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**STATEMENT  
BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

**969<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
31 October 2013**

*in response to the OSCE PA President Ranko Krivokapic*

Mr. Chairperson,

We join previous speakers in warmly welcoming President Ranko Krivokapic at the Permanent Council meeting and thank him for outlining his vision of priorities of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Azerbaijan supports development of parliamentary dimension of the OSCE and encourages the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to engage closely across all dimensions of OSCE comprehensive security concept.

We welcome the efforts of the Parliamentary Assembly to provide an input to the current OSCE agenda. In this regard we highly value the assessments of security environment and approaches to overcome existing challenges to security and co-operation provided by parliamentarians of the OSCE participating States at the annual session of Parliamentary Assembly held in Istanbul, in particular on Helsinki +40 process.

The Istanbul session reaffirmed that the Helsinki +40 process is a unique opportunity for the OSCE to confirm the importance of respect for its founding principles guiding the relations between participating states. We are convinced that this is a prerequisite for building trust and confidence among our countries, as well as for implementation of commitments the participating States have undertaken.

We welcome the attention devoted by the Assembly in Istanbul to the issue of protracted conflicts in the OSCE region and to necessity of finding their speedy and lasting solution based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of participating States. Problem of forceful displacement is a source of concern for many OSCE participating

States. We encourage the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to take a closer look on possibilities for ensuring their fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to return to their places of origin in the context of conflict resolution.

Involvement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the efforts aimed at resolving the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan based on international law principles and agreed norms is of particular importance. In this regard, the appointment of Mr. Joao Soares as the OSCE PA President's Special Representative on South Caucasus in July 2011 is encouraging. We invite him to fully utilize his mandate and consider realistic confidence-building measures which might be conducive to establishing trust and confidence between conflict-affected Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

In conclusion, we wish every success to President Krivokapic in his endeavors and looking forward to continue our cooperation with him and his able team in Vienna led by Ambassador Nothelle.

Thank you.