
Chairmanship: Sweden**1314th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 20 May 2021 (via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1.05 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Closed: 6.25 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador U. Funered
Ambassador T. Lorentzson

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson welcomed the new Permanent Representative of Iceland to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador Kristín Árnadóttir.

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: **REPORT BY THE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN
UZBEKISTAN**

Chairperson, Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan (PC.FR/14/21/Corr.2 OSCE+) (PC.FR/17/21 OSCE+), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in alignment) (PC.DEL/778/21), Russian Federation, United Kingdom (PC.DEL/741/21 OSCE+), Turkey (PC.DEL/763/21 OSCE+), United States of America (PC.DEL/737/21), Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/754/21 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/752/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/738/21), Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

1 Includes corrections to agenda items 2 and 3(h).

Agenda item 2: PRESENTATION BY THE UN WOMEN DEPUTY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, H.E. MS. ÅSA REGNÉR

Chairperson, United Nations Women Deputy Executive Director, Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/780/21), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/755/21), United States of America (PC.DEL/748/21), Turkey (PC.DEL/785/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Georgia (PC.DEL/787/21 OSCE+), Norway (PC.DEL/753/21), France (PC.DEL/751/21 OSCE+), Canada, Holy See (PC.DEL/749/21 OSCE+), Ukraine, Kazakhstan

Agenda item 3: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Chairperson

- (a) *Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea*: Ukraine, Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in alignment) (PC.DEL/784/21), Canada, United Kingdom, Switzerland (PC.DEL/750/21 OSCE+), Turkey, United States of America (PC.DEL/740/21)
- (b) *Deteriorating situation in Ukraine and continued non-implementation by the Ukrainian authorities of the Minsk agreements*: Russian Federation (PC.DEL/742/21), Ukraine
- (c) *Seventy-seventh anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatars*: Russian Federation (PC.DEL/746/21)
- (d) *Human rights situation in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine*: Ukraine, United States of America (PC.DEL/743/21), Canada, United Kingdom, Turkey (Annex 1), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/783/21), Lithuania (PC.DEL/756/21 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/747/21)
- (e) *Situation with the Armenian prisoners of war and other captives in Azerbaijan*: Armenia (Annex 2), Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/782/21), Azerbaijan (Annex 3), Russian Federation

- (f) *Incursion by Azerbaijan into the sovereign territory of Armenia: Armenia* (Annex 4), Azerbaijan (Annex 5)
- (g) *International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, observed on 17 May 2021: Portugal-European Union* (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; as well as Georgia, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/781/21), Spain (Annex 6), United States of America (PC.DEL/757/21), Canada (also on behalf of Andorra, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/765/21 OSCE+)
- (h) *Recent developments in Belarus: Portugal-European Union* (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, in alignment)(PC.DEL/777/21), United Kingdom (also on behalf of Canada), Switzerland, Denmark (also on behalf of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (Annex 7), Norway (PC.DEL/758/21), Belarus (PC.DEL/762/21 OSCE+)
- (i) *Need for a comprehensive and long-term political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: United States of America* (PC.DEL/759/21), Switzerland (PC.DEL/764/21 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Canada, Portugal-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra and San Marino, in alignment) (PC.DEL/779/21), Azerbaijan (Annex 8), Armenia (Annex 9), Turkey (Annex 10)

Agenda item 4: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Stockholm Conference on Media Freedom in the OSCE Region, held via video teleconference on 18 and 19 May 2021: Chairperson*
- (b) *Conflict Cycle Seminar entitled “Ten years after Vilnius – Advancing an inclusive ‘whole-of-OSCE’ approach to prevent violent conflict and build sustainable peace”, held via video teleconference from 17 to 19 May 2021: Chairperson*

- (c) *Visit by the Chairperson-in-Office to Serbia and Montenegro, to take place from 24 to 26 May 2021: Chairperson*
- (d) *Special meeting of the Permanent Council, to be held on 25 May 2021: Chairperson, Armenia*
- (e) *Resumption of OSCE meetings in Vienna in blended format from 25 May 2021: Chairperson*

Agenda item 5: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Activities on combating organized crime and corruption listed in the weekly report of the Secretary General: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/69/21 OSCE+)*
- (b) *Presentation of credentials by the Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE and the Permanent Representative of Iceland to the OSCE: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/69/21 OSCE+)*
- (c) *Meetings between the Secretary General and the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, held via video teleconference on 14 May 2021, the Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, held in Vienna on 18 May 2021, and the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, the staff of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek and the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, held via video teleconference on 19 May 2021: Secretary General (SEC.GAL/69/21 OSCE+)*
- (d) *Visit by the Secretary General to Ukraine, to take place in the following week: Secretary General*
- (e) *Participation by the Secretary General in a retreat with the heads of the OSCE institutions and the Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, to be held in Denmark in the following week: Secretary General*

Agenda item 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *COVID-19 vaccination programme for the diplomatic community in Vienna: Austria*
- (b) *Early parliamentary elections in Bulgaria, to be held on 11 July 2021: Bulgaria*
- (c) *National Plan of Action of Turkmenistan in the field of human rights for the years 2021–2025: Turkmenistan*

4. Next meeting:

Tuesday, 25 May 2021, at 3 p.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1314/Corr.1
20 May 2021
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(d)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

We commemorate the 77th anniversary of the tragic mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars.

On the night of 18 May 1944, nearly 250,000 Crimean Tatars were torn from their ancestral homeland and exiled under inhumane conditions.

