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**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
104th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
04 May 2017**

*on 72nd anniversary of the Victory in the Second World War
and occupation of Shusha by Armenia*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan is pleased that the 72nd anniversary of the victory in the Second World War has been brought to the agenda of today's meeting of the Permanent Council.

9 May victory in the Second World War is observed in Azerbaijan as a holiday. Like all members of anti-fascist coalition, people of Azerbaijan have made a significant contribution to and sacrifices for the victory. Azerbaijan sent more than 640,000 of its brave men and women to the frontline. Almost half of them did not return home. National Azerbaijani divisions displayed an exemplary courage in the fight against Nazism in European countries as well.

People of Azerbaijan also played an important role in the home front. The contribution of oil-rich Baku to the victory in the World War II was invaluable. Azerbaijan contributed three quarters of oil and 90% of the aviation fuel produced in the Soviet Union during the war time.

As a country that sacrificed a lot for the victory over Nazism and mindful of the horrors of the World War II, we are concerned about the instances of glorification, in any form, of the Nazi movement and those who collaborated with the Nazi movement in the South Caucasus region, including by erecting monuments and memorials. In this regard, it is particularly deplorable that the Government of Armenia unveiled statue in a central square of Irevan to Garegin Nzdeh, who collaborated with the Nazis and put the Armenian Legion, numbering some 30.000 men, at the disposal of the Nazi command. The UN General Assembly resolution on "Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance", adopted on 19 December 2016, which we supported, can be instrumental in preventing such worrisome tendencies.

Devastating consequences of the the World War II, prompted the international community to put the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders of States at the core of inter-state relations to maintain peace and security in Europe and beyond as reflected in the U.N. Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

Unfortunately, today, we still observe instances of threat or use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. From the early days of independence, Azerbaijan faced aggression of Armenia, which resulted in occupation of 20 per cent of its territory and forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan. On this day, we not only commemorate the victory over Nazism, but also mark one of the tragic days in the history of Azerbaijan, the occupation of Azerbaijan's ancient town of Shusha by the Armenian armed forces and ethnic cleansing carried out against its population, which took place on 8 May 1992.

Occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan elicited a series of the UN Security Council resolutions, demanding immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from the territories of Azerbaijan. Regretfully, these resolutions are yet to be implemented.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.