



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATION**

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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Yashar Aliyev
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations
at the Security Council open debate on mediation and settlement of disputes**

29 August 2018

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the United Kingdom's presidency for organizing today's open debate on the important topic of mediation and settlement of disputes.

Challenges to peace and security facing the world nowadays call for a strengthening of the international legal order and redoubled efforts at all levels towards both the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises.

It is critical that mediation frameworks not be used as a tool to entrenching the situations resulting from the unlawful use of force, war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing. In the same vein, it is important that the international community consistently oppose and reject any attempts to cover up and consolidate aggressions and other illegal acts by misinterpretation of the international legal norms and principles.

The established principle of the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and the ensuing obligation of non-recognition of situations resulting from serious violations of international law must be applied and enforced universally and unconditionally.

These obligations are constituents of the common rule-based international order; they are universally binding and apply to all situations and conflicts whatever their distinct root causes and nature.

Equally important is to ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations. It is unacceptable that armed aggressions against the sovereign States and the resulting military occupation of their territories continue notwithstanding the Security Council resolutions.

As is known, in its unanimously adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), the Security Council condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan, the occupation of its territories, the attacks on civilians and the bombardment of inhabited areas in my country, reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory.

In response to territorial claims and forcible actions, the Security Council reconfirmed in those resolutions that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories.

However, unfortunately, key Security Council demands have still not been implemented and the mediation efforts conducted for twenty six years within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have yet to yield results.

On the contrary, despite earlier warnings, demands and condemnation by the international community and against the background of ongoing efforts towards the political settlement of the conflict, deliberate actions are being carried out in the occupied territories with a view to securing their colonization and annexation, in clear violation of international law. Such actions include, *inter alia*, implantation of settlers, destruction and appropriation of historical and cultural heritage, exploitation and pillage of and illicit trade in assets, natural resources and other wealth in the seized territories.

As a country suffering from the occupation of its territories and the forcible displacement of hundreds of thousands of its citizens, Azerbaijan is the most interested party in the earliest political settlement of the conflict and removal of its consequences. At the same time, no settlement of the conflict can be reached which violates the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and is inconsistent with international law.

The primary objective of the ongoing peace process, whose mandate is based on the aforementioned Security Council resolutions, is to ensure the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the return of the forcibly displaced persons to their homes and properties. The achievement of that objective is imperative and can in no way be introduced as a compromise and used as a bargaining chip in the conflict settlement process. The military occupation and ethnic cleansing of the territories of Azerbaijan do not represent a solution and will never bring peace, reconciliation and stability.

Thank you.