

**Right of reply
by the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

**as delivered by Mr. Seymur Mardaliyev,
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Geneva**

**37th session of the Human Rights Council
Agenda item 3
Clustered interactive dialogue with
UN SG Special Representative on children and armed conflict**

Geneva, 7 March 2018

I am taking the floor in exercising the right of reply to the statement made by the representative of Armenia in the morning session.

Statement by Armenia is nothing but yet another useless attempt by this delegation to mislead this august body from continuing aggression and occupation of the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan and policy of ethnic cleansing by Armenia. Armenian statement reminded me famous Russian proverb which says “a guilty mind betrays itself”.

Armenia has no moral right to even mention the protection and promotion of human rights as it is exactly due to the Armenia’s state policy of aggression and occupation, children in Azerbaijan suffer from the violation of their fundamental rights.

As regards the attempts by the Armenian representative to misinterpret events of April 2016, I would like to stress that escalation in the conflict zone was the consequence of the direct and deliberate targeting Azerbaijani civilians by Armenian forces living in close vicinity to the line of contact which resulted in killing 6 civilians including one child and wounding 26 people. To defend its citizens Azerbaijani armed forces undertook successful counter measures that resulted in restoring Azerbaijan's sovereignty on some territories in the occupied regions as well as ensuring the return of Azerbaijani displaced persons including children to their homes at the liberated territories where they at present enjoy full access to their basic human rights.

It should be particularly underlined that no Armenian settlements exist close to the line of contact on the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia. There are however Azerbaijani civilians living in close vicinity to the line of contact who are subject to daily violation of ceasefire regime by Armenian militaries.

Presence of the Armenian troops on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is the primary destabilizing factor in the conflict zone. That’s why immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories as demanded in the UN Security Council resolutions of 1993 is the best solution to the sufferings of children in the conflict zone, protection their rights and safe livelihood. Sooner Armenia will grasp this reality sooner peace and prosperity will knock the doors of both Azerbaijani and Armenian children in our region.

I thank you, Mr. Vice-President.