

Statement of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia
Fifth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues
27-28 November, Geneva

Madam Chairperson,

Since the adoption of the declaration in 1992 Armenia has continuously reaffirmed its commitment to the provisions enshrined in it by numerous initiatives of the implementation of minority rights.

The challenges of the implementation of the Declaration are both national and international.

The primary concern of the states should be the promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination and equal rights for people belonging to ethnic or national, linguistic or religious group. The effective measure should be undertaken at the legislative, administrative levels and in practice. Education and awareness-raising are very important in this regard.

For better identifying the challenges of the implementation of the provisions of the declaration national non-governmental bodies addressing the issues of minorities were established in Armenia, among them - the Coordinating Council for National Minorities and the Youth Group of National Minorities of Armenia. Department of Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs was also established within the Government, which works closely with the mentioned national minority organizations. National minorities' organizations also cooperate closely with the Office of the Human Rights Defender. The specialist of national minorities' rights has been recruited in the staff of the Office.

Armenia believes that the role of the international community is crucial in addressing the protection of minority rights. The international community should continuously condemn and combat discrimination and incitement of hatred. We consider that the major challenge is the existence of cases of crimes on ethnic ground, the impunity and glorification of the perpetrators of those crimes at the state level, incitement of hatred and racial discrimination by the politicians towards people belonging to other national or ethnic, religious and linguistic group. In this regard we would like to stress the principle stipulated by the Draft Recommendations that "Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Declaration and other minority rights standards and instruments"

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion we would like to stress the importance of the active involvement by national minorities themselves in the process. In this regard we value the activities of diaspora organizations in the promotion and protection of the rights of the minorities and we would like to note the

positive experience of the Armenian diaspora throughout the World, the preservation of which is a challenge itself in many countries. In this regard, we encourage the participation of civil society organizations in this forum and we would like to stress that their contribution to the Forum is very important and can serve as a valuable source for those states in addressing the challenges of the implementation of the Declaration.

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