



**Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan  
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting  
Working Session 9: Rule of Law I  
Warsaw, 23 September 2016  
As delivered by Fidan Mahmudova  
Embassy of Azerbaijan to Poland**

*Right of reply*

With regard to the intervention by the delegate of Armenia,

Situation is so paradoxical, as you can imagine: **Armenia occupied territory of a sovereign state, violated its territorial integrity, expelled local Azerbaijani population from the Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts, making more than one million people refugees and IDPs**, destroyed everything in the occupied lands, including historical, religious, cultural monuments and all the infrastructure, which was evidenced by the reports of two OSCE missions. Then Armenia has just pretended to engage in the negotiations process for more than 20 years. Moreover, Armenia periodically makes different provocations to make this process eternal. **One of these provocations took place this April**. Over 500 houses of Azerbaijani civilians were shelled from the Armenian artillery, more than 100 houses were destroyed, 10 civilians, including children, were killed.

Furthermore, in April this year armed forces of Armenia among numerous instances of deliberate shelling on civilians and civilian objects of Azerbaijan with artillery and large-caliber weapons have also used **shells containing chemicals such as white phosphorus**. One of such projectiles was shelled on Askipara village of the Tartar region of Azerbaijan, coincidentally it missed its prime target and landed on the cultivated cotton field and was found as an unexploded ordinance by Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action in May 2016. This case was observed and well documented during the visit to Askipara village of 20 representatives and military attachés from 13 countries, as well as field assistants of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference.

Consonant with general international humanitarian law, attacks on civilians or civilian objects as are attacks on forests or other kinds of plant cover (like cultivated area in Askipara village) with White Phosphorus shells are prohibited under the Protocol III on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons of the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW or CCWC) of 1980.

International organizations have a clear understanding of how this conflict must be solved. There is a supreme international body – United Nations Security Council. It is the highest international organization. The Security Council adopted four resolutions in early 1990s. These documents demand unconditional and immediate withdrawal of the occupant Armenian forces from Azerbaijan`s territory. These resolutions remain unfulfilled. Armenia disregards them and tries to create a new reality by artificially changing the administrative borders of former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and illegally resettling in that area. It is absolutely illegal. It is a crime, and this crime has continued up to the present time.

Armenia continues to insist on unrealistic annexationist claims and take actions that are aimed at destabilizing the situation on the ground, strengthening its military build-up in the occupied territories, illegally changing the demographic, cultural and physical character of the seized

lands, engaging in economic and other activities, including transfer of Armenian population into these territories, and ultimately consolidating the status-quo.

It is also Armenia that blocks all initiatives of OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, derails the negotiation process.

Armenia wants to keep our territories under control and to accuse Azerbaijan everywhere of violating something. **We are the aggrieved party. We did not occupy** anybody's territory. It is our territory, it is the 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's internationally-recognized territory, that has been under occupation. This is the reality. Therefore, I deemed it my duty to bring this to the attention of our colleagues once again.

The current status-quo and tensions along the line of contact do not serve the interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which is the most interested party in the soonest political settlement of the conflict.

The military occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan does not represent a solution and will never produce a political outcome desired by Armenia. The sooner Armenia reconciles with this reality, the earlier the conflict will be resolved and the countries and peoples in the region will benefit from the prospects of cooperation and economic development.