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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE OSCE

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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

The meeting of the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 19-30 September, 2016

Opening session

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to express its gratitude to the German Chairmanship and ODIHR for convening the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We also wish to join previous speakers and thank distinguished panel for the opening remarks.

Germany took the helm of the OSCE Chairmanship at a time of deep crisis in the Organization. Systematic attempts to challenge the territorial integrity, sovereignty and internationally recognized borders of OSCE participating States, double standards and selective application of the Helsinki Final Act Principles, violation of inherent balance of three dimensions of OSCE's comprehensive security concept lie at the core of crisis.

We need more dialogue, mutual understanding and constructive engagement to overcome the crisis. The OSCE, due to its comprehensive security concept and broad participation represents a unique platform in this regard. It is with this in mind we remain of the view that the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, in particular, should provide an opportunity for genuine and constructive dialogue, as well as exchanging of practices through reviewing the implementation of the OSCE existing commitments. Only by doing so this fora can bring add-value to the overall work of OSCE and contribute to strengthening of trust and confidence.

Nevertheless, deliberations on the issues under the human dimension during previous years have revealed serious disagreements among the participating States not only over the issues under considerations, but also over the approach to them. Human Dimension which is an integral part of the comprehensive security concept in OSCE now divides participating States instead of bringing them together. In order to yield substantive results in third dimension we should aim at turning current challenges into opportunities.

OSCE institutions and field missions are important assets to the organization and while acting strictly in line with the provided mandates they have an important potential to diffuse tensions among the participating States. To that end Azerbaijan encourages the OSCE executive structures to act as bridge builders and utilize an entire toolbox of mandated activities, in particular a quiet diplomacy.

In situation when violations of fundamental rights of displaced population are still continue all over the OSCE region 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 do 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.

Tolerance and non-discrimination are important elements in the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. This linkage has been recognized by the OSCE participating States in the OSCE Decision adopted in Porto in 2002 and has become ever more acute in light of the recent increase of manifestations of discrimination and prejudice on the basis of religion. We have on numerous occasions expressed our deepest concern over the unfolding refugee crisis fueled by the armed conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. We are equally alarmed by and strongly condemn increased cases of religious intolerance, in particular Islamophobia, and attempts to associate religions or cultures with terrorism, as well as deliberate attempts in certain participating States to abuse the ongoing refugee crisis for narrow political interests.

With regard to the provisional list of participants to 2016 HDIM distributed only few minutes prior to the meeting we would like to once again express our regret that this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, was once again misused for promotion and propagation of the illegal separatist regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. It has been internationally recognized that this regime is the product of illegal use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan accompanied by heinous crimes, including ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

In this context, the participation of an NGO associated to and actively promoting the illegal separatist regime can by no means be in line with the principles that the OSCE stands for and therefore, diametrically contrary to the very aim of HDIM. The Azerbaijani side feels compelled to remind that in accordance with CSCE Helsinki Document of 1992, non-governmental organizations, which "resort to the use of violence or publicly condone terrorism or the use of violence", shall not be allowed to participate at the OSCE events.

In light of the above-mentioned, we regret that the ODIHR has failed to act in defending the core values and principles of the OSCE and took no step in response to the official request of the Azerbaijani side addressed to ODIHR last year to prevent obvious attempts to misuse the HDIM for promotion of the results of illegal use of force against the territorial integrity of the OSCE participating State.

It is within this context that the Delegation of Azerbaijan strongly urges the Director of ODIHR to take all necessary measures to stop such an unacceptable practice of admission of NGOs propagating separatist regimes to HDIMs. Failure to do so cannot but further undermine the credibility of this event.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.