



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
1155th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
20 July 2017**

in response to H.E. Mr. Angelino Alfano, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes H.E. Minister Angelino Alfano to the Permanent Council and thanks him for presentation of priorities of the Italian OSCE Chairmanship for 2018.

Italy will take the responsibility of chairing the OSCE at a challenging time, against backdrop of increased complexity of threats and challenges to security and stability and eroding trust and confidence among the participating States.

Ongoing violations of the Helsinki Final Act Principles in inter-state relations lie at the core of the current crisis. Sovereignty and territorial integrity of several participating States continue to be undermined due to existing conflicts. Failure to eliminate consequences of ongoing violations of the Helsinki Final Act Principles, as well as misinterpretation and selective application of these principles in the context of conflict resolution undermines rules-based European order.

It is therefore, imperative for the incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanship to keep the resolution of conflicts high on its agenda. In the meantime, absence of progress in implementation of tasking given to OSCE and its respective format with regard to settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict has to be addressed. Limiting OSCE's mediation activities to containment of the conflict runs a risk of rendering the peace process meaningless. The plight of millions of refugees and IDPs expelled from their homes due to the conflict should not remain beyond the focus of the OSCE. This problem needs to be addressed in a systematic and result-oriented manner.

Apart from conflicts, security and stability of the OSCE region are under growing pressure of numerous threats from terrorism, violent extremism, aggressive separatism and radicalization, as well as political-military turmoil in neighboring regions. Rising trend of intolerance and discrimination, especially on the ground of ethnicity and religion, such as Islamophobia undermines our common efforts. We welcome intention of the incoming Chairmanship to include those issues into its agenda and are looking forward to working with the Italian Delegation.

The OSCE with its diverse membership, unique concept of comprehensive security and established network of partnerships is well placed to serve as a platform for generating sustainable solutions to challenges outlined above, within available resources and mandates

of its relevant structures. We remain of the strong view that untapped potential of the second dimension has to be utilized. In this regard, we reiterate the importance of promotion of economic connectivity through transport corridors in line with provisions of respective OSCE decisions.

In conclusion, we once again thank Distinguished Minister for his appearance at the PC and wish him and his able team in Vienna successful Chairmanship. We assure our Italian colleagues of support and constructive engagement of the Azerbaijani side.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.