



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

**PERMANENT MISSION
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CYPRUS

1449th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Agenda Item 4, Review of Current Issues: “Situation in and around Nagorno-Karabakh”

Vienna, 9 November 2023

Mr Chair,

The Republic of Cyprus fully subscribes to the statement made by the European Union, but I would like to add some brief remarks in our national capacity.

We remain extremely concerned on the situation unfolded with the mass exodus of Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh, following Azerbaijan’s military operation in September and the nine months-long illegal blockade imposed on the Lachin corridor. The use of force to resolve disputes is not acceptable and we deeply and unequivocally condemn all such actions.

It is imperative to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all displaced people, including their undeniable right to return safely to their homes without discrimination or fear, in security. We shall not remain silent on this. Humanitarian support both for the displaced as well as for those still in Karabakh, must be fully ensured without delay and in a comprehensive way.

Similarly, it goes without saying that full respect and protection of the history and cultural heritage of Karabakh Armenians shall be protected and preserved. Azerbaijan has a responsibility to ensure all the above and provide substantial guarantees in this respect.

Mr Chair, I feel obliged to reiterate our full respect to the sovereignty, inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia. There is no room for double standards on this. At the same time, Azerbaijan must reaffirm its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of Armenia, in line with the 1991 Almaty Declaration.

Further escalation in the area must be avoided and respect to international law must prevail. We have a collective responsibility to this end.

Thank you Mr Chair.