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## STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

### 981th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council January 23, 2014

*in response to the Chairs of the Economic and Environmental Committee and  
the Human Dimension Committee*

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to welcome Ambassador Algayerova and Ambassador Kvile to the Permanent Council meeting.

We congratulate Ambassador Algayerova on her reappointment as Chair of Economic and Environmental Committee and Ambassador Kvile for assuming the position of the Chair of the Human Dimension Committee and thank both Ambassadors for outlining the work plans of the Committees for the year 2014.

Our Delegation looks forward to working with the Chairs on activities within the economic and environmental and human dimensions.

Mindful of the role of the OSCE as a platform to discuss issues, that have or could have an impact on the security of participating States, and to share best practices, we believe that the priorities set by the Chairmanship will provide the participating States with an opportunity to exchange their best practices in preventing and responding to natural disasters.

We took note of the intention to bring the issues of natural hazard-triggered disasters and technological accidents to the agenda of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum, which is, in our view increasingly important especially when it comes to disasters, the impact of which can go beyond the borders of a state where they occur. We believe that due consideration in this regard shall be given also to the idea of the Chairmanship that "there should be a shift from disaster response to prevention". This topic is even more significant taking into account that some participating states are located in the natural-hazard-prone zones.

We hope that within the established priority of the chairmanship to have discussions on reliable management of natural disasters and accidents, risk reduction and prevention of mismanagement of infrastructures which during disasters might cause tragic and

irreversible effect for the OSCE region will represent an essential and inextricable component of the targeted agenda of the second dimension.

With regard to the regional cooperation as a tool to strengthen disaster resilience, we would like to note that Azerbaijan enjoys bilateral cooperation with many OSCE participating States. As far as the multilateral regional cooperation is concerned, we support this format of cooperation based on the respect for the relevant norms and principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Mr. Chairperson,

Based on the OSCE concept of comprehensive and collective security, balanced approach in addressing all three dimensions should be an integral part of the OSCE work.

The issue of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot be considered outside of the context of security environment and threats. This linkage was unequivocally recognized in the OSCE cornerstone document, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975.

We took note of intention of the Chairmanship to focus on implementation of existing commitments relating to human dimension, among which we would like specially put on emphasize on those related to violation of rights of refugees and IDPs.

The problem of internally displaced persons and refugees caused not only by natural or man-made disasters, violations of human rights, but also by inter- and intra-state armed conflicts in the OSCE area represents one of the most serious challenges OSCE community has been faced up with over the last decade. Millions of people in the OSCE participating States have been forcibly expelled from their homes or fled ethnic violence and hostilities.

The Republic of Azerbaijan with more than one million of refugees and IDPs deprived of the elementary living conditions and exercise of the most fundamental human rights, including the right to live in dignity in their homes and on their native lands gives utmost importance to the issue of protection and promotion of rights of this vulnerable group of people.

In this regard, we would like to refer to the efforts of Switzerland and Norway to foster discussions on the issue of refugees and IDPs during the 2011 and 2012. We hope that Switzerland and Norway will continue thorough discussions on this critical issue. With this in mind, we deem it useful to hold one of HD events in 2014 on rights of refugees and IDPs in order to provide follow up to previous discussions and to ensure active involvement of civil society representatives to these discussions.

On the issues of the review of human dimension events our Delegation would like to state the following.



We appreciate efforts of the Ukrainian Chairmanship and the work done within the Informal Working Group to move forward the discussions on the optimization of the events in Human Dimension.

We are looking forward for follow up of those discussions and hope to achieve tangible results meeting the expectations and needs of all participating States.

It is our strong belief that the OSCE should pursue the improvement of efficiency of existing mechanisms. Therefore, the work of our organization should focus not on the quantity, but rather on quality of HD events.

All issues related to the review process of human dimension events should be addressed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and with due consideration of the proposals of all participating States.

Last year our Delegation suggested initiating discussions on the assessment of the role, implementation of mandate and working methods of the OSCE institutions, especially ODIHR. We hope that Swiss chairmanship, consecutively with Serbian Chairmanship will follow up this request.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we would like once again to thank Ambassador Algayerova and Ambassador Kvile for addressing the Permanent Council today and wish them and their able teams every success in 2014.

Thank you.