Tens of thousands of Crimean Tatars lost their lives during this tragic event.

Those who survived were forced to live yearning for their homeland.

We share the pain of the Crimean Tatars. We remember and respectfully honour the memory of those who lost their lives during the exile.

Seventy-seven years after the exile, the Crimean Tatars are challenged by the hardships created by the illegal annexation of Crimea.

Turkey will continue to stand by the Crimean Tatars in their struggle to overcome their grief, attain peace and prosperity, and protect their identity.

On this occasion, we confirm once again our strong support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, including Crimea.

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to conclude my statement by the reciting the text of an old Crimean Tatar song, which is also very well known in Turkey.

In fact, the text of this famous Crimean song both summarizes our statement and reflects the Turkish nation's feelings about the deportation of the Crimean Tatars from their centuries-long homeland 77 years ago. Their pain is still alive.

I will first recite the lines in Crimean Turkish and then the English translation will follow:

Aluřtadan esken yeller
Yüzüme urdı
Balalıktan ösken yerler
Közüme tüřti
Men bu yerde yařalmadım
Yařlıđıma toyalmadım
Vatanıma hasret oldım
Ey, güzel Kırım

It literally says:

The winds from Alushta
Hit me in the face
The places where I spent my childhood
Passed through my eyes
I have neither been able to live there
Nor could I get enough of my youth
Only I long for my homeland
Oh, beautiful Crimea!

We kindly ask, Madam Chairperson, that you would attach our statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(e)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

More than six months after the signing of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020 on a ceasefire, which put an end to the violent war of aggression launched by Azerbaijan and its allies against Artsakh, Azerbaijan continues to illegally detain Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and various decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, and showing complete disregard for numerous exhortations by the international community. In order to somehow justify their unlawful actions, the Azerbaijani authorities also continue to promote a fictitious and false narrative aimed at misrepresenting the status of Armenian prisoners of war and other captives.

In a press release dated 11 May 2021, Freedom House expressed deep concern over “reports of dehumanizing treatment and abuse, including torture, of Armenians captured and detained by Azerbaijan after the recent armed conflict” and urged the Azerbaijani authorities “to fully cooperate with the efforts of the European Court of Human Rights to investigate the validity of reports of dehumanizing treatment of Armenian detainees regardless of their status and ensure [that] those still in custody are provided with all protections required under international human rights and humanitarian law, including freedom from torture and inhuman treatment, and that details of their repatriation are provided”. Freedom House also reminded Azerbaijan that, as a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights, it was “obligated to fully cooperate with the [C]ourt and provide all requested information to facilitate a transparent investigation of these serious issues”.

Madam Chairperson,

In addition to the continued incommunicado detention of Armenian prisoners of war and captured civilians in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and paragraph 8 of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, Azerbaijan also continues to conceal the exact number of prisoners of war and captured civilians, and refuses to provide the relevant list to the International Committee of the Red Cross. During the 1312th meeting of the Permanent Council on 6 May 2021, my delegation presented information about the torture and arbitrary brutal killing of 19 Armenian prisoners of war and civilians in Azerbaijani custody (PC.JOUR/1312, Annex 2). The Armenian Legal Center for Justice and Human Rights

shortly afterwards revealed more shocking details of the circumstances of these war crimes. In this context, it is also worth recalling the brutal murder of 18-year-old Erik Mkhitarian, whose remains were discovered and subsequently identified using a DNA test. He was killed in Azerbaijani captivity after the cessation of hostilities. On 24 November 2020, Erik had still been alive, as evidenced by video footage disseminated that same day by Azerbaijani users of social media. Erik's name was on the list of 23 prisoners of war and other detainees submitted by Armenia to the European Court of Human Rights. This is the second confirmed murder of a prisoner of war from the list submitted to the Court. The first was the murder of Arsen Gharakhanyan, who was tortured and killed after being captured by Azerbaijani forces.

During the 44-day war of aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan with the direct support of Turkey and Turkish-backed foreign terrorist fighters, hundreds of Armenians, including military personnel and civilians, were captured by the Azerbaijani armed forces. Out of these, 73 individuals have been repatriated, but the rest still remain in Azerbaijani captivity. Given the confirmed murders of Armenian prisoners of war and civilians in Azerbaijani custody, the lives and health of the remaining Armenian captives in Azerbaijan are in serious danger. The Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia has instituted more than 100 criminal proceedings in relation to all these cases, which were ultimately combined into one single criminal case.

The Office of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia has analysed hundreds of audiovisual and photographic materials, along with testimonies by victims and eyewitnesses, which confirm torture and other cruel and degrading treatment of Armenian prisoners of war and other captives. The analysis has also revealed 17 instances of decapitation and murder, and 32 instances of desecration of dead bodies. Examination of the material collected demonstrates that the torture and other cruel and inhuman treatment to which Azerbaijani military personnel have subjected Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives was clearly motivated by ethnic hatred.

Madam Chairperson,

Azerbaijan is not only violating international humanitarian law and its international obligations, including OSCE principles and commitments, but is also flouting its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and ignoring judgments and interim measures issued by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

In particular, according to the ECHR, Azerbaijan failed to comply with its obligations by not providing information on Armenian prisoners of war and other civilian captives detained in Azerbaijan, as required by relevant ECHR decisions. Thus, on 9 March 2021, pursuant to Rule 39, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Court, the ECHR decided to notify the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of the interim measures it had applied in view of the Azerbaijani Government's failure to respect the deadlines set by the Court for the submission of information on the individuals concerned, and also in view of the rather general and limited information that was ultimately provided. (The ECHR sent its notification to the Committee of Ministers on 16 March.)

