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**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
at the Informal Meeting
of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OSCE participating States**

Mauerbach, 11 July 2017

Mr. Chairperson,

The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict remains one of the most serious threat to peace and security in the OSCE region.

Despite a clear mandate given by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions to OSCE, the prevailing trend we observe within the Organization is merely to defuse the conflict. De-escalating the conflict without withdrawing the Armenian troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan would not bring solution to the problem.

We must advance almost unanimous position within OSCE that the *status-quo* in the conflict is unsustainable. We must change it in view of Armenia's all kinds of provocations along the front line aimed at escalating conflict.

Latest indiscriminate shelling of civilian settlements, which resulted in death of two Azerbaijanis is a blatant violation of international humanitarian law by Armenia and testifies to systematic policy of targeting civilians with a view to compelling Azerbaijan to react and providing her an excuse to derail the peace efforts.

It is the current Armenian regime's awareness of imminent legitimacy crisis, once the conflict is resolved, that makes it to act so provocatively. Armenian leadership realises that solving conflict peacefully in accordance with international law would mean restoring sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan over the occupied territories. Therefore, it spares no effort to perpetuate the current status-quo to make the regime survivable.

Armenia has to understand that by increasing its reliance on current status-quo, it runs a risk of completely losing its independence and becoming a tool in political games in the region. It is only by resolving the conflict peacefully and restoring good-neighbourly relations with Azerbaijan and other countries of the region that Armenia can secure an independent and prosperous future for its nation, and benefit from development of the region.

Mr. Chairperson,

I regret that the Foreign Minister of Armenia lost the opportunity of dialogue in Mauerbach. He delivered accusatory statement full of baseless allegations against Azerbaijan. Such statement may yield desired outcome for domestic political considerations, but this was not

that was expected from him in the OSCE. Everybody in this hall knows who is the aggressor and who is the aggrieved in the context of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. The question is what the Armenian Minister tried to accomplish with his statement. If he thinks that in this way he can contribute to restoration of trust and confidence in the Organization, then clearly he failed.

The Armenian Minister sounded extremely provocative in view of planned meeting with Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan and the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group later today in Brussels. We strongly encourage the Armenian Delegation to take constructive position, as expected, both here in the OSCE and in negotiations in Brussels.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.