

**STATEMENT  
by the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

**as delivered by Mr. Seymur Mardaliyev,  
Counselor of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the UNOG in Geneva**

**37<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council  
Agenda item 4**

**Geneva, 14 March 2018**

The number of the internally displaced persons has doubled to almost 41 million since 2000 due to armed conflicts and violence in different parts of the world. While internal displacement impedes the achievement of development goals, it also forces people to live in vulnerable conditions particularly in situations affected by conflicts with lack or limited access to their fundamental human rights.

The global situation of internal displacement is alarming and requires renewed attention, rethinking of approaches to prevention, addressing the root causes as well as concerted action at all levels. While fully recognizing the primary responsibility of national authorities to protect and assist IDPs, nevertheless, we believe it is important that UN, in particular Human Rights Council and the High Commissioner for Human Rights do not neglect IDPs who are increasingly locked into protracted displacement for years or even decades and start to be involved into restoration of IDPs' human rights violated as the result of the on-going conflicts.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and offers an important opportunity to raise awareness of the plight of IDPs across the globe. We believe this occasion is also a chance for all of us to demonstrate that IDPs are not left behind.

As the strong advocate of all efforts to raise the visibility to the suffering of IDPs, Azerbaijan reiterates its commitment to support the activities of all relevant UN mechanisms and other relevant actors aimed at installing the effective protection mechanisms to ensure the rights of IDPs. We urge the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, relevant mandate holders as well as other UN mechanisms and agencies to address internal displacement, in particular by continuing to mainstream the human rights of IDPs into all relevant parts of the UN system, to elevate the profile of these issues in the Human Rights Council and OHCHR agendas, to strengthen the international response to internal displacement, to engage in coordinated international advocacy and action to improve protection and respect of the human rights of such persons.

Azerbaijan's sensitivities to IDP's cause are understandable. We host one of the largest IDP population per capita in the world— above 1 million IDPs and refugees in the country of 10 million— as a result of the aggression and occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia as recognized by the relevant UN documents and decisions. In general, the Government of Azerbaijan invested about 6 billion USD in the last twenty years to address social problems of displaced population, which has resulted in significant decrease of the poverty and unemployment among this segment of population. However, the above-mentioned measures are not considered as a durable solution since the voluntary return to places of origin in safety and dignity is regarded as the only durable solution for IDPs.

I thank you.