

Statement by

Mr. Artur Maysuryan
Head of EU Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Economy of the
Republic of Armenia

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Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Economy of RA, I would like to express gratitude to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe for the contribution to the regional development and implementation of various economic projects aimed at overcoming the difficulties we all are facing these years.

Armenia, like other countries in the world, faced the social and economic difficulties caused by COVID-19. In order to meet the challenges posed by the spread of the Coronavirus the Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted a package of comprehensive measures envisaging 25 social and economic mitigation programs for provision of assistance to Armenian businesses, supporting mainly the mostly affected sectors, such as tourism, accommodation and food services, transport, agriculture, construction.

I would like to express special thanks to the UNECE for the assessment of the “Impact of COVID-19 on Trade and Structural Transformation in Armenia: Evidence from UNECE’s survey of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises”. Identifying the needs, the assessment shows how to recover and make the Armenian economic growth possible by addressing these needs. The recommendations address a range of areas, including transition to a paperless trading environment, improvement of quality infrastructure and cross border trade, improvement of the competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises, as well as that of transport services.

I would like to highlight the timeliness of this assessment, as currently the Government of Armenia is considering new measures aimed at enterprises' assistance. It is also worth mentioning that the assessment's focus on long term capacity building needs of MSMEs. The Ministry of Economy will use the recommendations for designing a strategy for developing the National metrology system in cooperation with OIML and the National system of accreditation and conformity assessment, as well as for developing a strategy for increasing the SME's participation in international trade.

We greatly value the said support and highlight the importance of the assessment Recommendations in terms of its influence on improvement of main recovering programs in Armenia after pandemic and on development of ties with donors and developing partners to assist the implementation of recommendations and we will be able to elaborate operational plan in the road of reducing the impact by joint efforts, which will result to economic recovery and further stability.

In May-August 2020, the UNECE reviewed the impact of the crisis on the Armenian economy, based on a survey of 370 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the country, which are involved in manufacturing and trading activities. The review traced how non-tariff measures (NTMs) governing trade in goods influenced end-to-end supply chains and captured the lingering effects of the pandemic and their implications for achieving the 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs). On 17, December 2020 an online stakeholder meeting was held in the Ministry of Economy to discuss the results and recommendations.

Identifying the needs, the assessment shows how to recover and make the Armenian economic growth possible by addressing these needs. The recommendations address a range of areas, including transition to a paperless trading environment, improvement of quality infrastructure and cross border trade, improvement of the competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises, as well as that of transport services. With the support of the UNECE Armenia will be able to engage donors to

assist with the implementation of recommendations, bringing together 80 participants from UN relevant bodies and programs, other agencies and donor organizations.

We do hope that we all will be able to overcome the difficulties facing today and create more stable, shock-resistant economy in the future.

Thank you for the work done and the support shown to our government. Your efforts are highly appreciated.