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**Statement by Mr. Tofiq F. Musayev
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations**

**at the meeting of the Working Group of the 2024 session of the Special Committee on the
Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
under the agenda on the peaceful settlement of disputes**

22 February 2024

Mr. Chairman,

Unfortunately, despite recent unprecedented developments in the normalization of inter-State relations and a series of confidence building measures agreed following direct bilateral talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which were welcomed by the Secretary-General and the international community, Armenia continues to rely on misinterpretations and distortions.

As all delegations are well aware, General Assembly resolution 78/111 invited Member States to focus their comments, during the thematic debate at this year's session of the Special Committee under the agenda item on the peaceful settlement of disputes, on the subtopic "Exchange of information on State practices regarding the use of good offices". However, it is unlikely that any delegation present at this meeting was able to identify this subtopic in the comments made by the delegate of Armenia. Instead, these comments were entirely focused on my country, definitely not on State practices regarding the use of good offices as one of the means of the pacific settlement of international disputes. Consequently, the comments made by the delegate of Armenia are irrelevant, to say the least.

The delegate of Armenia also eloquently demonstrated her country's total ignorance of the meaning of the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes as such. According to Armenia, this principle was supposed to contribute to an indefinite continuation and sustenance of the situation resulted from its aggression against Azerbaijan. If it were so, then the prohibition on the use of force and the right of self-defence would have little value. The sole purpose of the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes is to prevent conflicts, not freeze their military outcomes.

Armenia had almost three decades to put an end to its aggression and occupation through negotiations. Instead, Armenia refused to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, which demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdraw of the Armenian occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, and directed all its efforts at colonizing the occupied territories under the cover of the ceasefire and the peace process. The defeat of this policy was inevitable.

Yet in 2008, in the comprehensive legal report that Azerbaijan circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council, we stated very clearly that should Armenia put a prompt end to the occupation of our territories while the ceasefire lasts, and before Azerbaijan opts to re-invoke its right of self-defence, there would be no ground for any actual resumption of hostilities (A/63/662-S/2008/812). It is regretful that Armenia ignored this clear message.

In the same vein, Armenia ignored similar repeated messages after the end of the war in the fall of 2020, refusing to withdraw its more than 10,000 heavily armed forces from the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan, continuing to advance territorial claims, further inciting violent ethnic separatism in Azerbaijan and killing and maiming Azerbaijanis on their own sovereign territory.

Azerbaijan legitimately exercised its inherent right and responsibility to protect its people, defend its territorial integrity and restore peace and stability in the region. The common feature of all actions that Azerbaijan was compelled to take in response to Armenia's repeated unlawful use of force was their compliance with the U.N. Charter and international law.

The delegate of Armenia further distorted the ongoing legal process between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the International Court of Justice and passed over in silence the fact that Azerbaijan also instituted the proceedings in the ICJ to hold Armenia accountable for systematic violations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and that the Court delivered the provisional measures in respect of Armenia.

On a particular note, the delegate of Armenia must be well aware that the legal name of the area, to which she erroneously referred as "Nagorno-Karabakh" and which was under her country's unlawful occupation for nearly three decades, is the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan.

Armenia still has lessons to learn in order to finally understand that the goal of a peaceful, safe, developing and sustainable region cannot be achieved by disrespecting and misinterpreting international law, endlessly replicating false narratives and pursuing the policy of hatred and territorial claims.

Instead of wasting time for lecturing others about the principles, values and norms that it has consistently disregarded and opposed, Armenia must concentrate on respecting own international obligations and engaging faithfully in normalizing inter-State relations and building peace in the region.

Thank you.