

Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
The 23rd Regular Meeting of HCoC
11-12 April 2024
Vienna, Austria

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, we would like to express our gratitude to the Republic of Ireland for its able leadership in the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC). We also take this opportunity to congratulate Chile on assuming the Chairmanship and thank Austria for its continued support as the Immediate Central Contact in Vienna.

As one of the first subscribing states to the HCoC, Azerbaijan considers it an important instrument for enhancing transparency and building confidence in the prevention of the spread of ballistic missiles. We recognize its contribution to the strengthening of international security arrangements, as well as achieving disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

Being at the crossroads of important international transport routes, Azerbaijan has established a solid export control system to combat the illicit trafficking of weapons of mass destruction and their components. We actively participate in political dialogue and carry out transparency measures within the HCoC.

Distinguished colleagues,

Azerbaijan has first-hand suffered from the devastating consequences of the use of ballistic missiles by Armenia during the 44 Days War in 2020. The ballistic missile attacks by Armenia were a priori illegal since they were used against the territorial integrity of a sovereign State, Azerbaijan. Moreover, with those attacks Armenia violated international humanitarian law as it deliberately ignored the vital principle of distinction between military and civilians by targeting Ganja city and other population centers, leading to numerous civilian casualties.

International human rights organizations have documented those deliberate and indiscriminate attacks, which claimed the lives of more than 100 civilians, wounded nearly 500, and caused widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure. What is more, Armenia had not declared those ballistic missiles within the framework of HCoC. All these testify to the fact that Armenia disregards not only the general norms and principles of international law but also the very basis of HCoC.

We condemn such aggressive behavior by Armenia, as well as its failure to comply with its commitments to implement transparency and confidence-building measures within HCoC. The international community should urge Armenia to act in accordance with international law and comply with its commitments under HCoC related to transparency and declarations.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate the importance Azerbaijan attaches to effective arms control, trust, and confidence-building measures, including in the non-proliferation of ballistic missiles, and stands ready for constructive engagement with the goal of contributing to peace and security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.