



Statement

**33rd session of the Human Rights Council
General Debate
Agenda item 4
19 September 2016**

Mr. President,

Azerbaijan once again draws the attention of the Council to large-scale human rights violations of more than one million Azerbaijanis who have become victims of the Armenian aggression against my country.

The next session of the Council will coincide with the 30th anniversary of the first ethnic cleansing in Europe after the Second World War carried out by the Armenian regime against 250,000 Azerbaijanis who were violently expelled from their historical lands in Armenia in 1987-1988, which was accompanied by killings of hundreds of Azerbaijanis, followed by destruction of Azerbaijani historical, cultural and religious heritage in Armenia and by renaming hundreds of Azerbaijani settlements and toponyms on the territory of that country. That was the first “successful” example of physical extermination or total expulsion of an ethnic group in the post-war Europe. Having not been condemned by the international community at that time, it paved way for new atrocities in Europe and beyond in mid-90s.

Furthermore, after the collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1991, Armenia occupied 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, and another 750,000 Azerbaijanis were expelled from their homes in Azerbaijan itself. Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the involvement of the OSCE into the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, when in March 1992 the OSCE Council took a decision to establish the OSCE Minsk conference as a forum for negotiations towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict. So far, the OSCE Minsk process has yielded no tangible results.

Thus, all of the fundamental human rights of Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs have been violated by Armenia already for 30 years, which establishes a bold challenge to the UN system, including its human rights inventory, despite numerous relevant UN SC and GA Resolutions, which were expressing grave concern over displacement of civilians and humanitarian emergency in the region of the conflict and demanded immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Therefore, Azerbaijan strongly urges the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Human Rights Council to pay due attention to the sufferings of Azerbaijani victims of this conflict as demanded by the UN documents.

Thank you.