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PC.DEL/1061/26
27 October 2026

ENGLISH only

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
TO THE OSCE

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STATEMENT
in response to the Report by the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, delivered by Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan at the 1582nd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, 22 October 2026

Mr. Chair,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes Dr. Kari Johnstone back to the Permanent Council and thanks her for her comprehensive and substantive report.

As was noted by the Special Representative, this year marks the twentieth anniversary of Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/06, which strengthened the mandate of her Office as a cross-cutting structure within our Organization. Two decades on, this mandate is more relevant than ever, as trafficking in human beings increasingly intersects with other types of crimes, including cybercrime, financial crime and drug trafficking.

We particularly appreciate the Office's focus on trafficking for the purpose of forced criminality and its continued efforts to promote the consistent application of the non-punishment principle. We also value its efforts to strengthen financial investigations, including those involving virtual assets, and its sustained attention to technology-facilitated trafficking. We commend the Office for delivering these important results despite operating with a budget that, in real terms, remains substantially lower than it was a decade ago.

Armenia attaches great importance to its close and continuous co-operation with the Office. The expertise, technical assistance and policy guidance it provides have made a valuable contribution to our national efforts and reforms.

Mr. Chair,

Armenia's response to trafficking in human beings is underpinned by a robust legal framework and a well-established institutional architecture. Inter-agency co-ordination is ensured through the Council on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Exploitation, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister.

Armenia is currently finalizing its eighth National Action Plan for 2026–2028, developed in close consultation with relevant international organizations, partners and civil society. The new Plan will address the evolving nature of trafficking, including technology-facilitated trafficking and developments in migration. The new framework is grounded in a rights-based, victim-centred and gender-sensitive approach, with non-discrimination and equality serving as its guiding principles.

We are encouraged by the recognition of Armenia's efforts in the fourth evaluation report by the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), published in June this year. GRETA welcomed the new provisions on trafficking in the Criminal Code, which explicitly address forced criminality, as well as the revised Labour Code's definition of forced labour and the long-awaited legislative package on the rights of the child. It also acknowledged progress in victim identification and assistance, alongside Armenia's efforts to address technology-facilitated trafficking.

In conclusion, Armenia remains firmly committed to strengthening its efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings. We look forward to continuing our close co-operation with the Special Representative and all relevant partners in pursuing this shared objective.

Thank you.