



633 Third Avenue, Suite 3210, New York, NY, 10017
Tel: (212) 371-2559, 371-2832 (ext. 101); Fax: (212) 371-2784, (646) 738-6143

**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 the theme “Promote sustaining peace through common
development” under the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security”**

20 November 2023

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of China for having convened this important open debate.

Azerbaijan has been a staunch promoter of the people-centered development approach, including through transformational changes to remodel the country’s economy with a focus on sustainability, inclusive growth, social justice and clean energy. Over the last 20 years, more than 310 billion US dollars have been invested in Azerbaijan’s economy, including around 200 billion in the non-energy sector.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan has transformed into one of the key transport and logistics hubs between Europe and Asia, greatly contributing to the development of trans-regional connectivity projects, investing in transport infrastructure and widening cooperation with regional partners.

All these efforts have been undertaken despite decades of armed conflict and its devastating humanitarian and economic impact.

Earlier this month, on November 8, Azerbaijan celebrated the third anniversary of the Victory Day to mark the end of the thirty-year Armenian aggression and occupation.

The causes of the war are indicative of how ethno-nationalist ideology, the rejection of diversity and the aspiration for monoethnicity can be a driving force dominating over universal principles, sustainable and inclusive development and the prospects and benefits of regional cooperation.

Those who ordered and perpetrated mass atrocities against civilians and other protected persons in my country were inspired by the objectives of ethnic purity in one of the most horrific campaigns of systemic racial discrimination in recent history. They first expelled more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis from their historical homeland in Armenia and today deny their right of return, then ethnically cleansed all occupied territories of their more than 700,000 Azerbaijani population, razed 9 cities and hundreds of villages in Azerbaijan to the ground and looted, vandalized and destroyed thousands of our cultural and religious sites.

Those in Armenia who refrain from prosecuting serious crimes committed by its forces, shy away from shedding light on the fate of almost 4,000 missing Azerbaijanis, as well as planted hundreds of thousands of landmines and other explosive devices in the formerly occupied territories and refuse now to disclose their locations are guided by the same hate motives.

Mr. President,

Providing support to States affected by conflict and engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding is and must remain a critical commitment of the United Nations. Such support and solidarity are critical to my country and many States around the world that are overcoming the severe consequences of conflicts.

After the end of the war three years ago, Azerbaijan has prioritized the demining, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the liberated territories and their reintegration into the country's economy to ensure the safe and dignified return of the displaced population and the high standard of living. Life is gradually returning to these lands and the first groups of displaced families have already returned to their places of origin.

Despite the post-conflict peace and development prospects, Armenia opted for maintaining territorial claims, refusing to completely withdraw its armed forces from the territory of Azerbaijan, further inciting violent ethnic separatism in my country and increasing armed provocations on the ground.

The security measures taken by Azerbaijan in its Karabakh region within less than 24 hours this September ensured the restoration of the State's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in full conformity with the rights and responsibilities vested in States in accordance with the U.N. Charter and international law to protect their nationals and react to an unlawful military presence of foreign troops and illegal armed formations on their territory.

As the main obstacles to advancing the agenda for the normalization of inter-State relations have been eliminated, we expect that Armenia will strictly abide by its international obligations, cease and desist from disinformation and misinformation and engage faithfully in efforts to build peace and stability in the region.

Attempts by some non-regional States to turn the South Caucasus into an object of geopolitical rivalry and confrontation, including by arming Armenia and encouraging its hate propaganda, do not serve peace, reconciliation and inclusive development.

Azerbaijan will continue its development and peace sustaining efforts in the region and will further contribute to global endeavours to ensure equitable access of developing countries to financing, development resources and benefits of progress.

Thank you.