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**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
1162nd Meeting of the Permanent Council
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on the issue of external participation at the OSCE human dimension meetings

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan thanks the distinguished Ambassador of Turkey for raising this issue. It is not for the first time that organization of human dimension meetings causes serious concern for the participating States. The issue increasingly becomes source of tension within the Organization, poisons atmosphere for genuine dialogue and undermines effectiveness of these meetings. There is urgent need to address current unacceptable practice in most expeditious manner with a view to preventing abuse of human dimension meetings contrary to the principles and commitments of the OSCE and their defined purposes.

Our position on the matter, which has been expressed on numerous occasions, including at the Permanent Council meeting on October 5, 2017, is principled and remains unchanged. Taking this opportunity, we renew our call to the current and future Chairmanships and the ODIHR to take urgent steps towards rectifying the situation and ensuring that the human dimension meetings are not abused for purposes they were not intended for. We will continue to use every available tool within the Organization to that end.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.