



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
1161<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council,  
19 October 2017**

*in response to the President of the OSCE PA*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes Ms. Christine Muttonen, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, to the Permanent Council and thanks her for insightful intervention.

Azerbaijan strongly believes in indispensable role of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting dialogue and cooperation in the OSCE area and beyond. We are of strong view that strengthening cooperation and coordination mechanisms between the Assembly and the governmental part of the Organization is ever more important in light of increased complexity of security threats and challenges facing the OSCE area. This should be done with full respect for established working methods and procedures with a view to finding synergies in overcoming current deteriorating situation in pan-European security affairs marked with diminishing trust and confidence among the participating States.

The OSCE PA is a significant asset of our organization for generating solutions to numerous threats and challenges to security and stability in our region. Its potential needs to be explored to the full. It is within this understanding that we welcome the establishment of the Silk Road Support Group within the Assembly as an important practical step towards gearing momentum for cooperation in the OSCE area.

We are pleased with the results of the Annual Session held in Minsk where parliamentarians across the OSCE region agreed to the Declaration covering full spectrum of pressing issues occupying our agenda. The protracted conflicts were in the focus of discussions as the imminent threat to security and stability of entire OSCE region. The OSCE PA reaffirmed its principled position with regard to settlement of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE area on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States involved. Furthermore, the Assembly reiterated its call for stronger political will to address the problems of refugees and IDPs reaffirming their inalienable right to return to their homes in safety and dignity.

The relevant provisions of declarations adopted by the Assembly form solid framework for activities of the PA with regard to the settlement of conflicts in the OSCE area. This should guide PA officials, including the Special Representative, in their conflict-related activities. No step in this highly sensitive domain can be taken without prior consultation with and explicit consent of the conflict-affected participating State, and strict adherence to transparency and impartiality.

Mme. President,

Our Delegation highly values high-level political dialogue and exchange of opinions you had conducted with the leadership of Azerbaijan during your last visit in September. Maintaining such dialogue and developing understanding on many critical issues affecting OSCE participating States is important for building trust and strengthening security in our region.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to wish Mme. Muttonen every success in her future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.