Instead of reconsidering its unacceptable behaviour and implementing decisions by the ECHR and its international obligations, Azerbaijan continues with its smear campaign against the Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives. A few days ago, the Azerbaijani

Prosecutor General announced that the so-called criminal cases against Armenian prisoners of war – initiated on trumped-up charges of quote, unquote, “terrorism” – were nearing completion. Apparently, over the coming days, we shall be witnessing several mock trials in Azerbaijan, whose authorities have a notorious track record of filling prisons with “undesirable” people on the basis of trumped-up charges. The experience they have gained in silencing human rights activists and dissenters has, undoubtedly, stood them in good stead, since they are now applying this practice in relation to Armenian prisoners of war.

Madam Chairperson,

The findings of medical examinations of those who have returned from Azerbaijani captivity and their own testimonies confirm that Armenian prisoners of war are being subjected to physical and psychological violence during interrogations and throughout their detention, the aim being to obtain “confessions” that tally with the fictitious criminal charges brought against them. The ill-treatment and violence suffered by Armenian prisoners in Azerbaijani captivity are a clear manifestation of torture, as defined by the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

We therefore once again call on the OSCE participating States to exert pressure on Azerbaijan so that it ceases its unlawful behaviour, complies with its international obligations and releases without delay all Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives.

Madam Chairperson,

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of today’s meeting.

Thank you.



1314th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(e)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

We would like to exercise our right of reply under this current issue raised by the delegation of Armenia. We would put aside some of the usual baseless accusations by Armenia against Azerbaijan, since as we have witnessed over the last months, engagement with a delegation that continually distorts facts and rejects a co-operative spirit does not produce any positive outcomes. However, we need to clarify the points related to the situation with the so-called “Armenian prisoners of war” – another issue consistently misrepresented by Armenia.

In this regard, we emphasize that Azerbaijan is committed to upholding the international rule of law, including its obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law as applicable to its detention operations and the disposition of detainees. Azerbaijan has released and repatriated all Armenians in its custody who were entitled to prisoner-of-war status, as it was envisaged by our obligations under the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 and international humanitarian law.

As to those Armenian detainees who remain in Azerbaijan’s custody, we would like to remind of the following. The sabotage group of 62 Armenian servicemen was transferred from the Shirak region of Armenia into the territory of Azerbaijan in late November 2020 after the signing of the trilateral statement, hence after the end of the war. The group was deployed in the Lachin district of Azerbaijan before its return to the control of Azerbaijan on 1 December 2020 under the trilateral statement. It penetrated deep into the territory of Azerbaijan and committed a series of terrorist attacks against Azerbaijani military servicemen and civilians in the Khojavand district, causing the deaths of four servicemen and serious injury to one civilian. The group was detained as a result of an anti-terrorist operation by Azerbaijan.

Those sent by Armenia to the territory of Azerbaijan with the aim of engaging in sabotage and terrorist activities in the period after the signing of the trilateral statement are not and cannot be considered prisoners of war in accordance with international humanitarian law and are liable under the criminal law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Consistent with its laws, Azerbaijan is presently investigating and conducting a detailed review of all individuals who were detained after the signing of the trilateral statement to assess the evidence against

them. In this regard, we also recall that on 4 May 2021 Azerbaijan, as a humanitarian gesture, repatriated three of the aforementioned individuals to Armenia without pressing charges.

Those who remain detained are being treated with full respect to their dignity and human rights in accordance with international human rights law as well as Azerbaijani law. In view of Armenia's repeated mischaracterization of this issue, Azerbaijan is ensuring greater transparency regarding their basis for detention, conditions of confinement and disposition. Azerbaijan remains committed to upholding its international obligations, including by ensuring that individuals it detains are treated humanely and are subject to just and lawful dispositions.

We call on Armenia to abandon its futile approach of distorting facts and misrepresenting information on the circumstances and reasons for detention by Azerbaijan of members of the aforementioned sabotage group, claiming for them the non-applicable status of prisoners of war and falsely accusing Azerbaijan of not honouring its obligations under the trilateral statement and international humanitarian law. Such an approach is counterproductive and undermines the fragile peace that emerged after the signing of the trilateral statement.

We further would like to remind of the extensive use of mercenaries and terrorists in the course of last year's war by Armenia, whom Armenia attempts to label as prisoners of war. In this regard, we draw attention to the recent investigation conducted under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan which established the fact of the participation of Vicken Abraham Euljekjian, a citizen of Lebanon, in military operations and terrorist activities in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan as a mercenary for material reward. He was indicted on charges of participation as a mercenary in a military conflict, commitment of terrorism by a group of persons upon prior conspiracy and illegal crossing of the State border of Azerbaijan. The indictment on the criminal case was approved and sent to court for consideration. More information on this issue was distributed by our delegation under the reference number SEC.DEL/175/21 on 6 May 2021. In a similar vein, we would like to draw attention to the latest report on the abuse of non-profit organizations and charity entities by Armenia for terrorist financing purposes, which was distributed by our delegation under the reference number SEC.DEL/184/21 on 13 May 2021.

