



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1159th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
5 October 2017**

in response to report by ODIHR on HDIM

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan welcomes Ingibjörg Solrun Gísladóttir, Director of ODIHR to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the report on the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM).

We recall that HDIM was designed as a forum to discuss implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments by participating States and civil society representatives, which are eligible to participate at OSCE events. HDIM must remain so.

Failure of ODIHR to prevent the abuse of HDIM modalities over the past years led to deviation of HDIM from its initial purpose. It is a matter of increasing concern that HDIM has turned into a tool to promote non-recognized illegal regimes. Lack of consensus on criteria for participation of civil society organizations at HDIM, should not be used for allowing propaganda of unlawful separatist regimes and their agents registered on the territory of some participating States. In spite of our differences on interpretation of HDIM modalities, nothing in the OSCE documents entitles ODIHR to allow demonstration of open disrespect and infringement upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of participation States and inviolability of their internationally recognized borders.

In this regard, it is unacceptable that ODIHR distributes documents, announcing HDIM side event with participation of an agent of the illegal separatist regime established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Only after protest of Azerbaijan, the person, who was not even registered for HDIM, was removed from the list of panelists of the said side event. Nevertheless, another agent of the separatists, who registered for HDIM as a member of an NGO, participated on the panel of this side event and contrary to his registration as an NGO, presented himself at that event as a representative of this separatist entity.

Allowing propagation of unlawful separatist regimes at OSCE events is contrary to the OSCE principles, commitments and our collective pledge in Bucharest Ministerial decision of 2001 on combating terrorism, where we committed to identify and address various social, economic, political and other factors, including violent separatism and extremism, through all relevant OSCE instruments and structures.

The Bucharest Plan of Action and CSCE Helsinki Document of 1992, provide solid ground and justification for ODIHR to elaborate specific measures to make sure that non-governmental organizations, wishing to attend HDIM, focus on human dimension commitments of participating States and not on propagating illegal separatist regimes.

We would like to recall that upon adoption of Ministerial Council decisions on appointment of the heads of OSCE institutions in July 2017, the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan made interpretative statement underlining that the OSCE executive structures and field missions are common assets of all 57 OSCE participating States, providing that they act in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with their respective mandates and by no means harm the legitimate interests of participating States. We made it clear that principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency, as well as scrupulous implementation of their respective mandates by heads of the institutions and field missions are the prerequisites for extending collective support of participating States to the activities of OSCE institutions and field missions.

Silence and consent of ODIHR for participation of agents of separatist regimes and NGOs affiliated with them at HDIM already necessitates review of modalities of this human dimension event. In this regard, the future of HDIM depends not only from the participating States who express concern with regard to such abuse of HDIM, like Azerbaijan, but also from those States who promote non-recognized illegal entities and allow NGOs affiliated with them to register and operate and get financial assistance on their territories.

We recall that during the appointment of Director of ODIHR, the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship in its interpretative statement called for “the need to address any friction through dialogue” and expressed its readiness to facilitate such dialogue whenever necessary. We expect from the Chairmanship and ODIHR to fulfill this pledge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.