



**Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan**  
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**Embassy of Azerbaijan to Poland**

Advancement of women is an important element of maintenance of international peace and security, as well as dialogue and harmony within society. With equal rights, women can be more important agents of changes contributing to comprehensive security in all three dimensions.

Azerbaijan pays special attention to the development of the strategy on combating violence, which provides agencies with a set of specific goals and actions for its implementation. Of particular importance is the establishment of special monitoring groups on gender-based violence under the executive power in each region of the country to increase coordination of GBV prevention and response efforts among different state institutions. These monitoring groups were established with involvement of different state agencies and executive powers. As an effective controlling mechanism, these local monitoring groups examine situation and effectiveness of the implemented measures in places, determine families at risk and provide support to them, analyze the causes of violence, provide protection to victims and ensure appropriate assistance to carry out such functions as coordination of gender based violence prevention and response efforts among different state institutions.

Moreover, there is a countrywide on-line database on violence against women. We are building local capacities to improve skills in collection, analysis, dissemination and use of data.

By implementing projects on participation of women in politics, including women leadership in self-Governance, government tries to encourage women's participation and increase their representation during elections. As a result, significant progress has been achieved at the municipal level. Thus, the representation of women at municipal level has increased to 35%. The use of the administrative reform that appoints a woman deputy to the governor and the training of these future women leaders in the administration of the State create a very important opportunity for women to play a major role in the development, especially in social policy.

Azerbaijan, with more than 250 thousand IDP and 156 thousand refugee women, attaches particular importance to the issue of protection of women in armed conflicts. As a result of the ongoing aggression of Armenia, thousands of women have been forcefully expelled from their homes, hundreds were killed or taken hostage, and the whereabouts of some of them are still unknown. According to the estimates of the State Commission on Prisoners of War, Hostages and Missing Persons of Azerbaijan, the fate of about 255 women still remains unknown.

Recently, in July, as a result of targeted and deliberate attacking of civilians by armed forces of Armenia 2 years' old baby girl and her grandmother were killed.

We underline urgent need for adequate attention to prevention and combating gender-based violence in armed conflicts and post-conflict situations, especially within vulnerable groups, such as refugees and IDPs.

Against this background, the protection of women, as well as fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern against women and girls in the context of armed conflicts should be regarded as an important aspect of any comprehensive strategy to resolve conflicts and thus, should be properly addressed within the OSCE. In this regard, we recall, in particular the Ljubljana decision of 2005, where participating States agreed to take into account the important role and the particular needs of women and girls in implementing government policies on protection and durable solutions including voluntary return, resettlement, rehabilitation, (re)integration and repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons in safety and dignity.