



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

1070th Meeting of the Permanent Council,

08 October 2015

*in response to presentation of 2016 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 2016 Unified Budget Proposal. We carefully studied 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 one specific issue that requires particular attention in the context of the budget process of the Organization.

Azerbaijan is of the strong view that far from being a merely technical exercise, the discussion of the budget first and foremost is a process of assessing the effectiveness of the OSCE and its structures to ensure transparency and accountability within the Organization. The OSCE participating States, by adopting a budget proposal for any institution or field mission, express their confidence for the specific fund manager's ability and commitment to spend the allocated resources for the benefit of all participating States alike. Adoption of a budget is a sign of trust towards the institutions, established by the participating States.

It is within this context that the Delegation of Azerbaijan would like to once again refer to the violation by the Director of the OSCE/ODIHR of its mandate, which resulted in disruption of its assistance to the OSCE participating State. At 17 September Permanent Council meeting, our delegation informed, in detail, the Council about the situation emerged after the decision of the OSCE/ODIHR Director to cancel the election observation mission for the upcoming parliamentary election in Azerbaijan to be held on November 1, 2015.

Against this background, it continues to be a serious concern that in 3 weeks after that Meeting situation emerged as a result of violations by this institution of its mandate remains unaddressed. This, unfortunately, means that in remaining 3-week time until election, it is almost unrealistic to re-establish ODIHR observation mission and consequently, the Republic of Azerbaijan as an OSCE participating State will be deprived of the requested assistance of an OSCE institution, for which we have extended our political, technical and financial support since its very establishment.

In light of the above-mentioned, it is our strong position that until the concern of the Azerbaijani side over the violation by ODIHR of its mandate is addressed and proper procedures are put in place to prevent the re-occurrence of such incidents in future, ODIHR's election-related activities cannot enjoy our support. We should not allocate the already scarce resources of the Organization to the fund manager who lacks accountability, attempts to violate the sovereign rights of the OSCE participating States and fails to meet our legitimate expectations.

With that I would not like to prolong discussions on this specific matter, since we will raise this issue under the agenda item "Current Issues".

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.