

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
24 May 2014

On May 20-23, 2014 Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of Council of Europe (CoE) and Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), paid a visit to Azerbaijan and were received by Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ogtay Asadov, Chairman of Milli Majlis (Parliament), and other government officials.

At the meetings with Azerbaijani officials, priorities of the chairmanship of Azerbaijan in the Committee of Ministers of CoE, the Nagorno Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, urgent international and regional issues, as well as Secretary General of CoE, Thorbjørn Jagland's report on "Situation of the human rights, democracy and rule of law in Europe" reflecting the situation in all CoE member states, including Azerbaijan were discussed.

Presentation ceremony of the Action Plan of CoE on Azerbaijan for 2014-2016, which is aimed at determining the frame of the cooperation between Azerbaijan and CoE in the coming years, was held during the visit with the participation of Thorbjørn Jagland.

Visiting "ASAN Service" center No4 of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Secretary General praised the activity of this service and said that "ASAN Service" can be a positive example for other CoE countries.

The session of the PACE standing committee, with the chairmanship of Anne Brasseur, was held at the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In her speech at the Parliament, Anne Brasseur said that respect for the territorial integrity of CoE member states is a fundamental principle of the organization. Touching upon the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Anne Brasseur, recalling the resolution of PACE No1416, adopted in 2005, stressed the definite and principled position of PACE regarding the support of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

PACE resolution No1416, adopted in 2005 demands the fulfillment of UN Security Council's resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884, and withdrawal of the military forces from the occupied territories.

Welcoming the PACE members and participants of the meeting, the Chairman of Milli Majlis, Ogtay Asadov spoke about the relations with PACE, Chairmanship of Azerbaijan in the Committee of Ministers of CoE and the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

At the meeting Minister Elmar Mammadyarov made a statement in a status of the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of CoE.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov informed PACE members about the foreign policy of Azerbaijan, atmosphere of tolerance and political reforms carried out in Azerbaijan, and conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov noted that non-resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan until today, continuation of the occupation of 20% of the territories of Azerbaijan and that more than 1 million Azerbaijani refugees and IDP's can't return to their homelands are in contradiction with the democratic values and fundamental principles, which form the basis of CoE and undermine the comprehensive development and democratic processes in the region.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, as the Chairman of the Committee of Minister of CoE, discussed with PACE members the various international issues.

During the discussions the fact of occupation of the territory of one CoE member state by another CoE member state was stressed to be unacceptable.