Economic and Social Council: Humanitarian Affairs Segment

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Mher Margaryan,
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Mr. Chair,

I thank the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mr. Martin Griffiths for the presentation of the Report on the Strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

This year’s Humanitarian Affairs Segment is held in the context of multiple global challenges caused by conflicts and pandemics. As reflected in the report, the COVID-19 pandemic, paralleled with the highest number of violent conflicts since the Second World War and the severe impacts of natural disasters resulted in the highest ever number of people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Chair,

Armenia is strongly committed to the principles and norms of the international humanitarian law and we attach utmost priority to protecting people in conflict settings and humanitarian crises, including women and children, older persons, persons with disabilities and displaced people and those left farthest behind.

Strengthening the capacities of the United Nations to prevent and respond to the humanitarian emergencies and crises is crucial for upholding human rights and human dignity for all, in particular those trapped in conflicts. Full respect and adherence of member states to the principles of the international humanitarian law is a key prerequisite to enable efficient delivery on the UN
humanitarian mandate and ensure protection of people on the ground without discrimination of any kind.

We continue to face the grave repercussions of a major humanitarian crisis in our region caused as a result of the premeditated large-scale military aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in the fall of 2020 amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic bringing about thousands of casualties, mass-displacement, destruction of livelihoods and of critical civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals.

Since the beginning of the hostilities and in its immediate aftermath, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has come up with detailed proposals to conduct an inter-agency assessment of the humanitarian, protection and early recovery needs and human rights situation in order to identify opportunities for impartial humanitarian activities.

The lack of good faith by one single party - Azerbaijan undermined those efforts of the United Nations, its humanitarian agencies and offices to assess the needs of the people on the ground and create conditions for long-term humanitarian response to the civilian population. In an utter disregard to international humanitarian law, this one country continues to obstruct safe and unhindered humanitarian access of the UN agencies to Nagorno-Karabakh thus denying the affected people the opportunities to benefit from the much-needed international relief efforts.

In this regard we fully support the recommendations of the Secretary-General to Member states, parties to conflict, the United Nations and the humanitarian organizations to promote and ensure full respect for and adherence to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.

In delivering relief and assistance in situations where the right to life and human dignity are under imminent threat it remains a critical priority for the United Nations system to employ a human rights-based, people-centered and inclusive approach for ensuring effective and timely humanitarian action and assistance to the people in need.

Thank you.