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**DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Statement**

**On the Violations of the International Humanitarian Law by Azerbaijan  
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1096th Meeting of the OSCE  
Permanent Council  
April 14, 2016**

Madam Chair,

We would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to a number of gross violations of the international humanitarian law by Azerbaijan in the course of its recent large-scale military offensive.

From the very beginning of the Azerbaijani offensive civilian infrastructures and civilian population, including children and the elderly became intentional and indiscriminate targets. Among the first civilian victims were the 12 years old boy, Vaghinak Grigoryan who was killed in front of the school-building as a result of a Grad missile attack, and two other wounded school-children.

In the village of Talish of Martakert region of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is located 3.5km from the Line of Contact, three elderly members of Khalapyan family, including the 92-year old woman Marusya Khalapyan were brutally tortured, mutilated and killed. Moreover, a number of crimes were committed against the military personnel of the Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army. Three captive soldiers Hayk Toroyan, Hrant Gharibyan and Karam Sloyan were beheaded by Azerbaijani armed forces in ISIL style. Social networks were full of photos of the Azerbaijani soldiers parading in Azerbaijani settlements with chopped heads. The photos of Karam Sloyan, who was of Yezidi origin were entitled “the head of Yezidi infidel”.

Furthermore, during the exchange of bodies of the deceased between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan carried out through the mediation of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the PRCiO, it was registered that bodies of the deceased transferred by the Azerbaijani side had signs of torture and mutilation.

Those barbaric acts going beyond elementary norms of civilized world, constitute violations of core international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Convention on the Rights of the Child, etc. In this context it is also imperative to specifically mention the blatant violation by Azerbaijan of Geneva Conventions of 1949, which inter alia

address groups exposed to specific risks, such as children, women and elderly, and its Additional Protocols of 1977 and 1989.

Some of these violations have characteristics of war crimes and criminal cases have been launched by the authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh to identify the whole magnitude of the atrocities. Already at this initial stage it is clear that these crimes entail identity based persecution against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. The Reference of the Office of the Prosecutor General of the NKR in regard to those cases, distributed on April 12, contains detailed information on the killed and wounded civilians.

The further systematic application of these violent actions may lead to the crime against humanity. It is important to prevent further atrocities also through the fair assessment, condemnation and bringing perpetrators to justice.

We have raised this current issue with the view to seek clarification from the Azerbaijani Delegation whether Baku remains faithful to its own obligations and commitments under international humanitarian law or considers them as ceased their effect as well.

Mr. Chairman,

We heard today that there is an intention of the Chairmanship and ODIHR to jointly plan such event in Azerbaijan on tolerance and non-discrimination. To plan such an event after recent atrocities committed by Azerbaijan against population of NK can be considered as encouragement to Baku. It will question credibility of ODIHR and will have strong impact on our cooperation with ODIHR.

Thank You.

### **Points for Reply**

Madam Chair,

The statement of the Azerbaijani Ambassador and the note verbal circulated today attempts to politicize concrete humanitarian issues raised by our Delegation, indicate two things. First, by refusing to address very concrete cases of atrocities that took place during the April large scale military offensive, Azerbaijan acknowledges the fact of their occurrence. Second, Azerbaijan intends to continue to justify the same atrocities against people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

We understand that Azerbaijani side tries to evade its responsibility of current atrocities by bringing forward more than two decades long ungrounded protracted accusations to which we always responded at every appropriate occasion. If Azerbaijani side thinks that its own version of history or efforts to revive the status quo of its Soviet past by the use of force gives legitimacy to chop heads or cut ears today, then there is a strong evidence that we are dealing with premeditated crimes organized by Azerbaijani highest authorities.

Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh have been always ready to respond or investigate any allegation of Azerbaijani side on the violation of international humanitarian law. . If the Azerbaijani side is truly interested in ensuring human rights of people living in the both sides of line of contact, first and foremost the right to life, it should be interested in an OSCE mechanism, which could investigate such incidents and identify the responsible side. Yet Azerbaijan always dismissed any possibility of verification even of its own allegations.

Thank You.