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**UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-fourth Session**

**Clustered Interactive Dialogue with
Special Rapporteur on Environment**

Statement

**delivered by Aydan Muradova, Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in
Geneva**

March 8, 2017

Mr. President,

At the outset, on behalf of the Delegation of Azerbaijan I would like to thank Special Rapporteur for his report.

Two crucial interconnected elements of the common heritage which are obligatory for the humanity to conserve and transmit to the future generations are peace and environment. And by a matter of fact these are the elements which our vulnerable and fragile world is experiencing such a difficulty to preserve.

It is a common knowledge that there can be no durable and sustainable peace in the world if the environment that sustains livelihoods is destroyed, polluted and barbarically exploited.

As you all well aware, Azerbaijan for 25 years continues to suffer from the aggression of Armenia, which has led to the seizure of 20 percent of the sovereign territory of my country, claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people, ruined cities and livelihood and resulted in the forcible expulsion of more than 1 million Azerbaijanis from their homes and properties.

Since the beginning of the conflict Armenia has deliberately employed methods and means of brutal warfare to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the environment, including the biodiversity of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, through destroying forests, burning and degrading soil, polluting water resources and killing animals.

The continuing occupation by Armenia of the territories of Azerbaijan deprives hundreds of thousands of citizens of Azerbaijan of drinking water, causes soil erosion, dehydration and desertification and severely affects region's economy in particular its agriculture. Armenia is always using the Sarsang reservoir, located in the invaded area as a mean of mass destruction against Azerbaijan by deliberately closing and thus preventing access to drinking and irrigation water for the frontier regions of Azerbaijan.

The environment is being severely damaged by the continuing barbaric and illegal exploitation by Armenia of natural resources in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Such

exploitation has generated significant profit for Armenia to continue funding a war against my country.

In total disregard of the demands of UN Security Council and UN General Assembly resolutions, Armenia bears full responsibility for the breaches of international law, including those that have caused damage to the environment of Azerbaijan and the depletion of natural resources in its occupied territories.

Azerbaijan urges UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Environment to focus, investigate and reflect in his next report the crimes against environment committed by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the damage it continues to cause.

Thank you for your attention.