



Hügelgasse 2, A-1130, Wien | Tel.: + 43 (1) 403 13 22 | Fax: + 43 (1) 403 13 23 | E-mail: vienna@mission.mfa.gov.az

**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1133rd Meeting of the Permanent Council,
09 February 2017**

in response to Delegation of Armenia

Mr. Chairperson,

In response to statement of the Delegation of Armenia, I would like to exercise my right of reply and stress the following.

According to press release of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On February 7, starting at 16:55, Armenian armed units subjected to fire the positions of Azerbaijani troops located on the forward defense line in various directions of the front, using large-caliber guns, mortars and guns.

As a result of urgent measures, various engineering constructions and firing points of the enemy were destroyed by retaliation fire of our military units.

Ministry of Defense does not exclude that the aim of Armenian armed forces on firing the positions of Azerbaijani Armed Forces from large-caliber weapons, was to distract attention from their attempts to carry out sabotage in the opposite direction of the front in Nagorno-Karabakh. However, as a result of the attentive actions of our military units, the enemy’s activity was detected in advance. The enemy suffered losses and was forced to retreat. Azerbaijani Armed Forces have not suffered any losses and currently have full control over the operational situation on frontline.”

As for allegations on use of force, I would like to reiterate the following part from statement of our Delegation delivered at the Council meeting on January 19: “... those who talk about non-use of force in the context of conflict resolution, first of all must eliminate the factor of military occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan. If they are unable to withdraw the Armenian troops from the occupied territories and address many other challenges to the peace process, Azerbaijan has every right to defend its territory and protect its people by all means. We have the right to change the status-quo, if the peace process fails to do it, as it was demanded by the UNSC resolutions”. The sooner Armenia withdraws its forces from the Azerbaijani territories, the fewer casualties it will suffer.

Finally, day by day, de-occupation of internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan is realized and with support of our partners we take resolute steps to restore our sovereignty over these territories. It is regretful that the OSCE and its Minsk Group, which has been tasked to that end, play very little, if any, role in this process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.