

**The Speech by Mr Ogtay Asadov,
the President of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

in the 4th Global Conference of Speakers of Parliament

(New York City, 31 August– 2 September 2015)

Dear Chairman,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to cordially greet all of you on behalf of the Parliament of Azerbaijan and wish success to our conference.

After restoring its independence by the end of the last century the Republic of Azerbaijan has firmly chosen the path of democratic development with a view of building a constitutional state and establishing civil society. Democracy is a crucial mean for the civilian settlement of the conflicts between the authorities and the society. In fact, it is an ideal which constitutes the long-term development objective of any society. On the other hand, democracy is one of the prerequisites for the creation of the prosperous living conditions for all individuals.

It is indeed, a very positive sign that the organisers have chosen the “Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development” as the key topic for the debates. It is also an estimable fact that the parliaments of the countries all around the world resolutely state their commitment to participate in the solution of the global challenges which derive from the intention to put a concrete democratic content into the collective efforts towards building a better world.

At present, parliaments start playing, through international cooperation, a gradually increasing and active role in the regulation of various problems faced by the humanity. As it has been indicated in the draft Outcome Document, that we have been discussing here, the parliamentary diplomacy has already demonstrated its ability to foster the efforts directed towards elimination of disagreements and conflicts.

The draft Outcome Document also determines the scope of the problems that may be solved through inter-parliamentary cooperation. These are such problems as wars and conflicts, terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in human beings, illicit drug trafficking, poverty, gender equality and so on, which make the humanity to think over more and more.

I deeply regret that the problem of aggressive separatism has not been included into the text of the Outcome Document. Separatism is one of the main reasons of many grave wars and conflicts. All of us are well aware of the bitter results that the attempts to achieve ethnic-political goals using violence may bring, so I propose to include pugnacious separatism in the text of the Outcome Document as the problem concerning the humanity.

I am of the opinion that this problem is one of the biggest threats for peace and security not only in various regions, but also in the entire world. In this context, I particularly want to touch upon the Armenia – Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that has caused such countless deprivations to the Azerbaijani people.

It has been more than 20 years now as 20 per cent of the Azerbaijani lands, e.g. the Nagorno-Karabakh region, which is an ancient territory of Azerbaijan, and 7 adjacent to it territories have been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Ethnic cleansing accompanied with the dreadful

acts of genocide has been conducted in the occupied territories and as a result, 1 million of Azerbaijanis have been expelled from their homelands.

In its resolutions Nos 822, 853, 874 and 884 adopted in 1993, the UN Security Council unambiguously affirmed the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan and claimed the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied Azerbaijani territories. Later on, a number of other international organizations also stated their support to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, the conflict has not been settled up to the present. This is the reason why I think that there is a need towards more resolute actions by the international community in this context.

On behalf of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan I declare that we stand ready to support strengthening the cooperation among the parliaments of various countries of the world in order to to put into reality the goals and objectives indicated in the draft Outcome Document.

Concluding, I extend my gratitude to the organizers of the conference for the excellent conditions created for us and express my convenience that it is important to have this type of events also in the future.

Thank you very much for your attention.