



Hügelgasse 2, A-1130, Wien | Tel.: + 43 (1) 403 13 22 | Fax: + 43 (1) 403 13 23 | E-mail: vienna@mission.mfa.gov.az

**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1149th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
08 June 2017**

*in response to address of the Secretary-General
of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development-GUAM*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes Ambassador Altai Efendiev, the Secretary-General of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development-GUAM to the Permanent Council and thanks him for comprehensive presentation outlining activities of GUAM. We also thank the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship for inviting the GUAM Secretary-General to the Council.

Mr. Secretary-General, your presence today at the OSCE is particularly symbolic as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of establishment of GUAM as international organization. GUAM was born here, in the OSCE, based on common approaches to security threats of its member States. Here in Vienna, GUAM continued to embrace new dimensions of cooperation as our four Delegations expanded their common interests and shared values. GUAM managed to transform aspirations of its member States into contributions for security, stability and economic development in its area and beyond. GUAM Secretariat in Kyiv serves as an effective platform to deepen cooperation in all fields of inter-state relations. As you, Mr. Secretary-General stressed, priority cooperation areas for GUAM are the joint projects in trade and transport, combating terrorism and transnational organized crime, promoting public-private partnership, human mobility and tourism.

We are pleased that GUAM enjoys working relations with the OSCE and its Secretariat. GUAM's contribution to various OSCE events, including in the Economic and Environmental Forum and Annual Security Review Conference, has been fruitful in terms of identifying areas of mutual interest and laying ground for practical cooperation. Yet, it is our belief that the potential of cooperation between the OSCE and GUAM remains untapped. We encourage GUAM Secretariat and relevant structures of the OSCE to elaborate on the ways of further intensifying interaction between the two organizations and come out with concrete initiatives. In this context, we would like to highlight the importance of GUAM Transport Corridor for developing connectivity in OSCE area, the issue that is high on agenda of both organizations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Achievements and success of GUAM are significantly challenged by the unresolved conflicts in its area. Due to these conflicts the GUAM region is the most frequently discussed topic in

the OSCE. Lack of solution to these conflicts is the biggest source of division and mistrust among the OSCE participating States.

Until each and every OSCE participating State and the mediating country fully recognizes its respective responsibility and contribution towards resolution of the conflicts on the basis of our agreed principles and commitments, unfortunately, division and mistrust will prevail in the OSCE.

Therefore, as we continue to observe differentiated and selective application of conflict resolution principles in the OSCE, determination of the GUAM member States to strengthen the respect for OSCE principles will only grow. The conflicts will continue to mobilize our common efforts to alleviate lives of millions of people in the GUAM countries, which are in need of protection, assistance and support, whether being forcefully displaced, unable to return to their places of residence or residing in conflict-affected territories.

The GUAM member-states are united in their position that the settlement of the conflicts on their territories shall be carried out exclusively on the basis of respect to sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of these states with the understanding that the territory of a State cannot be the object of acquisition by another State resulting from the threat or use of force, and that no territorial acquisition, military occupation or annexation, resulting from such act shall be recognized as legal.

This principled position of the GUAM member-states is based on the Helsinki Final Act and other fundamental documents of the OSCE. Thus, it is imperative for the OSCE, its negotiation formats and participating States to support the efforts of the GUAM States to settle conflicts by means of de-militarization of conflict zones, de-occupation of internationally recognized territories of the States, re-integration of uncontrolled territories into the states that they are part of and return of forcibly displaced population to their places of origin.

In conclusion, we once again thank Secretary-General Efendiev for his presence at the Permanent Council and wish him every success in his future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.