



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1070th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
08 October 2015

violation by the OSCE/ODIHR of its mandate

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to return to the issue of violation by the Director of the OSCE/ODIHR of his mandate raised at Council meeting on September 17. I wish to recall that Azerbaijan urged the OSCE Permanent Council to hold the OSCE/ODIHR Director accountable for refusing to engage in consultations with the participating State requesting assistance, and cancelling OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission for the upcoming parliamentary elections to be held on November 1, 2015 in Azerbaijan without due consultations with the Chairmanship and guidance of the Permanent Council, as it is required by his mandate.

At its last regular meeting, the Azerbaijani side informed the Council about the undesired situation emerged in the aftermath of OSCE/ODIHR Director's decision and requested the Serbian Chairmanship of the OSCE to provide its good offices to facilitate the process to address the situation and to that end, proposed to establish an *ad hoc* group. At this meeting, many participating States also expressed their concern over the issue and underlined the need for finding a way out of the situation in a spirit of dialogue and consultations.

Following the Council meeting, the Chairperson-in-Office confirmed in his letter of September 25 to the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan that he is seized of the matter and expressed his readiness to engage. The Chairperson-in-Office also underlined that it would be in the interest of whole organization to consider how to deal with the issue. On the very same day, in a response letter Azerbaijan re-confirmed to the Serbian Chairmanship of the OSCE our readiness to engage into constructive consultations to address the situation and expressed our concurrence with the Chairperson-in-Office that the window of opportunity for the ODIHR to render its assistance to the OSCE participating State in accordance with its mandate should not be missed.

Failure by the OSCE/ODIHR Director to engage into consultations without further delay limits whatever opportunity remains to remedy the consequences of his decision taken in

violation of the mandate. As a result, restoration of election observation mission to Azerbaijan becomes even more difficult.

Lack of any step forward since the last meeting of the Council is discouraging. The violations by the OSCE institution of its mandate harms the interests of Azerbaijan as the OSCE participating State and cannot be left unaddressed without having repercussions on the level of trust and confidence within the organization. It should be, therefore, in the interest of all participating States, as well as the Chairmanship to take possible steps at their disposal to hold the ODIHR accountable for the violations of its mandate.

It is within this context that we renew our call on the OSCE Permanent Council and the Chairmanship to pay due attention to the concerns of the Azerbaijani side and take prompt actions, including through setting up an *ad hoc* group, with a view to finding a way out of the current impasse. Failure to do so would be detrimental to the OSCE spirit of dialogue and cooperation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.