Speaking of international humanitarian law, we expect Armenia to fulfil its own obligations under it. Armenia has yet to deliver on its obligation to release information on the whereabouts of close to 4000 Azerbaijanis who went missing due to the war in the early 1990s, as well as to investigate numerous crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated against Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis. Moreover, Armenia should honour its obligations under customary international humanitarian law by releasing the maps of mines planted by Armenia on a massive scale in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan.

Finally, we would like to briefly react to the statement of the European Union and aligned countries. We take note of it and regret that despite numerous calls of Azerbaijan made over the course of the conflict to release detainees on the basis of the "all for all" principle, including two Azerbaijani civilians Dilgam Asgarov and Shahbaz Guliyev who were illegally detained, tortured and treated inhumanely for six years, the European Union and aligned countries remained silent. We call on the delegation of the European Union not to

politicize the issue, which is being dealt with in accordance with the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 and in full compliance with international humanitarian law.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(f)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

The situation has not changed since the last Permanent Council meeting on 13 May, when our delegation provided information about Azerbaijan's incursion into the sovereign territory of Armenia (PC.JOUR/1313, Annex 4). The Azerbaijani troops continue their illegal presence in the Armenian provinces of Syunik and Gegharkunik in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Armenia. This encroachment by the Azerbaijani armed forces on Armenian sovereign territory, which is in flagrant violation of international law and OSCE principles and commitments, poses a serious threat to security and stability in the region and beyond.

Since 12 May, Armenia has been making efforts to resolve the issue by political and diplomatic means in order to prevent unnecessary casualties and further escalation of the already tense situation in the region. The Armenian authorities have been consulting with their international partners at both the bilateral and multilateral level, using all political resources at their disposal. However, these consultations have so far not yielded any results. What is more, the Azerbaijani side did not even show up for the most recent round of negotiations, which were agreed to take place yesterday, 19 May 2021.

Madam Chairperson,

The illegal presence of the Azerbaijani armed forces on Armenian territory grossly violates international human rights law; deprives the residents of Armenian border villages of their only source of income, that is, of their ability to raise livestock and use pasture land; and seriously hampers their access to irrigation and drinking water. The presence of Azerbaijani troops is, moreover, accompanied by acts of intimidation and harassment of the residents of these border villages, who are, among other things, being forced to leave or threatened with death or captivity. In the aftermath of the war of aggression waged by Azerbaijan and its allies, this is creating additional psychological pressure on the Armenian people in the region.

Given the continuing unnotified and large-scale military exercises conducted by Azerbaijan and the accumulation of military equipment and forces along the borders with Armenia, one can safely assume that such destructive and provocative actions are aimed at further escalating the extremely fragile post-war situation and disrupting the implementation of the provisions of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020.

Dear colleagues,

Armenia once again strongly condemns this incursion into its sovereign territory and believes that this and other provocative actions by Azerbaijan are deliberate, premeditated and calculated to disguise that country's territorial claims against the Republic of Armenia. Predictably, the Azerbaijani side is trying to justify these actions under the pretext of delimitation and demarcation of borders. In this regard, we reiterate our previously stated view that demarcation and delimitation are not an exercise to be conducted at gunpoint, or steered by field commanders, but rather a political and legal process that requires, first of all, stability and security together with, of course, an environment of mutual trust.

We therefore once again emphasize that Azerbaijan must stop its provocative actions and immediately, without any preconditions, withdraw from the sovereign territory of Armenia.

Armenia will continue to explore all possible diplomatic avenues and to demonstrate, for its part, the political will required to resolve this situation peacefully.

Madam Chairperson,

Armenia is prepared to continue to undertake efforts aimed at defusing tensions and finding a negotiated solution to the current stalemate created by the incursion of the Azerbaijani armed forces into the sovereign territory of Armenia.

However, in view of the Azerbaijani leadership's extremely belligerent rhetoric, the most recent incursion into the sovereign territory of Armenia, and the conduct of yet another unnotified large-scale military exercise, the assurances made by Azerbaijan regarding its striving for peaceful co-existence and its willingness to engage in good faith in efforts aimed at resolving the conflict ring hollow and are clearly misleading.

Indeed, for that to happen we need first to have an environment conducive to dialogue and confidence-building. This aggressive posturing by Azerbaijan is a step in the wrong direction, which could have disastrous consequences for the entire region.

To de-escalate the already tense situation on the ground, Azerbaijan should first and foremost withdraw its troops from the territory of Armenia and stop ramping up tensions, which could easily lead to further escalation.

We call on the Swedish OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretary General and the OSCE participating States to respond appropriately to the provocative and irresponsible actions of Azerbaijan with a view to preventing further escalation of the situation and an increase in tensions in the region.

Madam Chairperson,

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of today's meeting.

Thank you.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(f)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Azerbaijan would like to exercise its right of reply in response to the statement of the Armenian delegation.

The delegation of Azerbaijan resolutely rejects allegations as if Azerbaijan has violated the so-called “sovereign territory” of Armenia. Such claims are absolutely baseless. We have already provided to the participating States information regarding the ongoing measures on the restoration of the internationally recognized border between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the strengthening of the border protection system, undertaken in accordance with international law and the statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation, signed on 10 November 2020. Today, we would like to reiterate the following.

First, it is unusual, to say the least, to hear references to the principle of territorial integrity of States by the country, which itself for almost three decades not only gravely violated this very principle by unleashing full-scale war against Azerbaijan and occupying a significant part of its sovereign territory, but on numerous occasions even challenged the very mentioning of this principle in international documents and its validity.

