



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1104th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
09 June 2016**

in response to Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan joins previous speakers in welcoming H.E. Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the Permanent Council and thanks him for interesting intervention.

Azerbaijan attaches high importance to fruitful cooperation with the Council of Europe, as we value its role in promoting democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law. Since its membership in the organization, Azerbaijan actively cooperates with the organization with a view to contributing to attainment of goals that the Council of Europe stands for. Our chairmanship in the Committee of Ministers in 2014 has been especially instrumental in this regard.

Azerbaijan equally values strong partnership between the Council of Europe and the OSCE on the issues of common concern. Recent upsurge of terror attacks, as well as rise of intolerance and discrimination, increasing manifestations of Islamophobia against the backdrop of refugee crisis makes this cooperation even more necessary. OSCE and Council of Europe may compliment each other's efforts in tackling these challenges and Azerbaijan remains ready to contribute to these efforts both in Vienna and Strasbourg. We suggest the Council of Europe to establish a dialogue with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to jointly address the issues of migration and prejudices against Muslims.

Unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area pose serious challenges both for the OSCE and Council of Europe within their respective areas of competence. Harsh humanitarian consequences of ongoing occupation by Armenia of internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, which resulted in almost one million of refugees and IDPs, require more efforts to be taken by these two organizations. In its judgment on the case "Chiragov and others v. Armenia", the European Court on Human Rights has documented blatant violations of fundamental rights of Azerbaijani IDPs by the Republic of Armenia and established Armenia's responsibility for unlawful occupation of and illegal military presence in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Monitoring by the Council of Europe of state of implementation of the judgment, as well as the Republic of Armenia's obligations on peaceful solution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is of utmost importance.

We also take note of the interest of the Secretary General to address the issues related to safeguarding human rights in the conflict zones. Azerbaijan remains to be of strong view that any such initiative should exclusively be conducted with due respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and by no means misused to promote results of illegal use of force.

In conclusion, we renew our gratitude to the Secretary General for his presence at the Permanent Council and wish him every success in his future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.