

## **OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum 1<sup>st</sup> Preparatory Meeting Vienna 14-15 February 2022**

### **Right of Reply by the Delegation of Armenia**

It was not my intention to take the floor. However, I'm compelled to make the following remarks in reaction to the statement delivered by the Azerbaijani panelist.

It is very regrettable that we face a situation when this platform is being abused and misused to put forward narrow national agenda and legitimize the massive use of force against Artsakh and its people.

Today, the keynote speaker from Azerbaijan referred to some activities being carried out in the territories which felt under the control of Azerbaijan **as a result of the war of aggression and massive use of force against Artsakh and the people of Artsakh.**

During 44-day war of aggression Azerbaijani armed forces and foreign terrorist fighters deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure and peaceful settlements with the aim to resolve the NK conflict by force. More than one year after the war of aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan, the situation remains tense. In violation of international humanitarian law and the provisions of the trilateral ceasefire statement, Azerbaijan refuses to release all Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives and conducts mock trial. Since 12 May 2021, the armed forces of Azerbaijan continue strengthening their illegal presence on the sovereign territory of Armenia. Azerbaijan continues to distort the provisions of the trilateral ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020 in order to justify its aggressive policy against Artsakh and Armenia.

The use of force has never been a way to peace in general and in particular in our region. The realities created as a result of the use of force by Azerbaijan against Artsakh and its people cannot create a basis for lasting and sustainable peace. Peace can only be achieved in our region through a comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which must include the determination of the status of Artsakh on the basis of the realization by the people of Artsakh of their inalienable right to self-determination.

As far as the issue of roads is concerned I would like to emphasize that the agreements on opening the roads and communications are enshrined in the Statements of November 9, 2020, January 11, 2021, and November 26, 2021, where there is no obligation, condition or agreement for the Republic of Armenia to provide Azerbaijan with a corridor or a road with corridor logic. Thus, Azerbaijani demands on the so called "corridor" is yet another illustration of territorial claims against Armenia. We urge Azerbaijan to refrain

from provocative rhetoric and actions and not hinder the implementation of the agreements on unblocking all economic and transport communications in the region.

We call upon the Polish Chairmanship in the future to refrain from extending invitation to keynote speakers whose main aim is to abuse the discussions. Finally, the delegation of Armenia may deem it appropriate to reconsider its activities in this dimension.

### **Second right of reply**

The statement by the representative of Azerbaijan is very illustrative and comes once again to confirm our concerns. It clearly demonstrates that a diplomat has lost the sense of reality and openly celebrates the use of massive force against Artsakh and its people. Therefore, I do not see any sense continuing this useless polemic.