



PC.DEL/358/09

15 May 2009

ENGLISH only

**PERMANENT MISSION
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY,
AMBASSADOR YUSUF BULUÇ
AT THE
761TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
(14 MAY 2009)**

Mr. Chairman,

The 15th anniversary of the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh marks an event worthy of commemoration. The hostilities which resulted in thousands of victims were stopped but untold human misery continues to this day.

While not understating its significance, we see it as an intervention to create a pause and room for finding a lasting political solution to the conflict. We do not take the fact that it has lasted 15 years necessarily as an end or achievement in itself.

The same anniversary as in the preceding 15 years drives home the sad fact that despite all efforts of the international community, a solution continues to elude us.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict accords the region a distinct political character that sharply contrasts with the rest of the OSCE geography and thus renders it a status of unequal and divided security.

On various previous occasions we have underlined the opportunities that the region is being deprived of on account of this conflict. We do not need to repeat them today. As highlighted in the Prague Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, an initiative which we welcome, those opportunities are broad and tangible.

We should rather take the present deliberation of the Permanent Council as an exhortation to intensify and sharpen the focus of efforts by the Minsk Group countries, not least its Co-Chairmen and the wider OSCE community designed to promote a political solution. Let us make today's review of the situation in and around Nagorno-Karabakh to mark our common dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, renewed commiseration with the victims and their continuing suffering. In the context of the human dimension of our agenda the rights of uprooted and displaced persons to their decent and dignified exercise deserve no less priority or focus than, for example, national minorities or other vulnerable groups.

My government as a member of the Minsk Group is firm in its determination to continue its contribution to the process, both within and outside the Minsk Group,

communicate directly with parties to the conflict at several levels to bring its positive influence to bear on this challenging task.

Our national input is premised on an assessment that the distance covered in the process is measurable and significant but not yet far enough nor has the required speed.

The successful visit paid by the Prime Minister of Turkey to Azerbaijan which he concluded yesterday was a further evidence of such determination which we hope to be a stimulus and a contribution reinforcing and complementing the efforts by the parties and the Co-Chairmen.

As to the latter, let me conclude by reassuring the Co-chairs that in the conduct of their leadership role they are not alone.

Thank you.