**2 PROSECUTOR GENERAL’S OFFICE**

**Madam President.**

First of all, I would like to address the achievements of Armenia in the field of combating corruption and corruption-related crimes. *In recent 2 years* the number of corruption cases *has been tripled* which is conditioned mainly by the increasing trust between people and law enforcement bodies. The investigations on the corruption among high-ranking officials and charges concerning corruption related crimes were recently brought against former presidents, ministers, deputy ministers, members of the Parliament, Head of State Supervision Service, judges and etc.

Regarding investigations of the cases of torture and ill-treatment I would like to highlight that the struggle against torture and ill-treatment in Armenia is carried out in close cooperation of the relevant State agencies. In this context efforts taken by the National Preventive Mechanism acting within the staff of the Human Rights Defender deserve special notice. Since 2015 amendments to the Criminal Code were enacted by which the crime of torture was stipulated as a distinct *corpus delicti,* fundamental steps have been taken to ensure the effectiveness of investigations of such cases in line with the international commitments taken by Armenia. I would like to mention the decision of the Board of the Prosecutor’s Office aimed at ensuring the prompt and effective investigation in cases of torture, as well as at preventing the possible incidents of inhumane or degrading treatment. The detailed instructions refer to the importance of immediate recognition as a victim of persons subjected to ill treatment, assignment of forensic medical examination, protection of these persons during the criminal proceedings and in later stages, the importance to find out all the witnesses and their thorough examination for excluding the possibility of matching their testimonies.

In order to stick to the standards of conducting investigation by an independent body and taking into consideration the recommendations provided by the CPT, the prosecutors were assigned to ensure that all the materials prepared based on the information concerning bodily injuries of apprehended or arrested persons should immediately be sent to the Special Investigation Service - an independent investigative body.

It is also worth mentioning that the number of criminal investigations launched on the allegations of ill-treatment and investigated by the Special Investigative Service has a stable tendency to grow*. In particular, if the number of such cases in 2015 was 6, in 2016 it was 17, in 2017- 47, in 2018 - 50, in 2019 - 53.*

Referring to the question raised by Swedish colleagues it is important to mention that according to the new regulations regarding domestic violence cases, the prosecutor *triggers criminal proceedings despite of the existence of the victim’s complaint.*

As to the crimes against LGBT persons,low number of criminal cases should never be considered as an indicative that the crimes against LGBT persons are not properly investigated. All allegations of such crimes are thoroughly examined and the law enforcement bodies concerned give due accountto the investigation of the motives of such criminal actions.

I would also like to refer the question of investigations of deaths in armed forces raised by colleagues from the United Kingdom. First of all, let me highlight that in recent years all the studies by the Prosecutor General’s Office, concerning the effectiveness of such investigations, have been conducted exclusively in the light of the judgments of the ECHR and other international human rights’ bodies.

During the preliminary investigations related to the deaths of conscripts, *necessary procedural measures have been taken immediately* aimed at investigating all possible versions of the cause of death.Investigations in the armed forces are also subject to close public scrutiny. The Prosecutor General’s office periodically informs the public about any new development on every death incident in the armed forces. The Prosecutor General and the Military Prosecutor periodically invite the relatives, investigators and prosecutors for a discussion of all pending cases.

In recent years the number of the deaths in Armed Forces is constantly decreasing. In particular, *in 2017 the number of the deaths in Armed Forces connected with the military service was 56, in 2018 - 38 and in 2019 - 20.* It is worth mentioning that the vast number of deaths in Armed forces resulted from ceasefire violations in the line of contact.

As to the question raised by the delegation of Spain, I’d like to inform that on the events of June 2015 and July 2016 a number of criminal investigations were launched and are still in process. Dozens of police officers were charged and recognized guilty by final court judgements.

**Thank you.**