



Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1390th Meeting of the Permanent Council,
22 September 2022

Right of Reply to the Delegation of Armenia

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to exercise our right of reply to the Delegation of Armenia. Needless to say that we categorically reject the title of the current issue raised by this country, as well as the tone and allegations made by its representative. These allegations, full of a standard set of fabrications, distortions and deceptions, demonstrate how far Armenia is from complying with its international obligations and from taking steps in good faith for promoting peace, stability and cooperation in our region. We have responded to these worn-out allegations and unfounded accusations on a number of occasions. It makes no sense to respond to all of them today.

However, there are a few points to pick. First, on allegations of Armenia regarding the opening of fire by Azerbaijan's armed forces on 21 September. This is another disinformation to create ground for Armenia's provocation attempt which happened tonight, at about 2 a.m., as Armenia's armed forces subjected to fire the units of Azerbaijan's armed forces in the direction of the Kalbajar region at the state border, using large-calibre weapons, grenade launchers, and mortars, and by mining ravine gaps in these areas. As a result of response measures, the Armenian side was forced to retreat.

Furthermore, another incident at the state border happened in the direction of Zangilan region. Reportedly, three members of military volunteers union of Armenia "Erkrapa" attacked one of the posts of Azerbaijan's armed forces. Armenian side through military channels actually apologized for the incident and said that these military volunteers were under the influence of alcohol.

Second, Azerbaijan is on the record, including in this Permanent Council, to push for concrete results on all three tracks forming the agenda of bilateral discussions between Azerbaijan and Armenia, namely delimitation and demarcation of the state border; soonest conclusion of a peace treaty based on the five basic principles grounded in international law presented by Azerbaijan; and opening of transport communications in the region, which will contribute to the post-conflict normalization of relations between the two countries. It is Armenia that tries to backtrack from and obstruct the process of normalization, and to evade from implementation of the obligations it assumed, as was the case in Brussels on 31 August and its aftermath.

Third, it is ironic and pathetic that, Armenia – the country which unleashed aggression against Azerbaijan, held the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan under occupation for almost 30 years, carried out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale and committed other heinous crimes during the war – now enthusiastically talks about and appeals to the very norms and principles that it has consistently violated and undermined in the hope of endless impunity.

References by Armenia to the principles of international law, such as territorial integrity are particularly astonishing, given that this country even today disregards the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by refusing to fully withdraw the remnants of its illegally present armed forces and illegal armed detachments from the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan, in line with the trilateral

statement of 10 November 2020, and refusing to return to Azerbaijan eight enclave villages that the Armenian forces occupied during the First Garabagh war in the early 1990s.

Therefore, attempts by Armenia to portray itself as an ardent defender of the commonly agreed principles, norms and values are not capable of whitewashing the well-known real image of this country as an aggressor and persistent violator of international law and human rights.

That Armenia is yet to comply with its international obligations and commit itself genuinely to peace and stability in the region is evidenced by its continued use of obsolete or fake names for the localities within Azerbaijan. The references in the statements of the Delegation of Armenia to such names, which have neither historical nor legal grounds whatsoever, are testament to Armenia's continued territorial claims against Azerbaijan and apparent disregard for Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We also urge the Delegation of Armenia not to cite out-of-context references from the speech of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev which he made yesterday during the visit to the recently liberated Lachin city. This statement is available online and anyone interested can read it. In his address, the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev provided factual information, stating that during the years of Armenian occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan, Armenia never treated areas bordering Karabakh region of Azerbaijan as state border, because it hoped to achieve *fait accompli* of the results of its aggression. After restoration of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity in 2020, Azerbaijan finally received access to these border areas, but currently these territories remain not de-limited. This is why, in the post-conflict period, we have consistently been promoting delimitation and demarcation of state border as one of the main tracks of normalization process, whereas Armenia constantly delays this process under various pretexts and evades from taking tangible concrete steps. This was the essence of what the President of Azerbaijan said in his address on the issue of delimitation of state border.

The President emphasized that Azerbaijan offered to Armenia peace immediately after the war. This was perhaps one of a handful examples in the military history of the world when lands remained under occupation for thirty years, people lived in suffering and deprivation, historical and religious monuments were destroyed, cities were razed to the ground, and more than a million mines were planted, and yet Azerbaijan offered peace. However, we see again that Armenia is not interested in peace, still nurturing some revanchist ideas. Thus, President Ilham Aliyev essentially reiterated that Azerbaijan offered to Armenia peace.

Mr. Chair,

We stress that on its part Azerbaijan will continue undertaking efforts aimed at consolidating peace and stability in the region, and implementing its commitments stemming from the trilateral statements. We urge Armenia to finally draw lessons from the most recent past and realize the futility of its approach aimed at violation of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We urge Armenia, instead of resorting to military provocations and attempting to undermine post-conflict normalization process, to focus on the implementation in good faith of its obligations and take further necessary steps for advancing the peace process. This has no alternative to long-term peace and security in the region.

It is essential for the international community, including the OSCE and its participating States to refrain from indulging into Armenia's unacceptable behaviour premised on territorial claims towards other states, but rather send the right messages to Armenia, urge this country to focus on the implementation of its obligations instead of engaging in the acts of politico-military adventurism, and confirm the support of the international community for the search of negotiated diplomatic solutions to all issues pertaining to the normalization of inter-State relations between the two countries.

In this regard, at the last meeting between the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan held on 19 September in New York, Azerbaijan once again emphasized its readiness for urgent negotiations in accordance with the trilateral statements and the results of the Brussels meeting of 31 August. Soonest progress and tangible steps in this direction are essential to ensure lasting peace.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.