



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting,
Working session 11 “Humanitarian issues and other commitments”
Warsaw, 18 September 2017

Right of Reply to the Delegation of Armenia

Mr. Chairperson,

Armenia’s speculations about the individual or collective rights of the residents in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan is nothing but another futile attempt to cover up its annexationist policy and attests to the direct role of Armenia in unlawful use of force and occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan.

Armenia itself violates the basic human rights and freedoms of the Azerbaijanis expelled from the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and other occupied territories by changing the demographic composition in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan existing before the outbreak of the conflict through transferring Armenians into those territories and preventing the return to their homes and properties of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, along with the destruction or misappropriation of their property, exploitation of natural resources and changing the historical and cultural character of the occupied territories. Such actions can in no way be consistent with human rights standards.

Armenia cannot demand privileges at the very core of which are gross and systematic violations of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, and the discriminatory denial of fundamental rights and freedoms with respect to the Azerbaijani population expelled from their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan as a result of Armenia’s aggression against Azerbaijan.

None of the commitments on human rights protection constitute preferential treatment for any State, group or person, or may be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or perform any action in contravention of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, other obligations of international law or the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, including the principle of territorial integrity of States.

The population of Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan consists of two parts - the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities. Azerbaijani community is expelled through use of force and the Armenian community still remains in those territories with arms. Both of them are citizens of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan’s position in conflict settlement is consistent and is based on inclusion, integration and equality. The human rights and fundamental freedoms of both the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan shall be equally protected. People who used to live in those territories have equal rights with those who are still in these territories. They have to return back to their homes and start defining their common future in this region on an equal

basis. But, a number of important steps must be taken to reach this stage, starting with demilitarizing the region and withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as demanded by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Whereas, Armenia's position is based on exclusion and discrimination on ethnic grounds, refusing even to accept the existence of the Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, denying the Azerbaijani population, expelled from this region and other occupied territories through use of force, the right to return to their places of habitual residence and enjoy their rights. Armenia's position is aimed at legitimization of the results of unlawful use of force and ethnic cleansing, which Azerbaijan and the international community will never accept.

Thank you.