



PC.DEL/1168/05
17 November 2005

ENGLISH only

**Statement
at 580th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
November 17, 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation has a pleasure to join previous speakers in warmly welcoming the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office to this meeting of the Permanent Council. We also want to thank distinguished Ms. Anastacia Crickley, Ambassador Ömür Orhun and Professor Gert Weisskirchen for their informative written reports and oral presentations.

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the issues indicated in respective mandates of the Personal Representatives. As a country with a diverse multinational population, representing many religious and cultural groups, we firmly believe that such negative phenomena as racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, discrimination against Muslims and intolerance have no right to exist in the OSCE area, since they fuel the development of tensions between various groups, contribute to terrorism and extremism of all kinds, and cause violent conflicts, undermining international security, peace and stability. We must join our efforts and pool existing resources with a view to eradicating fully these negative phenomena, and their root-causes in particular, to the common benefit of all our countries and peoples.

We are convinced that the only way to mutual understanding and respect between different societies and groups goes through the idea of education, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. A special role in this field belongs to the Personal Representatives who raise the profile of our common struggle against intolerance and discrimination, and monitor situation in the participating States, particularly the implementation of relevant OSCE commitments.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, please allow me to wish the distinguished Personal Representatives every success in their professional activities.