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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1441st (SPECIAL) MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 September 2023

On the situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh

Mr. Chairperson,

Following a sharp escalation of the armed confrontation in Nagorno-Karabakh on 19 September, the situation has been evolving rapidly. Allow me to point out that the information about Azerbaijan launching an “anti-terrorist operation” in the region was relayed to the Russian peacekeeping contingent a few minutes before it began.

Despite the aggravation of the situation, the Russian peacekeepers have continued to conscientiously carry out their mission and to do everything possible to protect the civilian population: more than 2,000 civilians, including over 1,000 children, have been evacuated from the most dangerous areas. The wounded are being given medical assistance. Everyone has been provided with temporary housing and hot food.

Ever since the hostilities resumed, the command of the Russian peacekeeping contingent has been in contact with representatives of the Karabakh Armenians and the Azerbaijani authorities, and actively taking steps to immediately put an end to the bloodshed and to ensure adherence to the norms of humanitarian law with regard to civilians. The most recent information is that, with the Russian peacekeepers’ mediation, an agreement was reached today on a full cessation of the hostilities as from 1 p.m. and on the start, on 21 September, of negotiations between the representatives of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh and the central authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan. These agreed arrangements will be implemented in co-ordination with the Russian peacekeeping contingent.

We envisage that the parties will manage to de-escalate the tensions and to set about peacefully addressing the problematic issues. We stand ready to facilitate that in every possible way.

Agreed steps for achieving peace and stability in the region are enshrined in a set of trilateral statements adopted between 2020 and 2022 by the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Although the fundamental conditions under which these documents were signed have changed as a result of the Armenian leadership recognizing, in October 2022 and May 2023 at summits held under the auspices of the European

Union, that Nagorno-Karabakh is a part of Azerbaijan, the set of Russian-Azerbaijani-Armenian agreements reached at the highest level remains the only viable road map for a sustainable settlement.

The absolute priority now is to prevent a resumption of hostilities and to direct the situation back to the political track and diplomacy, above all towards implementation of the aforementioned trilateral agreements reached at the highest level.

Thank you for your attention.