

Statement by Edward Nalbandian, Foreign Minister of Armenia at the UNDP 50th Anniversary Ministerial Meeting, “Preventing Violent Conflict, Building Peaceful Societies”

24 February 2016

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UN Charter guides the member states to take effective collective measures for the prevention of threats to peace. Over the years the concept of prevention has been gradually and effectively occupying an important space in the international efforts of building peace and security. However, conflicts continue to emerge and many of them turn violent with increasingly higher human cost, consuming significant resources of the international community and thus attracting stronger focus to the improvement of the prevention capabilities.

It goes without saying that the unambiguous implementation of the international commitments, in particular those enshrined in the UN Charter on developing friendly relations among nations based also on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, can enormously contribute to the prevention efforts. If there is anything that history teaches us, is that there is a direct linkage between the brutal hindrances of the rightful exercise of human rights and violent conflicts. Usually the countries, which are disrespecting the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination, are also grossly violating human rights.

In its Agenda 2030 the international community has once again reaffirmed the inter-connection between sustainable development, peace, human rights and the rule of law. The UNDP, with its extensive presence in the field has been duly recognized within the UN system as an important contributor to the function of prevention and early warning. Identifying, reporting and reacting to deteriorating human rights situations is amongst the key functions of the field missions to detect early signs of fuelling instability.

Ladies and gentleman,

The link between global security and development is beyond doubt. Conflicts may impede the sustainable development. This is a reality. But there is another reality as well. Some protracted or frozen conflicts may continue for decades on the territories inhabited by people whose aspirations to achieve sustainable development goals are as legitimate as for anyone else. Pending settlement to the final legal status of certain territories, particularly those which are subject of negotiations under agreed format of conflict resolution, should not be used as an excuse to violate the legitimate right of the people to development. After all, «Leave no one behind» commitment is not about invoking a justification for exclusion but finding ways for inclusion. The international community should find ways to ensure involvement of the people from conflict areas in the international cooperation aimed at achieving sustainable development goals. The operation of the international organizations and agencies, such as the UNDP and others also should not be anyhow restricted for the people of the conflict areas.

It is important to transform the challenge imposed by conflicts to an opportunity of establishing positive agenda of partnership including through genuine confidence building among parties to the conflict. All people have universal aspiration for security and development. Common economic or environmental projects among parties to the conflict can entail first steps towards building trust and confidence and what is more important, a common vision of peace.

Thank you.