



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
TO THE OSCE

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## STATEMENT

### **on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture as delivered by Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan at the 1526<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

*3 July 2025*

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to thank the delegation of Switzerland for raising the current issue on "International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, observed on June 26", which is an apt reminder of our joint commitment to prevention and eradication of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Armenia reaffirms its firm commitment to upholding the absolute prohibition of torture as enshrined in the UN Convention against Torture and in the OSCE's documents.

Systemic torture does not occur in isolation, rather it is enabled by long patterns of impunity, a lack of transparency and the erosion of democratic institutions. In such environments where power goes unchecked, the judiciary is politicized and accountability is absent, torture becomes a methodical tool to extract forced confessions.

We express our deep concern that in some OSCE participating States credible reports of torture persist, often in politically motivated cases, and within closed detention systems. Moreover, states that practice torture domestically to silence dissenting voices use it as a method of warfare in conflict situations. Extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, cruel treatment, abuses of legal procedures, and mock trials of prisoners of war and civilian detainees remain common practices among such states. These practices violate the clear legal framework established by the UN Convention against Torture and other international instruments, as well as the commitments undertaken by all OSCE participating States.

In her most recent report of February 2025 the UN Special Rapporteur on torture addressed the crime of hostage-taking from the perspective of the absolute prohibition of torture. She noted in this regard that certain States have been increasingly detaining foreign nationals under fabricated or exaggerated charges to serve foreign policy or other objectives. By manipulating justice systems and exploiting procedural mechanisms, these States prolong and complicate release while denying the detainees' status as hostages or wrongful detainees. These cases have included severe physical and psychological torture, including by tormenting the families of victims.

The prohibition of torture is absolute and unconditional under international law. The OSCE Ministerial Council decision on the Prevention and eradication of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment emphasizes "that the prohibition of torture is a peremptory norm

of international law without territorial limitation, which applies at all times and in all places". Hence, references to domestic nature of such acts, sovereignty or justifications of non-interference in national judicial processes are irrelevant and such violations and credible allegations should invoke international reaction and inquiry.

The observance of this international day once again highlights the imperative to move beyond rhetoric and take decisive action to eradicate these grave violations from the OSCE region, ensuring that impunity is no longer tolerated.

Thank you.