

COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW: ARMENIA

Intervention by Turkey - 22 January 2015

Mr Umut DENIZ

Mr. President,

We welcome the Armenian delegation and thank them for their presentation.

We welcome the steps taken by the Armenian authorities to improve Armenia's human rights record. However, much remains to be done to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the existing legislation.

Turkey is concerned about the public mistrust in the judicial system, the persisting weakness of the fight against corruption, and allegations of routine use of torture and ill-treatment in police custody.

We closely follow and value all efforts for the prevention of genocide, which is an obligation of the international community.

Nevertheless, Turkey remains concerned regarding restrictions on freedom of expression on this issue in Armenia. In this context, it should be noted that "genocide" is a crime very clearly defined by the 1948 Convention, with specific conditions of proof. As such, the events of 1915 constitute a legitimate subject of debate, as there is no consensus on their legal characterisation as "genocide".

On the other hand, we would like to clarify that allegations of blockade by Turkey on Armenia mentioned in the National Report are baseless and do not relate to the realities and the human rights situation on the ground.

Turkey would like to make the following **recommendations** to Armenia:

- 1) Conduct impartial and transparent investigations of cases where the freedom of expression has been restricted.
- 2) Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.
- 3) Provide criminal liability for torture in line with Article 1 of the UN Convention against Torture.
- 4) Strengthen legislation on violence against women and domestic violence by adopting the draft law on the subject and by acceding to the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention.
- 5) Develop a national strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children.

Thank you, Mr. President.