



Right of Reply

**In Response to the Statements delivered by the Delegation of Azerbaijan under the current issue on Victory Day as delivered by Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia, at the 1184th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
May 3, 2018**

Mr. Chair,

Our delegation has already joined the statement delivered by Kazakhstan on the Victory Day and my current statement is an exercise of the right of reply to the statement just made by the Azerbaijani delegation.

We took note that Azerbaijan associates the Victory Day with certain events occurred during Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the ground of date coincidence, notwithstanding that there is almost 60 years difference between these events.

We know that the highest political leadership writes history in Azerbaijan in rather retrospective manner and this statement is a good case in point. Also, we understand that Armenians are reference point for Azerbaijani leadership to determine history of human kind.

However, if Azerbaijani side sees relevance between the Victory Day and events which are celebrated in Artsakh as the liberation of Shushi we deem it appropriate to add certain clarification here.

The indigenous Armenian population of Shushi was massacred by Azerbaijani army and the city itself was set on fire in 1920, which paved way for subsequent 70 years old occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In 1991 and 1992 Shushi was turned into a military stronghold of the Azerbaijani occupation army, from where the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh was constantly and indiscriminately shelled, causing significant casualties among civilian population.

Therefore, the liberation of Shushi city on May 9, 1992 has been a clear manifestation of the right of people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-defence and was extremely important for ensuring very survival of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh on their ancestral homeland.

The claims of Azerbaijani delegation that the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on the liberation of Shushi are completely false.

In response to another statement of Azerbaijani delegation, I would like to stress that my delegation is ready to discuss each and every episode of the history of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict under a proper current issue.

The attempt of the Azerbaijani delegation to hijack this current issue on the Victory Day by putting forward its irrelevant conflict perceptions charged with false allegations is totally unacceptable.

Thank you.