

25 September 2017



Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Working Session 13: Rule of Law II
Warsaw, 19 September 2017
As delivered by Fidan Mahmudova
Embassy of Azerbaijan to Poland

Right of Reply

Madam Chair,

My delegation raised a point of order during the intervention by the NGO representative from Azerbaijan, but regrettably, it was ignored.

Firstly, the appointment to which the representative of Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety has referred to in his intervention followed important constitutional changes made after a referendum. A referendum which was legal and legitimate and was organized in accordance with the national legislation and the Constitution of Azerbaijan.

The result of this referendum was considered by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as the one “expressing the willingness of the people of Azerbaijan to take a step forward towards safe, stable and sustainable development of their country and to target the establishment of a more efficient system of governance and the implementation of more meaningful reforms needed for the country to respond to the democratic and economic challenges it faces.”

As for the appointment itself, it was done solely based on the merits, as Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva has been an active Member of Parliament since 2005 and the head of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Her activities, contacts and tremendous impact go well beyond the borders of Azerbaijan.

Finally, while we do support the freedom of speech and expression, we find it regretful that, at times, these freedoms are misused by so-called experts from civil society to turn influential international for a, such as this one into chats that have no factual basis, nor proofs whatsoever.

And to conclude, with regards to the intervention by the US delegate - we would like to reiterate that there are no political prisoners in Azerbaijan, people mentioned in the statement have been arrested for committing certain crime offences.