After three decades of occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan and the absence of a border regime between the two countries, Armenia is yet to come to terms with the need to respect the borders of a neighbouring State, as it continues to encroach on its territorial integrity. Continuing the occupation of some of the territories of Azerbaijan, including Karki village of Nakhchivan region and seven border villages of the Gazakh district of Azerbaijan, the dissemination of false historical narratives, the circulation of fabricated papers in the name of a non-existent entity, references to the localities within the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan under different fake names and reviving revanchist aspirations, are just a few examples to mention.

Second, as far as the most recent incident at the State border is concerned, Azerbaijan’s border guards are deployed along the international border between Azerbaijan and Armenia in accordance with the trilateral statement signed on 10 November 2020, which envisaged, *inter alia*, the withdrawal of Armenia’s armed forces from the Lachin and Kalbajar districts of Azerbaijan and the restoration of the control of the Azerbaijani

authorities over these territories, including the section of international border. In a subsequent period, Azerbaijan and Armenia were engaged in clarifying the boundary line between them based on the corresponding official maps available to both countries. This ongoing process is carried out through direct technical contacts between the sides, involving their border protection services. Such contacts have helped resolve the emerging border issues in the liberated Gubadly, Kalbajar and Zangilan districts of Azerbaijan.

Armenia conveniently passes over in silence that Azerbaijan allows the use by the citizens of Armenia of the Gorus-Gafan highway, almost 21 kilometres of which passes through the territory of Azerbaijan, after the clarification of the boundary line in that area. This is unprecedented given that these two States were at war only some six months ago. This vividly shows the goodwill of Azerbaijan to normalize relations with Armenia and resolve the border issues constructively.

Third, against this background, there is no doubt that the inadequate reaction of the Armenian side and the provocative campaign of accusations launched by Armenia in recent days in connection with the situation around the Garagol Lake has domestic goals ahead of the snap parliamentary elections, which will be held next month in an atmosphere of acute political and economic crisis facing the country. Under these circumstances, hate propaganda towards Azerbaijan and revanchist slogans are the only incentives to offer by political rivals, who are those that unleashed a war against Azerbaijan in the early 1990s, on the one side, and the current authorities that lost this war thirty years later, on the other. Moreover, Armenia's continuous provocative actions pursue the obvious goal of distracting the attention of the international community from the apparent unwillingness of Armenia to implement in full the trilateral statements signed by Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.

Fourth, as we have repeatedly stated, and we reiterate it once again, Azerbaijan has no land claims to any State, but will not yield an inch of its territory to anyone. Azerbaijan is committed to the regional peace, security and co-operation and normalization of inter-State relations between the two countries based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders, and expects the reciprocity of the Armenian side.

Fifth, we urge Armenia to accept the reality of the inter-State border regime along the Zangilan, Gubadli, Lachin and Kalbajar districts of Azerbaijan and cease immediately its attempts to aggravate the situation in the region, including by attempting to internationalize the situation by dragging external actors into the process. Armenia should cease its provocative actions and warmongering statements and engage constructively in discussions with a view to resolving the issue. In this context, we welcome the proposal of the Russian Federation to establish an inter-State commission to carry out delimitation and demarcation of the entire international border. We hope that Armenia will also positively consider this proposal.

And finally, regarding the recent statements by some participating States who showed an unusual interest in this matter, we reiterate that border delimitation and demarcation is a bilateral issue that requires quiet diplomacy. Hence, we call on these participating States to refrain from making statements that may further complicate an already sensitive situation. We believe that such statements can in no way facilitate a peaceful solution of this issue and, on the contrary, produce the opposite effect by encouraging Armenia to continue making bellicose statements and to hold on to its unconstructive position. Irresponsible statements by

the Armenian authorities to use force, which were made immediately after statements by some participating States, are indicative to this end.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(g)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SPAIN**

Spain aligns itself with the statement by the European Union and would also like to make the following statement in a national capacity.

On the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the Council of Ministers of the Government of Spain approved an institutional declaration, whose main content is as follows.

Spanish society is, for the most part, a diverse society that respects the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons and fights against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sexual characteristics.

The Spanish Government is firmly committed to defending the rights of LGBTI persons both nationally and internationally, and undertakes to adopt the necessary measures to continue to make progress in the eradication of discrimination, attacks and acts of violence that LGBTI persons continue to suffer today.

With the approval of same-sex marriage on 30 June 2005 and its entry into force from 3 July of that year, Spain became the third country in the world to legalize such marriages and a model for recognition of the rights of LGBTI persons at an international level.

However, further progress towards full citizenship in terms of rights and freedoms is needed. Indeed, in Spain there are still many obstacles that prevent legal equality from becoming real and effective – at a time, moreover, when the protection of the rights of LGBTI persons is being questioned and rolled back.

The emergence of COVID-19 has only accelerated the deterioration in the enjoyment of these rights. There have been numerous worrying incidences of vulnerability suffered by many LGBTI persons, highlighting the difficulties that our societies still face in including these persons effectively and equally. This applies especially to those who suffer more intensively from the effects of multiple and intersectional discrimination, such as transgender women, who are subject to numerous forms of structural discrimination that ultimately hinder their access to the labour market and often lead them into poverty, sexual exploitation and trafficking, marginalization and difficulties in accessing basic services.

