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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Fariz Rzayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the Security Council open debate on the theme: “Maintenance of international peace and security: new orientation for reformed multilateralism”**

***14 December 2022***

The United Nations is a critical pillar of multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the Organization constitute the foundational normative framework in international relations.

Since the establishment of the United Nations, a lot has been accomplished to settle international disputes, develop legal standards and obligations and restore hope in those affected by war, violence and instability.

However, while the world is becoming more divided, uncompromising and intolerant, peoples throughout the planet continue to suffer from conflicts, forced displacements, terrorism, violent extremism, inequality and insecurity.

Policies aimed at sowing dissension on religious and racial grounds, building mono-ethnic societies and advocating ethnic incompatibility and supremacy fuel intolerance, destabilize societies and undermine peaceful coexistence.

The lack of accountability for serious violations of international law is also among the conditions conducive to the protraction, expansion or resurgence of conflicts.

Strengthened global solidarity, multilateralism and common efforts, with the United Nations at the core, grounded in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, are the most effective ways to achieve the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all.

It is imperative that all States abide by their international obligations, particularly those relating to respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference.

Providing support to States affected by conflict and engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction and rehabilitation must be a commitment of the international community.

The effective functioning of the multilateral system necessitates the implementation of decisions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations.

Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations is clear on the obligations of States to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. The lack of proper attention by the Council to apparent disregard and misinterpretation of its resolutions containing binding demands is not a positive practice.

The case of Azerbaijan is clear here. For twenty-seven years the resolutions of the Security Council remained unimplemented. The resolutions demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional end of the occupation of the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan. The resolutions were simply ignored with complete impunity, while hundreds of thousands of people were uprooted and prevented from returning to their homes and properties for almost three decades.

The occupying forces of the neighboring Republic of Armenia continued to resort to multiple armed provocations throughout the period of occupation. As a result of large-scale armed provocation in September 2020, the Republic of Azerbaijan was obliged to launch a counter-offensive operation in full line with Article 51 of the UN Charter and the named four resolutions of the Security Council passed in 1993.

As a result, the territories of Azerbaijan were liberated from the long-term unlawful foreign military occupation. The Republic of Azerbaijan launched a large-scale campaign aimed at rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of the conflict-affected territories.

We extend the hand of post-conflict normalization to Armenia, and we call upon the Armenian side to abide by its international obligations, put an end to its illegal activities, cease territorial claims, completely withdraw its armed forces and illegal armed formations from the territories of Azerbaijan, redress the harm caused to Azerbaijan and our people and concentrate on direct negotiations with a view to soonest finding the diplomatic solutions pertaining to interstate relations.

We believe that our region experienced enough devastation and suffering, we believe we must use this unique window of opportunity to finally turn the tragic page of history together and build the common positive future together for the sake of next generations.

Thank you.