



**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
63rd Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Permanent Council,
19 October 2016**

revisiting the 1996 OSCE Framework for Arms Control

Mme. Chairperson,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan joins previous speakers in warmly welcoming Ambassador Francisco Seixas da Costa and Ambassador Susanne Baumann to our meeting. We thank them for their insightful presentations. We are equally grateful to OSCE German Chairmanship and Portuguese Chairmanship of FSC for dedicating today's discussion to a very important and relevant topic, such as the future of pan-European arms control and CSBM regimes.

It is harsh reality in 20 years since the adoption of OSCE Framework for Arms Control, very little has been achieved for realization of our vision of OSCE area that is free from conflicts, dividing lines and zones with different level of security. On the contrary, the security environment has become even more complex due to emergence of new threats and challenges while space for meaningful dialogue and cooperation among the participating States continues to shrink.

In Lisbon, all OSCE participating States agreed to develop the framework for arms control that would ensure complementarity of OSCE-wide and regional arms control and confidence-and-security-building measures with a view to strengthening the indivisibility of security in the OSCE area. To that end, we have collectively set aims, *inter alia*, to address inter-state conflicts affecting security of the OSCE area, as well as ensure that the presence of foreign troops on the territory of another state is in conformity with international law and host-nation consent principle.

Existence of unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area is grim manifestation of the failure to achieve progress in these directions. The conflicts are direct consequences of gross violations of basic principles underlying the letter and spirit of the arms control and CSBMs regimes, such as respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-use or threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Further delay in their resolution undermines the integrity of the area of application and poses serious challenges to implementation of arms control and CSBM measures.

Due to the conflicts, part of internationally recognized territories of participating States remain beyond legitimate control and have been effectively turned into grey zones for accumulation of undeclared, unaccounted and undeclared equipment and ammunition. These territories are used by the occupying State to conceal its military potential from existing arms control mechanisms and in turn, undermine transparency and predictability, which should exclusively be reciprocal and verifiable.

We are of strong view that in our deliberations on future of pan-European arms control and CSBMs regimes the issue of unresolved conflicts and their adverse effects should be adequately addressed and legitimate security interests of the States with conflict affected territories should be taken into account.

It is with this understanding that we continue to support initiatives aimed at overcoming the current impasse. Any future undertaking in this direction should aim at strengthening indivisibility of security in the OSCE area with due attention to legitimate needs and concerns of non-block, non-aligned participating States.

In our view the future negotiations on European conventional arms control regime should be based on respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States, strict adherence to the principles of non-use or threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any Participant (State Party) and host-nation consent, while serving to elimination of harsh consequences of existing conflicts for the implementation of the current regime.

In conclusion, we thank again to the distinguished guest speakers for their presence at today's discussions and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Thank you, Mme. Chairperson.