



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2017 Annual Security Review Conference

Opening Session- European Security

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes H.E. Minister Kurz, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and thanks him for his statement. We express our gratitude to the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship for organization of this year's Annual Security Review Conference. We also thank distinguished keynote speakers for their interesting presentations.

Our discussions take place amidst serious crisis of security and trust in the OSCE area multiplied by turmoil in the neighboring regions. Ongoing violations of the Helsinki Final Act Principles related to respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of frontiers over past two decades continue to be the major threat to our common vision of a security community without conflicts, dividing lines and zones with different level of security.

In parallel, security and stability of the OSCE region are under growing pressure of numerous transnational threats, notably terrorism, violent extremism, aggressive separatism and radicalization, forced displacement of people due to conflicts and occupation of territories, as well as political-military turmoil in neighboring regions. Rising trend of intolerance and discrimination, especially on the ground of ethnicity and religion, such as Islamophobia challenges our common future. Xenophobic public rhetoric and discriminatory restrictive policies by some participating States is a source of serious concern.

Resurgence of block-to-block thinking in European affairs, which should have been abandoned years ago, put under question the indivisibility of security in the OSCE area. Intensified competition and build-ups between opposing politico-military alliances and economic blocks result in further erosion of trust, and are accompanied by attempts to subjugate the OSCE agenda for promotion of political interests of these blocks.

Along with its detrimental effect on cooperative security concept of OSCE, such a tendency poses specific challenges for the non-aligned, non-block participating States. It is therefore of utmost importance that issues related to enlargement of politico-military and economic blocks and its impact on the European security in general, and in particular on the non-aligned participating States should be in the focus of discussions within the Structured Dialogue. In this regards, we once again underline the importance of comprehensive dialogue with those non-aligned states and elaboration of guarantees for respecting their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Azerbaijan, as one of the non-block OSCE participating States, firmly believes in central role of the OSCE in pan-European security architecture. The only way out of current crisis of security is re-dedication by the participating States to the philosophy of the Helsinki Final

Act and restoration of unconditional respect for the Principles guiding inter-state relations as enshrined therein. Our shared commitments contained in the OSCE documents establishes clear standards for participating States' treatment of each other and of all individuals within their territories. Therefore, all OSCE commitments should be equally applied to all participating States without any exception, double standards, geographic or other preferences.

We also reiterate our principled position regarding the necessity of observing balance inherent in all three dimensions of security. Any attempts that would undermine such a delicate balance either by participating States or executive structures of the OSCE inspired by short-sighted interests will undoubtedly be detrimental for the future of the Organization as a whole.

In conclusion, we thank once again our distinguished keynote speakers for their contributions and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.