



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

the 1041st meeting of the Permanent Council

February 26, 2015

Situation in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to update members of the Permanent Council on the current state of affairs in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani side regrets that the Armenian Armed Forces continue to violate the cease-fire regime along the Line of Contact and resort to provocations in the aftermath of the visit of the Co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group to the region. Thus, on the night to 21st of February the Armenian armed units made another attempt of incursion on the Line of Contact, in the result of which a soldier of the Azerbaijani Army Zalimkhan Eybali Javadov was shot dead while countering the attack.

This incident is yet another example of systematic violations of the ceasefire regime by the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia aimed at further deterioration of the situation in the conflict zone. In this context, the Azerbaijani side reiterates that any attempt of Armenia to put the blame on the Azerbaijani side for the increased tension on the Line of Contact is futile and the leadership of the Republic of Armenia bears full responsibility for the deterioration of the situation in the region. Armenia's stubborn insistence on sustaining the status-quo based on illegal armed presence in the internationally recognized territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its overt disregard of the calls of the international community, including the demands of the relevant United Nations Resolutions on full, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all occupying forces from the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan remains the source of tension in the region and impedes the efforts for finding earliest solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In parallel to its provocations on the Line of Contact, the Armenian side also disregards the calls, including by the co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group, for releasing two Azerbaijani civilians- Mr. Dilgam Askerov and Shahbaz Guliyev, who were taken hostage in the occupied Kelbajar region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and remain to be subjected to torture and

degrading treatment since July 2014. In blatant violation of the norms of the international humanitarian law, the Armenian side continues its notorious attempts to use the case of the Azerbaijani hostages as a tool of blackmail with a view to propagating the illegal regime established on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

In fact, Armenia's attitude towards the captured Azerbaijanis testifies to this country's ongoing disregard to the massive violations of basic human rights of up to 1 million Azerbaijanis, who have been forcefully expelled from their native lands in the result of ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia. Today, as Azerbaijanis around the world commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the most tragic example of this policy, which led to heinous crime against humanity committed by the Armenian Armed forces in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly, it is high time to put an end to impunity of those responsible for crimes committed against Azerbaijani population of the occupied territories. Combating impunity is important not only for the purpose of prosecuting crimes and bringing those responsible to justice, but also to ensure sustainable peace and reconciliation.

In this context, the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan renews its call for the OSCE participating States to redouble their efforts to persuade the Republic of Armenia to honor its obligations under the international law with regard to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and consequently, to stop the continued military occupation of the Azerbaijani territories.

Thank you.