



STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

2016 Annual Security Review Conference

Working Session IV: “Countering terrorism - transnational threats in the OSCE area”

Vienna, 30 June 2016

Thank you, Mr. Moderator,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes distinguished speakers and thanks them for comprehensive presentations.

With its changing nature and character, terrorism continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security and to the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and social and economic development of all States. Today, when our world continues to suffer from terrorism and terrorist acts, in their frequency and magnitude, claim the lives of innocent people and undermine peace and security, a comprehensive approach to combating this scourge through concerted and coordinated international actions remains ever more vital. Recent heinous terrorist attacks in Istanbul demonstrated it once again. As a country that suffered its share from terrorism in the past, Azerbaijan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The international community, including through United Nations efforts, has achieved tangible results in countering terrorism. At the same time, a number of critical areas continue to require our constant attention.

Conflict-affected territories, especially those under foreign military occupation, often provide fertile ground for terrorists and other non-State actors, who use terrorism as a means of achieving their illegal goals. The accumulation of armaments and ammunition in those territories beyond international control and the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related materials to non-State actors pose a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. We stress the need to intensify conflict resolution efforts on the basis of the generally accepted norms and principles of international law, particularly those relating to respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of States.

The 2001 OSCE Bucharest Plan of Action for combating terrorism recognizes the inseparable link between terrorism and aggressive separatism, extremism and organized crime. It is within this context, we reiterate our call on OSCE to mobilize its efforts in addressing the root causes of terrorism and to eliminate the conditions conducive to its spread.

Financing of terrorism should remain at the center of the counter-terrorism efforts. It is important to counter and suppress the financing of terrorism, as it supports the recruitment efforts and strengthen the operational capacities to organize and carry out terrorist acts.

We believe that war on terrorism cannot and must not be used to target any religion or culture. This principle must be part of any counter-terrorism strategy. All States should be united in supporting various initiatives on intercultural and interreligious dialogue, such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the culture of peace initiative. Strengthening cooperation within those initiatives will serve to prevent misconceptions, defamatory manifestations and deliberate labelling of religions and contribute to the efficiency of counterterrorism efforts.

Azerbaijan supports the activities of the OSCE in the field of combating terrorism and continues to be a strong proponent of keeping the issue of countering terrorism and violent extremism high on the agenda of our Organization. We welcome the adoption at the Ministerial Council in Belgrade of two Declarations on Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism and on Reinforcing OSCE Efforts to Counter Terrorism in the Wake of Recent Terrorist Attacks. With regard to the fight with foreign terrorist fighters, we are convinced that OSCE should make its contribution to the intentional efforts through assisting the OSCE participating States to implement two Declarations on the issues of foreign terrorists fighters and kidnapping for ransom adopted at the Basel Ministerial Council in 2014. Moreover, we encourage the participating States to explore way to move beyond the context of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions in fighting against foreign terrorist fighters and the phenomena of kidnapping for ransom.

On combating transnational threats and challenges to security and stability in our region, we would like note that OSCE should benefit from the experiences of other relevant international organization specialized in this field and should try to find its added value to better address these threats and challenges without duplicating already existing mandates and responsibilities. It is also essential to distinguish TNT-related challenges to the security and stability in the peripheries of the OSCE, from those to the central part of the Organization, as they are quite different and complex in nature. Therefore, these challenges and security needs of those in the peripheries should be duly taken into account while designing OSCE activities on TNT issues.

We agree that existing and potential threats in the sphere of cyber-security are among the new challenges of the twenty-first century. We welcome the adoption of OSCE additional confidence-building measures to reduce the risks of conflicts stemming from the use of information and communication technologies and express our readiness to continue our engagement in the work of the Informal Working Group established in accordance with the PC Decision 1039. The OSCE activities on addressing the threats emanating from the use of ICT should be based on norms and principles of international law.

Thank you Mr. Moderator.