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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 6 May 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and has the honour to transmit the statement of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia on the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) on 31 March 2020 (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Armenia kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto* as a document of the forty-third session of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 4.

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.



Annex to the note verbale dated 6 May 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Statement of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia on the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) on March 31

We congratulate the authorities and the people of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) on holding free and fair elections on March 31, which were in line with high democratic standards.

The people of Artsakh have indeed earned the right to live free in dignity, to shape together a democratic and modern society. In this regard, these nationwide elections, which were held in an environment of free competition and civil solidarity, have been case in point.

Those elections once again demonstrated that human rights, particularly the right to vote and to take part in a government, are inalienable and universal. The fundamental human rights instruments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights, clearly establish that in exercising human rights no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of any territory and that all peoples can freely determine their political status by virtue of their right to self-determination and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

The right of the people of Artsakh to self-determination is the foundation for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. This reality has been fully reflected in the principles and elements of settlement presented by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, which envisage the determination of the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh through a legally binding expression of will.

It is noteworthy that in their statement on the Artsakh elections, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs once again reiterated the role of the population of Artsakh in determining their future, in the context of principles and elements of the settlement of the conflict.

The incoming authorities of Artsakh - those who have already received the mandate of the people of Artsakh at the parliamentary elections and those who will receive that very mandate at the second round of the presidential elections, have a special responsibility and role in the Nagorno-Karabakh peace process.

Active engagement of the elected authorities of Artsakh as a main party of the resolution of the conflict will significantly increase the effectiveness of the negotiation process and will ensure progress in the key issues of the conflict resolution.

Elections in Artsakh are also important in terms of strengthening democracy, human rights and civil society in the region. It once again emphasizes that the conflict cannot serve as an insurmountable impediment for building democratic society.

On these days, we also pay tribute to the memory of the victims of the military aggression and atrocities committed by Azerbaijan against the people of Artsakh four years ago. In this context, it should be underlined that the democratic development of all countries in the region and accountability of authorities before their own peoples is a prerequisite for the regional security and peaceful resolution of the conflict.