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

**Statement**

**On the Arrest of journalist Rauf Mirkadirov and harassment of Leyla Yunus  
delivered by the Delegation of Armenia at the 999th Meeting of the OSCE**

**Permanent Council**

May 08, 2014

We would like to share the concern of the EU delegation on further deterioration of human rights situation in Azerbaijan.

The Delegation of Armenia would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council that Azerbaijani journalist Rauf Mirkadirov and Director of the Institute of Peace and Democracy Leyla Yunus were participating in public diplomacy joint projects with the Armenian non-governmental organizations aimed at strengthening trust and confidence between the Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples. They had jointly created an Armenian-Azerbaijani site, which serves as a platform for dialogue between the societies.

We took note that the Chief of local Police overtly accepted the fact of intimidation and ill treatment of Leyla Yunus and justified it by attributing to her an Armenian origin.

In undertaking these actions, Azerbaijan clearly violates number of the OSCE commitments related to freedom of expression and tolerance and non discrimination.

Moreover, Azerbaijan does not honour its commitments on the necessity of humanitarian contacts between Armenians and Azerbaijanis reached at the highest political level.

We call on Azerbaijan to stop arresting and intimidating representatives of its civil society who dare to raise their voices to advocate peace, mutual understanding and reconciliation. Reconciliation and peace are not only Armenian but universal values, and those Azerbaijanis who share these values are certainly not Armenian spies but responsible representatives of their own society.

Thank You.