



**Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Azerbaijan on recent provocations
by the Republic of Armenia**

2016-12-29

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in strongest terms condemns the provocation perpetrated by the reconnaissance group of Armenian armed forces on the state border of Armenia and Azerbaijan on December 29, 2016 and the actions of Armenia escalate the situation.

Instead of taking concrete steps for the resolution of the conflict and engaging in substantive talks according to the discussions at the meetings of Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Vienna and Sank-Petersburg, Armenia tries by means of different provocative actions to undermine the negotiations, to continue its policy of aggression against Azerbaijan, as well as to strengthen its military presence in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and by attempting to involve the third parties to the conflict to maintain the status-quo.

Azerbaijan side has repeatedly stated that the continuation of Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and the presence of Armenian armed forces in the occupied sovereign territories of Azerbaijan remains the major threat to regional peace and security, and is the main cause of violation of ceasefire and occurrence of incidents. The escalation of situation in April with the instigation and provocation of Armenia is yet another vivid example of that.

We consider that the comment by the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the issue is lopsided. Contrary to the official position of the CSTO Member States and the essence of the negotiation process conducted with the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, addressing by the Secretary General the illegal regime established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as “nagorno-karabakh republic” is unacceptable. Before issuing any remark or comment, the CSTO Secretary-General must properly analyze and assess the situation on the ground. It should also not to be ruled out that facing yet another disappointment in the last Sankt-Petersburg Summit meeting of CSTO Armenia resorted to such provocative actions.

The Republic of Azerbaijan with the aim of eliminating the consequences of Armenian aggression and occupation of its territories, ensuring its territorial integrity and sovereignty will continue its efforts and the substantial negotiations jointly with the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs for the settlement of the conflict on the basis of the norms and principals of international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the Helsinki Final Act.