STATEMENT

By First Secretary of Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Mr. Ogtay Ismayil-Zada at the meeting of the First Committee.

Thematic Discussion: Regional disarmament and security.


Mr. Chairman.

Azerbaijan joins other delegations in congratulating you on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly’s 63-rd session. We also congratulate other members of the bureau on their well-deserved election.

The Republic of Azerbaijan actively participates in joint efforts to address regional and global issues, with particular focus on regional security, combating terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ensuring energy security.

We consider it important to take a number of steps for achieving peace and stability in the region. Foremost, the region should be free from weapons of mass destruction. Development of the regional relations in line with the nuclear non-proliferation norms of international law is a precondition for ensuring and strengthening stability at the regional and global level.

The regional disarmament and security play a vital role in establishing peace in conflict situation. Unfortunately, unresolved conflicts in many instances become a source of concentration of uncontrolled arms as well as provide fertile ground for transnational organized crime and other illegal activities.
During the last decade Armenia has been intensively building up its military presence and capability in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The analysis of the data indicates that during this period the numbers of unaccounted for and uncontrolled arms in the occupied territories have been consistently increasing. According to our information, Armenia is hiding up to 316 tanks, 324 armored combat vehicles and 322 artillery systems in our occupied territories. These items of equipment must be counted against the maximum levels of Armenia’s holdings and it is obvious that our neighbour has exceeded its ceilings more than twice, thus, seriously changing the military balance in the region in its favour.

As a consequence great numbers of UTLES are accumulated in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The occupied territories of Azerbaijan give Armenia an opportunity to use repair facilities and, moreover, to transfer and hide UTLES from the CFE community. This endangers not only the national security of Azerbaijan, but also the stable development of the whole region.

Mr. Chairman.

The statements of Armenian officials are full of accusations towards Azerbaijan about its allegedly militaristic intentions and armaments race. The Armenians are stirring hysteria about oil revenues of Azerbaijan, which are supposedly being used for military purposes only.

With regard to the increase of the military budget of Azerbaijan, as we have stated previously, it is the matter of an overall economic development of the country and the general increase of the state budget. In terms of quantitative indicators, we are not exceeding the usual norms of expenditures in a peace time despite the fact of occupation and undeclared war. It should be taken into account that the considerable part of expenditures goes to salaries, housing and other social needs of the military personnel. Moreover, comparative analysis shows that in correlation to its population Armenia is much more militarized in terms of number of military personnel, as well quantity of armaments. The military budget of Armenia as a percentage of GDP consists of 3.86 %, while Azerbaijan has 3.26 %.

We understand the true reason of Armenia’s misinterpretation launched in all international forums. The purpose is to create a smokescreen of its intentions in the occupied territories and to win time.
Mr. Chairman.

Despite the fact that Azerbaijan is in a state of war and its territories are under occupation, we are continuing to fulfill our commitments under the CFE Treaty. Azerbaijan has reduced and destroyed more than 150 treaty-limited armaments and equipment (TLEs) during the last five years in order to maintain conformity with the limits set by the Tashkent Agreement.

In conclusion, I want to declare that as long as Armenia continues to follow its aggressive policy, any talks about peace, stability and all-inclusive cooperation in our region are irrelevant. First of all, Armenia should ask herself about the reasons of such a situation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.