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DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

Statement

**Delivered by the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the
871st Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation
December 13 2017**

In response to the statement delivered by the delegation of Azerbaijan,

We would like to remind the pS that last time when the Armenian delegation raised the issue of unnotified large scale military exercise held by Azerbaijan in the vicinity of the line of contact the Azerbaijani delegation stated that the concerns of our delegation are not legitimate and that Armenia hides behind the existing OSCE instruments.

Thus, we would like to stress that Azerbaijan exhausted its right to raise any kind of concern regarding the compliance of commitments by any other state, particularly Armenia, because it has been gravely violating and disregarding its commitments vis-à-vis Arms Control and CSBMs in the course of the last decades. In saying this we could have put a full stop here. However, in line with our constructive position in the OSCE I would like to inform the forum on the following:

On December 1st the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan paid a working visit to Nagorno-Karabakh, to attend the consultation with the participation of Defence ministers of the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and other high-ranking command staff. Such meetings are traditionally held at the end of each year. The visit of the President and other high level officials took place upon the invitation of the authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The military exercise mentioned by the Azerbaijani delegate was conducted by the unified command of the NK Defence Army. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia were not part of the military exercise.

In the statement Azerbaijani delegation presented the exercise in distorted manner, selectively putting together pieces of information from mass media and official websites. I encourage the Azerbaijani delegation to base their claims exclusively on the official information contained primarily in the website of the Ministry of Defence of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Though Nagorno-Karabakh is not bound by the Vienna Document, however, it should be also mentioned that the exercises were much below the thresholds which are subject to prior notification. If Azerbaijani delegation is interested in more details regarding the subject of the mentioned military exercise, we would advise to initiate direct military to military contacts with the NK Defence Army using also relevant OSCE documents in this regard.

Thank you.