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STATEMENT AT 811th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

As for delivery by Ambassador Fuad Ismayilov

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

I would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the press-release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the adoption by the European Parliament on 20 May 2010 of the Resolution on “The need for an EU Strategy for the South Caucasus”.

The press-release reads as follows:

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan welcomes the adoption by the European Parliament on 20 May 2010 of the Resolution on “The need for an EU Strategy for the South Caucasus” on the basis of the report of the Bulgarian member of the Parliament Mr. Evgeni Kirilov. While strongly supporting the EU initiatives on the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, the European Parliament calls for an increasingly active role of the EU to transform the South Caucasus into a region of sustainable peace, stability and prosperity with a view to enhancing the integration of these countries into the European policies.

This important Resolution singles out rightly the unresolved conflicts in the region as an impediment to the economic and social development and the full realisation of the Eastern Partnership in the South Caucasus countries and considers the peaceful resolution of the conflicts as essential for the stability in the region. Referring to the respect by the EU for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity in its relations with the South Caucasus states the Parliament reminds furthermore that one of the aims of the Eastern Partnership is indeed to bring tangible support for the consolidation of statehood and territorial integrity of partner countries and judges unacceptable any conditioning of the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the counties of the region.

The Ministry commends the clear and unequivocal position of the Parliament with regard to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and its heavy consequences. Thus, calling for the intensification of efforts to settle this conflict in the coming months and the abandon of preferences to perpetuate the *status quo* created by force and with no international legitimacy the European Parliament demands the withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The European parliamentarians also express their serious concerns on the fact that hundreds of thousands of refugees and IDPs who fled their homes during or in connection with

the Nagorno-Karabakh war remain displaced and their rights, including the right to return, are denied and they call for an unambiguous and unconditional recognition of these rights and underline the need for their prompt realisation.

Bearing in mind the “parliamentary elections” to be organised in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, the Ministry is pleased to note the confirmation, through this Resolution of the European Parliament, of the EU position recognising as unconstitutional and illegal the framework in which the elections in the breakaway territories take place, while defending the political rights of displaced persons.

Despite the desperate attempts of the Armenian side to thwart its adoption, this Resolution was strongly supported by all main political groups of the European Parliament. The Ministry believes that this timely and clear statement by the European Parliament on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a signal to Armenia to stop its policy aimed at prolongation of the settlement process and finally to take a constructive position in the negotiations, on the basis of the principles mentioned in the Resolution.”

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.