The proportion of hate crimes committed against LGBTI persons should also be pointed out.

For all of the above reasons, the public authorities must implement determined policies that, based on respect for international human rights standards, promote the real and effective equality of LGBTI persons and the fight against all forms of discrimination. There is a need to raise awareness among citizens as a whole and to point out the value of sexual, gender and family diversity, based on the conviction that inclusive, egalitarian, supportive and tolerant societies are also stronger and more resilient. Social cohesion necessarily involves a commitment to a culture of diversity and non-discrimination rather than one of hatred and prejudice.

The protection of the rights of LGBTI persons is anchored in our fundamental principle of the dignity of the individual and the free development of the personality – as the foundation of political order and social peace – and the rights to physical and moral integrity, and to personal and family privacy.

The promotion of equality for LGBTI persons requires the implementation of specific measures in various areas, for example, to prevent and eradicate homophobic and transphobic harassment, to encourage diversity management policies in the workplace, and to foster the social and labour integration of transgender persons.

In recent months, the Government has shown its firm commitment to progress in recognition of the rights of LGBTI persons through the adoption of different measures. Among them is the creation, for the first time in the history of our country, of a General Directorate for Sexual Diversity and LGBTI Rights; the establishment, also for the first time, of the Council for the Participation of LGBTI Persons with the aim of institutionalizing collaboration and strengthening permanent dialogue between the public administrations and civil society in matters related to equal treatment and non-discrimination of LGBTI persons; and the promotion of a regulatory package to foster real and effective equality of transgender persons and non-discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sexual characteristics.

This regulatory package will recognize, as the World Health Organization has already done, that transgender persons do not suffer from any disorder; it will put an end to the misnamed “conversion therapies”, which in reality amount to ideological torture; it will establish full equality of rights for lesbian and bisexual women in access to assisted reproduction techniques and in the parentage of their children; it will institute positive action measures to end the serious social exclusion suffered by many transgender persons, especially women; and it will pay attention, for the first time, to the rights of intersex persons.

Likewise, the Government is firmly committed to eradicating and condemning homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour in different areas of society. Thus, in line with this commitment, the sporting authorities recently implemented the first sanctions against homophobic behaviour in Spanish sport.

The measures adopted by the Spanish Government must be aligned with the priorities established at the European level. In that regard, a State agenda needs to be promoted that

enables progress to be made on the recommendations established by the European Commission in its first LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020–2025.

In recent years, Spain has promoted numerous actions in defence of the rights of LGBTI persons in different multilateral forums, such as the Human Rights Council (support for the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity); the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly; the United Nations LGBTI Core Group (informal and heterogeneous network of countries and international, non-governmental and civil society organizations created to give visibility and support to the demands and claims of the LGBTI community in the framework of the United Nations); the Equal Rights Coalition (Spain is a founding member of this intergovernmental organization created to foster multilateral co-operation and the exchange of information and best practices in the defence and promotion of LGBTI rights); the European Commission's High Level Group on Non-Discrimination, Equality and Diversity; and the European Governmental LGBTI Focal Points Network within the framework of the Council of Europe. In addition, the issue of LGBTI human rights is regularly raised in bilateral dialogue with third countries.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(h)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF DENMARK
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF ALBANIA, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA,
CANADA, CROATIA, CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA,
FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND,
IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA,
MONTENEGRO, THE NETHERLANDS, NORTH MACEDONIA,
NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SERBIA, SLOVAKIA,
SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, UKRAINE, THE UNITED KINGDOM
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)**

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to deliver this statement on behalf of the following 37 countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States, and my own country, Denmark.

In the face of massive, systematic and brutal violence following the 2020 presidential election in Belarus, 17 OSCE participating States invoked the OSCE Moscow Mechanism to look into serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Belarus.

In his report under the Moscow Mechanism, Rapporteur Mr. Wolfgang Benedek concluded there was overwhelming evidence the Belarusian presidential election on 9 August 2020 was fraudulent, and the Belarusian security forces committed massive and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The report stated the period directly after the elections “has to be qualified as a period of systematic torture and ill-treatment” by the security forces against peaceful protesters.

Seven months after Mr. Benedek’s evidence-based account, and more than nine months after the fraudulent presidential election, we note with great concern that the same systemic violations and abuses persist unabated. The number of political prisoners and detainees continues to rise, with members of the free media being particularly targeted.

According to human rights organizations, there are currently almost 400 political prisoners in Belarus. According to the General Prosecutor's Office of Belarus, since August 2020, more than 3,000 criminal cases have been initiated for violating the procedure for holding mass events and protests. In April 2021 alone, the courts passed sentences against at least 98 people in politically motivated criminal cases.

We note with particular worry that human rights organizations have reported numerous credible allegations of abhorrent treatment of prisoners, including torture. This seems to reflect a deliberate decision by the authorities to create a climate of fear, with the aim of silencing victims and witnesses.

Madam Chairperson,

Multiple times over the past months, we have called on Belarus to put an end to these violent acts, protect the victims and ensure the safety of all individuals without discrimination. We have repeatedly called on Belarus to conduct prompt, effective and thorough investigations into all reports of human rights violations and abuses in order to ensure anyone responsible or complicit is held accountable.

We have invited Belarus, and we renew this invitation now, to keep this Council informed of the status of any investigations that may have been initiated.

