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**Statement by Mr. Tofiq F. Musayev
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan
in the explanation of position on the resolution entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural
dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace” (A/76/L.21)**

***48th plenary meeting of the General Assembly
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Azerbaijan would like to offer the following explanation of vote on the resolution contained in document A/76/L.21, entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”, which was just adopted with the overwhelming support of Member States.

Azerbaijan shares the main objectives of the resolution and voted in its favour. We are grateful to the delegations of Pakistan and the Philippines for their leadership and strong commitment to the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the promotion of a culture of peace, paying particular attention to encouraging intercultural and interreligious dialogue at the national, regional and international levels.

In that regard, we note that the resolution welcomes the declarations adopted by the Global Forums of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which also include the declaration of the Seventh Global Forum of UNAOC, held in Baku in April 2016.

Furthermore, the resolution just adopted is the fifth one referring to the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue as a key global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue, which since 2011 has been organized biennially by Azerbaijan, in cooperation with UNESCO, the Alliance of Civilizations, the World Tourism Organization, the Council of Europe and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

We welcome the international recognition of the World Forum, the leading role and important contribution of which were emphasized also in the three earlier reports of the Secretary-General (A/72/488, para. 40; A/74/476, para. 9; and A/74/212, paras. 2-3), in the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, as well as in a number of other international documents.

Against this background, irrelevant and unacceptable comments made by the delegate of Armenia, at the core of which are undoubtedly deeply rooted racial hatred and attempts to disguise its own flagrant violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, run counter to the very spirit, as well as well the object and purpose of the resolution.

By presenting its standard set of insinuations, Armenia has once again eloquently confirmed that its narrow and short-sighted political agenda is incompatible with such notions as “culture”, “peace” and “dialogue”.

Azerbaijan regrets that, this year again, a hostile position of Armenia has prevented the General Assembly from adopting the important resolution by consensus.

We also regret that could not join other Member States in co-sponsoring the resolution. Our position on the event and its highly controversial outcome document referred to in preambular paragraph 30 was explained in detail in the statement delivered by the delegation of Azerbaijan at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly held on 15 April 2018 (see A/73/PV.75, pages 5 and 6).