



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

1106th Meeting of the Permanent Council 23 June 2016

on the World Refugee Day

Mr. Chairperson,

On June 20 the international community marked the World Refugee Day in line with relevant UN General Assembly resolution.

On this occasion the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to reiterate the importance of international protection and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. Plight of refugees and other persons of concern does not affect only hosting countries, but rather have much a wider effect on the security and stability of the whole region. Thus, it necessitates unified efforts of all international community, including the OSCE and its participating States.

Azerbaijan has been coupling with the refugee and IDPs issue for more than twenty years. 250 thousand Azerbaijanis had been expelled from the territory of Armenia and hundred thousands of ethnic Azerbaijanis had been forcefully expelled from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as a result of the ongoing aggression and the policy of ethnic cleansing of the Republic of Armenia against Azerbaijan. Protection of this vulnerable group and restoration of their violated rights and freedoms is a priority of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan that strives to promote durable solutions for their social problems.

At the same time, in light of relevant international norms, including the OSCE commitments, we are of firm belief that final and sustainable solution to the issue can only be achieved through ensuring their inalienable right to return in safety and dignity to their places of permanent residence. In this context, we underline the need for creation necessary conditions in conflict zones to that end.

In light of the above-mentioned, we call on all OSCE participating States, as well as OSCE executive structures to pay close attention to the issue of protection of refugees and IDPs in the OSCE area, in particular in the context of armed conflicts and to take into due account the needs of this vulnerable group in their future activities. We further reiterate our call on the German Chairmanship of the OSCE to include this important topic into the agenda of the human dimension events.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.