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**Permanent Mission of the  
Republic of Azerbaijan  
to the United Nations**

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**Security Council  
4852<sup>nd</sup> meeting  
Agenda item "Women and Peace and Security"**

**Statement  
by  
H.E. Yashar Aliyev,  
Permanent Representative**

**New York  
October 29, 2003**

Thank you Mr. President,

I would like to echo the previous speakers in welcoming the initiative of the United States Presidency to hold an open debate in the Security Council on the agenda item "Women and peace and security". Our special thanks go to Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno, Under-Secretary-General for peacekeeping operations, and Ms. Amy Smythe, Senior Advisor of MONUC, for their valuable observations. This issue, which is of principled importance for our country, is in the limelight of all members of society. In this regard, I would like to thank the Secretary General and all those who contributed to the preparation of the report on women, peace and security (document S/2002/1154 dated October 16, 2002). The report presents valuable recommendations for the consideration of the Members States. Azerbaijan shares them and supports their operationalization.

Mr. President,

The twenty-first century has witnessed both a dynamic movement towards worldwide implementation of the principle of gender equality and proliferation of various kinds of conflicts where women became to an alarming degree victims and targets of atrocities and aggression. The analyses of both trends have proven that notions of peace and advancement of women are inextricably linked in a number of dimensions. This interconnection is strikingly evident in the situation of armed conflict, which consequences most heavily affect women and children both physically and psychologically. Nevertheless, while trying to mainstream the gender perspective into each stage of the armed conflict, one cannot, but reveals the most impressive fact that affected women, suffering from the various forms of violence, avail themselves more hesitantly than men to rehabilitation programs.

Moreover, the report prepared in accordance with resolution 1325 of October 31, 2000, on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls identified that women and girl are disproportionately targeted in contemporary armed conflicts and constitutes the majority of all victims. We concur with the recommendation on the necessity to recognize the extent of the violations of the human rights of women and girl during armed conflict and to ensure that it is duly taken into account in planning and implementation of peace support operations. In this regard, local and international NGO's acting to protect and remedy those affected by the

armed conflict could serve as reliable sources of information. To this end, cooperation between international organizations, including those of the UN system, and government concerned is indispensable element to ensure the dynamic of positive changes of attitudes and mind-sets of affected women and girls upon which peace and security depends.

In our view, the armed conflicts most outrageously impact on women and girl when they are taken hostage or imprisoned by parties to the conflict. In such situation women and children hostages are exposed to various forms of violence ranging from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment to rape, slavery, and trafficking in women and children for the purpose of their sexual exploitation, forced labor or services.

Here, I would like to mention that the Commission on Status of Women and Economic and Social Council have already condemned these illegal acts committed against women and girls in their resolutions entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned in armed conflict" (Documents E/CN.6/2002/13 and E/2002/27). Both organs condemned these violent acts in contravention of international humanitarian law against the civilian population, as such, in areas of armed conflict, and called for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts.

Mr. President,

We pleased to note that during the last decade international legal frameworks that provide protection for women and girls affected by armed conflicts ha been developed. It is encouraging that statutes of the two International Tribunals created by the Security Council to address crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have been expanded to include gender-based violence, such as rape, enforced prostitution and trafficking during armed conflict, as well as torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and enslavement.

At the same time, I believe that other forms of violence affecting women and girls in situation of armed conflict, including hostage taking, must also be recognized and adequately acknowledged by proper legal body, in particular the International Criminal Court. These would allow women and girls -

victims of violence in situations of armed conflict - to have an opportunity to pursue claims for compensation for injuries and other physical and moral damage incurred.

Mr. President,

Another dimension of the impact of the armed conflicts on women and girl is the situation of women and girls refugees and internally displaced persons. Coping with problems of women refugees requires integration of specific gender-sensitive concerns into the full spectrum of emergency assistance and in particular in transition from relief to development. Women refugees could be efficiently involved in the processes of identification of needs of the affected population and distribution of humanitarian assistance in the field. Their active participation in tailoring gender-sensitive rehabilitation programs relevant to their livelihood, food security and health would provide better relief and employment opportunities for women refugees.

Mr. President,

Revealing all above-mentioned points brings me to the conclusion that despite their increased vulnerability and exposure to violence during and impact of armed conflict, women role in giving and sustaining life has gradually developed their unique skills and instincts contributing to peace and development. Therefore, I believe that it is our common goal to ensure that women concerns are fully incorporated into our efforts to maintain peace and security.

Thank you.