



## Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

### *62<sup>nd</sup> Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and Permanent Council, 9 March 2016*

*on European Security*

Mme. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan welcomes distinguished guest speakers, Mr. Andreas Michelis, Political Director of the German Federal Foreign Office and Dr. Joris Voorhoeve from the Leiden University to the joint FSC/PC meeting and thanks them for their interesting presentations. We also express our gratitude to the German Chairmanship of the OSCE and Dutch Chairmanship of the FSC for organizing this meeting on very important issue.

The OSCE has an important role to play in diffusing tensions in pan-European affairs. Experience proves that attempts to use the OSCE for exerting pressure on independent participating States do not yield expected results. OSCE's contribution to European security can only take place through dialogue and cooperation.

Competition among politico-military and economic blocks within the OSCE area seriously affects European security environment. The non-aligned OSCE participating States face undue pressure from different sides, which undermines their right to define and choose their own security arrangements. We firmly believe that issues related to enlargement and interaction of politico-military and economic blocks and its impact on the non-aligned participating States should be in the focus of the OSCE. Comprehensive dialogue with those non-aligned states and elaboration of guarantees for respecting their sovereignty and territorial integrity should be initiated.

Ongoing violations of the Helsinki Principles, in particular those related to respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the States lies at the core of current crisis of European security. Failure to demonstrate principled position in all protracted conflicts, attempts to misinterpret or selectively apply Helsinki Final Act principles have deeply undermined trust. We observe the attempts to transform the conflict resolution process into conflict containment and it looks like that the OSCE is satisfied with it. But, we are not. The OSCE is yet to deliver to expectations in terms of settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

The most effective confidence-building measure is to ensure withdrawal of illegally deployed Armenian military forces from the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, supported by the OSCE's multinational peacekeeping mission. The Delegation of Azerbaijan is of firm believe that the High-Level Planning Group should be modernize its existing four options with a new one based on civilian and police components.

Mediation is another important area that requires close attention. Mediation, as an element of the OSCE conflict resolution efforts, should in all circumstances be conducted in line with the norms and principles of international law, the UN Charter and Helsinki Decalogue, the principles of neutrality, impartiality, compliance with the agreed mandate, respect for sovereignty of states and in conformity with their obligations under international law.

The Minsk Group Process is at such a critical stage of the settlement where we cannot accept formal extension of support to the efforts of the Co-chairmen. If OSCE and its Minsk Group are seriously concerned with the risks of escalation of the conflict, it is absolutely necessary to look into the mediation formats and try to fix them, because they fail to produce results for more than 20 years.

In this regard, it is imperative for the OSCE to effectively oversee the settlement process on the basis of mandate of respective negotiation format and decisions and documents adopted with regard to the conflict and give proper guidance for the mediation efforts. In particular, the much-needed revitalization of the OSCE Minsk Group in its full format could re-establish OSCE's ownership over the process and provide valuable channel for dialogue within the Organization.

In conclusion, we thank once again our distinguished guest speakers for their contributions and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Thank you, Mme. Chairperson.