



ARMENIA

September 28, 2022

HRC 51st Session: Annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of indigenous people

Delivered by Ms. Armine Petrosyan, Second Secretary

President,

We thank all the panelists for their remarks on challenges in protecting human rights of Indigenous Peoples during and after COVID-19 pandemic, as well as on good practices in relation to the social and economic recovery plans. We have all found ourselves in an unprecedented and unforeseen situation with pandemic. The COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect among others on Indigenous Peoples, with women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities suffering the most. The negative impact of pandemic become clear particularly for indigenous population residing in conflict areas where health and essential services have already been devastated by hostilities and crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how dependent we are on the information technologies regardless of the development level for a given society. The impact of the digital divide on the right to education of indigenous children, cannot be underestimated. With schools moving to online learning, many indigenous children were simply unable to gain access to their classes. This situation contributed to deepening the inequalities in access to education for indigenous children.

Besides educational challenges and the digital divide, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the perils of food insecurity, lack of access to adequate medical care, clean water and sanitation, and unequal access to basic services. We believe that recovery efforts should deal with the crisis by addressing the underlying structural inequalities, taking into account the concrete issues affecting indigenous peoples. States should include short-, medium- and long-term elements in their recovery plans that take into consideration the needs of indigenous peoples, including in order to support their economic recovery.

I thank you.