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**The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

31<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council

Clustered interactive dialogue with Special Representative of Secretary General on violence against children, and with the Special Representative of Secretary General for children and armed conflict

8 March 2016

Mr. President,

The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan welcomes the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict and for violence against children and thanks them for their reports.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is concerned about the continuous harmful and widespread impact of armed conflicts on children with its short-term and long-term consequences. The negative impact of armed conflicts on children has different aspects, such as recruitment of children, targeting schools, displacement of children and so on.

In this connection, we condemn the recruitment, training and use of children in hostilities by armed groups. We also condemn the targeting of children in situations of armed conflict and direct attacks on objects protected under international humanitarian law, including places that generally have a significant presence of children, such as schools and hospitals.

Mr. President,

Another horrible aspect of impact of armed conflicts is the displacement of children as a result of armed conflicts. Children, many of them who lost their parents or separated from their families, are at a particularly high risk of human rights violations and abuses. We do concur with the Special Representative that in time of conflict, along with targeted attacks on schools, education is also often interrupted due to a general climate of fear and insecurity or because of the displacement of school children, teachers and school personnel.

In this regard, we urge Special Representative on children and armed conflict to focus on the consequences of the ongoing occupation by Armenia of 20 % territories of Azerbaijan, in particular its impact on children. Since 1992 hundreds of Azerbaijani children were killed by Armenian soldiers, 92 children taken hostage, 3393 children lost one parent, 120 children lost both parents, hundreds of thousands of children became refugees and IDPs. As a result of continuous violations of the ceasefire regime by Armenia, 188,000 Azerbaijanis, including thousands of children were obliged to flee their places of permanent residence along the line of contact and Armenia-Azerbaijan border and move to safe places for a temporary accommodation, and became actually new IDPs.

In conclusion, while reiterating our commitment to further promotion and protection of rights of children, we urge Special Representative on children and armed conflict to strongly react to such cases against children.

Thank you for your attention.