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Hügelgasse 2, A-1130 Vienna Tel: +43 (1) 403 13 22 Fax: +43 (1) 403 13 23 E-mail: [vienna@mission.mfa.gov.az](mailto:vienna@mission.mfa.gov.az)

PC.DEL/285/11  
29 March 2011

ENGLISH only

### **Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan at the 854<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council**

Mr. Chairman,

I have one issue to raise here today.

During his speech at the 852<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, the foreign minister of the Republic of Armenia Mr. Nalbandyan has specifically accused Azerbaijan of rejecting the proposals on withdrawing the snipers.

With regard to this, I have to stress that the issue of snipers has a speculative context within which, the Armenian side is trying to create a false impression of the real situation existing on the ground. It is well-known that the territories of Azerbaijan are occupied by Armenia, and maintaining its military presence on the territory of Azerbaijan, the Armenian side on a regular basis violates the cease-fire established on the Line of Confrontation.

There is one difference, which deserves the attention, that while on the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by the Armenian forces, there are no Armenian settlements close to the Line of Confrontation, on the other side there are civil Azerbaijani population living in close vicinity to the Line of Confrontation. More and more losses are registered among Azerbaijani peaceful civilian population caused by the fire from the Armenian side. This is only with sorrow, regret and fury that we react to this fact, especially, to the death of nine-year old child on March 8, in the Orta Garvand village of the Aghdam region.

The nine-year old child from the Azerbaijani village was killed by deadly bullet of an Armenian sniper. We regret particularly that this child was killed right after the meeting of the Presidents of the both sides arranged with the assistance of the President of the Russian Federation, where a statement was issued concerning the humanitarian aspects. So, we reject the accusations addressed by the Armenian side and we urge them to put an end to the barbaric acts of killing innocent civilians, including the children.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.