



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1109th Special Meeting of the Permanent Council,
20 July 2016**

*in response to the report of the
Chairperson of Informal Working Group
focusing on the Issues of Migration and Refugee flows*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan joins previous speakers in expressing our gratitude to Mr. Claude Wild, Chairperson of the Informal Working Group focusing on the Issues of Migration and Refugee flows for his able stewardship of the work of the IWG and preparation of the report. We took note of the Report and would like to share our views in this regard.

The report identifies several pertinent areas related to displacement and outlines several recommendations for participating States, OSCE Secretariat and institutions, as well as field missions. These recommendations deserve focused attention of the OSCE. Indeed, massive displacement of people in the OSCE area and its neighborhood is a serious challenge for our common security and stability. We share the assessment of the report that the implications of this displacement for regional stability, cooperation and development are vast. This necessitates coordinated and streamlined approach by the OSCE on the basis of its comprehensive security concept.

We are of principled view that OSCE's approach to the matter must be comprehensive encompassing all manifestations of forceful displacement and should be exclusively based on our agreed OSCE commitments. It is within this context that we underline the necessity of incorporating the issue of internal displacement into the ongoing deliberations. As the report points out, large number of IDPs affects several OSCE participating States and this important issue must be addressed by the Organization. Without that any undertaking of the OSCE can hardly be comprehensive accommodating concerns of all OSCE participating States.

We duly acknowledge the importance of protection, combatting crime, border management, successful integration and solidarity and partnership in dealing with massive involuntary flow of people. At the same time, we are of strong view that adequate attention must be also paid to addressing the root causes of the phenomenon. War, armed conflict, civil strife and grave human rights violations are major reasons of displacement. We recall the report of the UN Secretary General entitled *"In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrant"* that "individuals have a right to remain in their homes and the international community should do everything possible to ensure that people are not forced to abandon their homes or

communities in search of safety or survival". This approach should be also integrated into OSCE's activities.

Ensuring safe and dignified return of the displaced people is of equal importance. Such a return of displaced people is not only the inalienable right of affected persons, it also represents the most sustainable way of tackling the challenges stemmed from involuntary movements. In this context, it is worthwhile to recall that in Istanbul Summit Document of 1999 the participating States rejected any policy of ethnic cleansing or mass expulsion and reaffirmed their commitment, *inter alia*, to facilitate the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons in dignity and safety. It also remains our shared commitment to pursue without discrimination the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons in their places of origin.

We further recall the recommendation of the UN SG in his above-mentioned report that investing in reconciliation and reconstruction to make it possible for refugees to return home voluntarily in safety and dignity is of paramount importance.

Unfortunately, these issues have not been reflected in the report of the IWG. We underline the necessity of incorporating these issues into any initiative aimed at crafting an OSCE response to massive displacement. Our Delegation remains open for constructive engagement with all interested parties to that end.

In conclusion, we once again express our gratitude to our Distinguished Swiss Colleague and his team for their dedication and hard work and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.