In the face of these credible accusations, the various replies provided by Belarus to the Permanent Council over the past months have been unsatisfactory and not credible. Belarus has denied reports from multiple, independent and reliable sources such as international organizations, journalists and civil society and accused us of interfering in its internal affairs.

At the same time, pressure against civil society, human rights organizations, journalists and national minorities in Belarus continues unabated, and in some cases, has greatly increased. Representatives of these organizations face politically motivated detentions, interrogations and searches of their offices and homes. Journalists and other media actors are being prosecuted and sentenced merely for performing their work. The authorities are continuing to repress those who have taken part in peaceful protests, increasingly using newly broadened legislation on countering extremism to detain and charge peaceful civil society representatives, journalists and other media actors, and human rights defenders. This, in effect, allows the authorities to criminalize any form of dissent, and we categorically and explicitly reject the supposition that such dissent amounts to "extremism".

These actions serve to silence civil society organizations and make it increasingly difficult for them to continue functioning in Belarus.

At the same time, new amendments of laws for ensuring national security broaden powers of law enforcement officers and *de facto* legalize future human rights abuses against civil society.

We continue to be deeply concerned that Belarus has not investigated any of the well-documented crimes by the authorities. To our knowledge, no criminal cases have been opened, no Belarusian officials have been held to account for their actions, and no Belarusian officials have condemned or even acknowledged the massive human rights violations and

abuses following the elections. The lack of action by the authorities exacerbates the climate of impunity in Belarus. These concerns justified a number of international initiatives aimed at examining serious human rights violations in Belarus, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights-led process established by the United Nations Human Rights Council and the International Accountability Platform for Belarus. We urge Belarus to co-operate fully with these initiatives.

Madam Chairperson,

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person, have been at the heart of this Organization since the Helsinki Final Act was signed more than 45 years ago. Respect for them is also an obligation under international law. It is high time for Belarus to adhere fully to the commitments and obligations it has freely made.

Against this background, and based on the recommendation of Mr. Benedek's report, we once again repeat our questions to Belarus:

- When will the Belarusian authorities investigate the credible reports of massive human rights violations and abuses, including allegations of torture, ill treatment, sexual violence, disappearance and killing by security forces?
- When will the Belarusian authorities bring criminal charges against those responsible for the human rights violations and abuses, including Belarusian security officials?
- When will the Belarusian authorities provide protection for the victims and witnesses who have bravely come forward and reported their accounts of human rights violations and abuses?

We look forward to engaging with Belarus in a genuine discussion on these and other concerns, as well as on how the OSCE and the wider international community can assist in addressing them. We urge Belarus to co-operate with the OSCE constructively and in good faith in order to resolve the present crisis in a peaceful and sustainable way.

Madam Chairperson, I would request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



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**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Madam Chairperson,

We took note of the statement made by the delegation of the United States of America. Frankly speaking, we do not share the necessity of raising this current issue some thirty years after the conflict started and after the signing of the 10 November 2020 trilateral statement by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation, which essentially put an end to the conflict. Nonetheless, we would like to emphasize the following.

Firstly, let us start by drawing attention to the address of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, which will be delivered at the special Permanent Council meeting next week on Tuesday. Our Minister's address will cover details of the dynamics and developments happening in the region in the aftermath of the signing of the trilateral statements. His address would provide clearer answers to many of the points that we heard today in the statements of some participating States. Thus, we encourage all delegations to actively participate in next week's special Permanent Council meeting and keep their questions and comments for the Minister.

After seven months since the signing of the 10 November 2020 trilateral statement the situation remains relatively stable, the conflict is over and except some minor incidents, the ceasefire is being held. The new reality established on the ground offers a unique opportunity to consolidate peace in the region and set it on the course of mutually beneficial comprehensive multilateral co-operation that can eradicate the risks of new wars in the region.

As Azerbaijan has repeatedly stated, at the current post-conflict stage there is a need for stronger OSCE support for the full implementation of the trilateral statements and practical engagement with the sides in order to sustain peace and stability. Azerbaijan is engaged in the comprehensive post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and invites its partners to assist us in this essential endeavour. However, despite our consistent requests to the OSCE to render practical support to this process, thus far we face a rather indifferent attitude and lack of response.

We emphasize once again that Azerbaijan has restored its infringed sovereignty and territorial integrity and wants to leave the conflict and animosity behind in history, focusing on post-conflict rehabilitation, reconciliation and normalization of inter-State relations with

Armenia. However, there are certain forces in Armenia which are not happy with the current stability and a unique chance to capitalize on an opportunity to consolidate peace. We witness that these forces actively supported by the Armenian diaspora and some other protagonists, consider the new reality as a challenge, but not as an opportunity. Such voices must be resolutely opposed to, while the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia must be prioritized and supported.

Wounds from the three-decade-long conflict and last year's war are still fresh and time will be needed for both societies to recover from the reminiscences of war. Azerbaijan invited the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to help realize some of the confidence-building measures and reconciliation initiatives, aimed at decreasing the instances of hate speech and harmful narratives in the media, promoting tolerance, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. Yet regrettably thus far there has been no response to our appeal.

There is an impression that the OSCE and its executive structures are under the heavy influence of those who are unhappy with the current situation and refuse to help consolidate peace and stability. That is unfortunate. The OSCE and its executive structures need to stay relevant by providing their contribution at the current phase of post-conflict rehabilitation.

The Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Kasprzyk, was recently in the region and has suggested some project proposals for confidence-building measures. Azerbaijan has positively considered some of them and is ready to engage at an expert level to finalize the proposals.

We still expect that the OSCE Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs will demonstrate that they are capable of much more than issuing ordinary statements and expressing positions. The Co-Chairs know very well what the current situation is, where we stand and what type of contribution is expected from them.

We wish to thank Russia and Turkey for their effective engagement and co-ordination of efforts aimed at the implementation of the trilateral statements.

In closing, we stress once again that the role of the OSCE as well as the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group in the current context in our region depends on their support to the full implementation of the trilateral statements as well as their respective contributions to building sustainable peace and stability in the region.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



1314th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1314, Agenda item 3(i)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Madam Chairperson,

Let me start by thanking the distinguished chargé d'affaires of the United States of America for having raised the current issue regarding the need for a comprehensive and long-term political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We also thank the delegations of Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Canada and the European Union for their statements on this current issue.

Last year's war of aggression against Artsakh – which involved the massive use of force by Azerbaijan with the direct involvement of Turkey and Turkish-backed foreign terrorist fighters – was accompanied by mass atrocities, war crimes and ethnic cleansing, leading to tens of thousands of displaced people in Nagorno-Karabakh. It has seriously undermined the efforts of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to settle the conflict by peaceful means.

Azerbaijan has not only been trying to justify its aggression: it has gone even further by claiming that it has resolved the conflict through the use of force and created new realities on the ground. Now the President of Azerbaijan has no qualms about declaring that he will resort to the use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia. The irresponsible and illegal actions of Azerbaijan following its incursion into the sovereign territory of Armenia are a clear sign of Azerbaijan's intentions, and my delegation has already updated the Permanent Council on this issue.

We welcome our partners' reaction to the developments along the Armenia-Azerbaijan State border, but at the same time we would stress once again that general calls addressed to both sides are perceived by Azerbaijan as, so to speak, a "letter to an unknown recipient" and even as an encouragement for it to continue its unlawful actions. We therefore invite our partners, and particularly the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, to abandon the practice of generalized calls and statements. Specific demands must be made – especially for the immediate and unconditional release and return of all Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages from Azerbaijani custody.

We also expect the Co-Chairs to finally react to Azerbaijan's State policy of promoting racism, dehumanizing Armenians and destroying the Armenian cultural heritage in the occupied territories of Artsakh.

We have noted the call by the Co-Chairs for humanitarian organizations to have unrestricted access to Nagorno-Karabakh. In this regard, we should like to reiterate that previously existing practices should be maintained, and that humanitarian issues should not become subject to political manipulation.

Madam Chairperson,

Realities created by the use of force can never be legitimate. We encourage the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to reinvigorate their continued efforts on the basis of the commonly agreed principle for resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, namely the realization of equal rights and self-determination of peoples – a principle that remains as valid and relevant as ever.

A comprehensive settlement of the conflict aimed at achieving lasting and sustainable peace in the region should also cover the de-occupation by Azerbaijan of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh; ensuring the safe and dignified return of the recently displaced residents of Artsakh to their homes; and preservation of the Armenian cultural and religious heritage in the territories that have fallen under the control of Azerbaijan.

The trilateral statement of 9 November 2020 should be considered without prejudice to a final lasting political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Only a political, negotiated settlement that respects the rights of all can bring peace and reconciliation to the South Caucasus region.

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of Armenia once again reiterates that it is high time to focus on a final, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and stresses that this conflict is essentially about the right of the people of Artsakh to live freely in their historical homeland and to decide their own destiny without compulsion or coercion of any sort. The temporary occupation of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, accompanied as it has been by war crimes, complete ethnic cleansing, threats and aggressive posturing, can hardly be considered conducive to a sustainable and lasting settlement. Only a negotiated political settlement that takes into account the rights of all, and whereby the status of Artsakh is determined on the basis of its people's exercising their right to self-determination, can be considered to be a genuine resolution of the conflict.

With this in mind, Armenia reiterates its readiness to participate in high-level meetings, albeit with the proviso that it is first of all necessary to create minimum conditions of trust. Such trust could be established if and when Azerbaijan abandons all its belligerent and anti-Armenian rhetoric and provocative military actions, and starts fulfilling its obligations under previously reached agreements. We have so far seen no indication of this being feasible.

Finally, I wish to stress that Armenia is ready to receive the Co-Chairs within the framework of the established practice of their regional visits.

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of today's meeting.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

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Annex 10

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1314th Plenary Meeting
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**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

It is important to recognize positive developments such as the ceasefire, the end of the almost three-decade-long illegal occupation, and the growing prospects of normalization and co-operation in the region. In this context, regarding the State border between Azerbaijan and Armenia, it is of the utmost importance that high-level representatives of some participating States, including the Co-Chair countries, refrain from inflammatory comments that could prepare the ground for further escalation.

Confidence-building ought to be a two-way exercise. As a Minsk Group member, we would be interested to learn about the activities that the Co-Chairs are conducting to that end.

Madam Chairperson,

We regret the continuation of poisonous discourse and enmity here at the OSCE. We reject the allegations made by the Armenian delegation against Turkey and its rhetoric as a whole.

We have expressed our vision for the future of the region on a number of occasions. We will continue to repeat it: it is Armenia and the Armenian people that will benefit the most from peace, stability and economic development in our region.

We join Azerbaijan's constant call on the OSCE and its participating States to support the two trilateral statements.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.