



**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՊԱՏՎԻՐԱԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ**  
**DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Statement**

**in response to the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, and the Head of the High Level Planning Group delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1118th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
November 10, 2016**

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to warmly welcome the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group Ambassadors Igor Popov, James Warlick and Pierre Andrieu, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk and the Head of the HLPG, Colonel Hans Lampalzer to the Permanent Council and thank them for their comprehensive reports. We welcome Ambassador Stephane Visconti on assumption of the responsible mission of the Minsk Group Co-Chair and wish the outgoing Co-Chair Pierre Andrieu all the best in his endeavours.

We reiterate our full support for the agreed format of the Minsk group Co-chairmanship and our commitment to the peaceful resolution of the NK conflict.

As it was already mentioned last time the Co-Chairs appeared at the Permanent Council on April 5 in the immediate aftermath of the large scale military offensive unleashed against Nagorno-Karabakh. We appreciated their efforts aimed at de-escalating the situation. The use of force amid peace process highlighted certain realities.

First, it indicated that Azerbaijan used peaceful negotiations to create capacities aimed at military solution of the conflict.

Second, it revealed the true reasons behind the rejection of confidence and security building measures including strengthening OSCE presence and creation of the investigative mechanism.

Third, the atrocities perpetrated by Azerbaijani armed forces both against civilians and militaries with their subsequent glorifications indicated that Azerbaijani side did not merely crossed a line of contact but a red line further seriously eroding the calls of the Co-Chairs on preparation of the population to the peace. The tactic of terrorizing the population of Nagorno-Karabakh and attempts at discrediting all their activities should also be seen in the same context of pursuing a zero sum game.

Fourth, Azerbaijan tried to undermine the very foundations of the peace process by an attempt to denounce 1994 and 1995 ceasefire agreements which do not have any time limitations. We appreciate clear-cut message of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and their respective countries that reconfirmed the relevance and indispensable role of these agreements for peace process.

The confidence and security building measures outlined during the Summits of Vienna and St Petersburg are instrumental in contributing to the prevention of the further use of force and thus creating conducive environment for peace process.

Armenia is committed to the implementation of what has been announced and agreed upon at Vienna and St.Petersburg summits on strict adherence to 1994 and 1995 ceasefire agreements, creation of an investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations and expansion of the capacities of the PRCiO Office. Unfortunately Azerbaijan openly rejects implementation of those agreements and the letter of the Delegation of Azerbaijan, distributed yesterday, was yet another confirmation of that fact. Strengthening of the capacities of the PRCiO Office does not mean mere mechanical increase of its staff, but rather increase of its monitoring activities on the ground in the conflict zone. Every meeting and agreements reached therein are meaningful as far as there is a record of their implementation. Azerbaijan's record in this regard is by far not positive, which certainly impacts the whole negotiations process.

The ongoing ceasefire violations continue claiming casualties and urgency of implementation of these confidence and security building measures is essential both for creating necessary environment for peace process and preventing further casualties on the ground.

Azerbaijan complements the explicit use of force by implicit threat to use the force. The intentional ceasefire violations have been accompanied by the large scale military exercises which occur in very special timing. For instance, just before St. Petersburg Summit Azerbaijan held large scale military exercise and same will happen in couple of days before the Hamburg Ministerial Council and afterwards of the visit of the Co-Chairs to the region. According to Azerbaijani defence Ministry the forthcoming military exercises will involve 60 thousand troops, almost entire personnel strength of armed forces, more than 150 tanks, 700 units of artillery and more than 50 units of military aviation, and it is apparently being held in violation of Vienna Document.

We are convinced that the threat or use of force should be unequivocally condemned in a specified and clear manner. The people of Nagorno-Karabakh have been main target of the large scale military offensive of Azerbaijan. Their right of existence on their ancestral homeland was put under the question. Under these circumstances, the realization of the right of people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination becomes more than relevant today and it constitutes central issue in the negotiation process.

That being said, let me highlight that Armenia is committed to peaceful resolution of the conflict based on the three principles outlined by the OSCE Co-Chairs in their entirety.

In our reply to the President of the ICRC a couple of weeks ago we stressed that both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh continue to cooperate with the ICRC and its offices in Yerevan and Stepanakert both in regard to the exchange of information on missing persons and also other areas of activities of the ICRC. We also outlined a number of concrete cases of open violation of international humanitarian law by Azerbaijan, all of which remained unanswered. We also underlined that attempts to politicize the issue and inflate the number of missing persons for purely propagandistic aims as well as the refusal of Azerbaijan to cooperate at the level of relevant state commissions on missing persons both with NK and Armenia are complicating progress in regard to exchange of information on missing persons.

The Delegation of Armenia took note of the report of the distinguished colonel Hans Lampalzer. We encourage the HLPG to continue its activities strictly following its mandate on elaborating military peacekeeping operation.

In reaction to the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Turkey, I would like to emphasize, that, yes, Turkey is a member of the Minsk Group on the paper, but in reality Turkey is violating its OSCE commitments and playing a very negative and destructive role in the process, by fully supporting one party to the conflict, keeping sealed its borders with Armenia and blockading it not only on the ground, but also in international fora, refusing to ratify protocols on establishment of diplomatic relations and development of relations between two countries, signed in Zurich 7 years ago.

We call on Turkey to reconsider its policy in regard to the NK conflict.

Thank You.