



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1114th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
04 October 2016**

*in response to presentation of 2017 Unified Budget Proposal by
the Secretary-General*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan joins previous speakers in thanking Mr. Secretary-General for his presentation on 2017 Unified Budget Proposal. We will carefully study the budget proposal and will convey our comments and suggestions in due course during the discussions of specific funds. Herewith, I would like to limit myself to some general observations.

This and next year will be marked with selection of heads of several OSCE institutions. It is therefore critical to assess their activities and effectiveness of discharging their respective mandates agreed upon by all 57 OSCE participating States. Under these circumstances, we believe that increase in the budget of OSCE institutions should be reasonable and we expect detailed justification in this regard.

There is an acute need for renewal of human dimension events review process. It is a matter of increasing concern that OSCE human dimension events lack any meaningful opportunity for genuine and constructive dialogue and mostly seen as a battleground for attacking, sometimes even insulting governments or public officials by a civil society. In current context and unless substantial changes are made both to the modalities and agenda, we do not see a necessity in suggested increase to the Human Dimension Meetings Program.

As for the activities of the Office of the RFoM, working out clear standards for the journalistic activity related to armed conflicts is critical. Our Delegation has on numerous occasions pointed out the necessity for professional standards regulating responsible journalistic activity in the context of armed conflicts.

We remain to be of strong view that OSCE's activities related to the unresolved conflicts needs to be streamlined in accordance with existing mandates and OSCE decisions. It is therefore, imperative for the organization, as well as its structures and institutions to pay focused attention to the resolution of conflicts.

It is unfortunate to observe for yet another time lack of proper attention to the issue of IDPs and protection of their rights in the budget proposal. In this context, we request all relevant fund managers to re-consider their proposal so that to reflect adequate attention to the issue of IDPs.

We welcome efforts to reinvigorate the economic and environmental dimension. The participating States undertook a number of commitments in economic and environmental dimension, full adherence and implementation of which by the States and their business community is important for good governance, sustainable economic development and security and stability. Good governance in private sector is as important as in public sector; in particular, as far as the role of private sector in fighting against money-laundering, financing terrorism, corporate human rights violations and other illegal activities are concerned. It is within this context that we remain open for further discussions with a view to strengthening OSCE activities in the above-mentioned areas.

Budget proposal for the activities of the OSCE Office in Yerevan raises a number of questions due to apparent attempt to transform the field presence into an international development agency. We will discuss in details activities of the Office in the politico-military dimension as there are still a number of issues which require more clarity. It is within this context that we reiterate the necessity for the incoming OSCE Chairmanship and CPC to keep an effective oversight of activities of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. Enhanced transparency and accountability in the activities of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, in particular in the first dimension is of utmost importance in this regard.

In conclusion, we wish every success to the Austrian Delegation to the OSCE in timely adoption of the budget and stand ready for constructive engagement to this end.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.