



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

1073rd Meeting of the Permanent Council,

29 October 2015

on statement of the Co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I do not have a prepared statement. In fact, I would appreciate next time, if the representative of the Co-chairing countries making a statement on this current issue would at least inform us in advance.

I have identified three elements in the press release distributed by the Co-Chairs. First, I think there is a positive note in that press release that Presidents of two countries agreed and confirmed their commitment to meet. I think that it is important if they manage to meet and to discuss the key elements of the settlement process and other issues. I also wish to underline that any efforts moving in the direction of advancing the negotiation process would be instrumental.

The second element I wish to underline is the attempt of the Co-Chairmen to re-establish the dialogue at the level of the communities, who are primarily affected by the conflict. I encourage them to find the opportunity to allow the discussions of their future in the region and secondly to support programs that could bring Armenians and Azerbaijanis together. I think that those two tracks complement each other and we have to continue efforts to produce results and at least have meetings between the communities and between Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

There is also reference to the meeting with the ICRC representative in Yerevan. I do not know in general the results of that meeting, but at least the Co-Chairs discussed the implementation of the agreement which was achieved at the level of the Presidents of France, Azerbaijan and Armenia on the exchange of the data on the missing

persons. If we also manage to move forward on this issue it would be of help both for the process and for the peace efforts.

Last point, which I identified, is the security in the region and security along the line of contact. I agree that the use of heavy weapons, mortars and rocket launchers is a testimony to the fact that the conflict is not over, the war is ongoing and occupation is still continuing. What we need to do is to eliminate the military factor. We have to channel our efforts to move beyond this status quo. That is what has been repeatedly called by the Presidents of Co-chairing countries, by the OSCE and international community. The way to shake this status quo is to eliminate the military factor. The only military factor remaining in the territory is the presence of the Armenian troops. If Armenian Government is serious of the danger and incidents along the Line of Contact they have to withdraw their troops and people could at least feel safer in those territories.

There is also an incident which took place when Co-chairs and OSCE monitors were crossing the Line of Contact from occupied territories of Azerbaijan into the territories controlled by us. Armenian Ambassador first took the floor and claimed that shots were made from the territory of Azerbaijan. Our Ministry of Defense which met the Co-chairs and monitors and in safety accompanied them to the territories controlled by Azerbaijan, has immediately made a press release noting that the shots were made from the Armenian side. Even when the Personal Representative of CiO Ambassador Kasprzyk was approached by the Azerbaijani journalists with the request to identify where the shots were coming from he himself was a bit lost because he could not identify it. So I would not claim, as the distinguished Ambassador of Armenia did that the shots were made from the Azerbaijani side.

The situation is very fragile. The better is the tone of the press release of the Co-Chairmen, the better are the chances that we can move forward. And we see that the press release has some positive elements. I hope that the meeting of the Presidents will give some positive results.

Thank you.