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**Security Council
Seventy-fifth year**

Letter dated 14 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In reference to the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia ([A/74/771-S/2020/242](#)), I would like to point out the following.

Firstly, the above-mentioned letter contains as its annex the so-called “memorandum” on behalf of the puppet regime established by Armenia in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In this connection, we register once again our resolute protest against the continued circulation by Armenia of various papers in the name of that regime. Besides being a primitive fabrication and example of extreme cynicism, such papers are null and void per se and must be rejected at the outset.¹

The very fact of propagating a regime that was set up as a result of aggression, ethnic cleansing and mass killings graphically demonstrates Armenia’s refusal to comply with the obligations incumbent on it under the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The international community has recently reaffirmed its consistent and principled position of collective non-recognition of the situation resulting from the

¹ See [A/72/508-S/2017/836](#), [A/72/889-S/2018/546](#), [A/73/689-S/2018/1167](#), [A/74/320-S/2019/669](#), [A/74/636-S/2019/1014](#) and [A/74/744-S/2020/193](#).



occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan by rejecting and invalidating the so-called “elections” to the self-styled structures of the puppet regime staged by Armenia on 31 March 2020.²

Secondly, the fact that Armenia and its political and military leadership and subordinate forces, including local armed bands, terrorist groups and mercenaries, are responsible for the commission of multiple war crimes in Khojaly and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan is well documented, not only by the official investigation, but also by numerous independent and impartial sources consisting, inter alia, of the documents of international organizations and reports by eminent international lawyers, foreign journalists, human rights activists and international non-governmental organizations.

In addition to the testimonies contained in my letter dated 24 February 2020,³ particular mention should be made of the following statement of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in response to attempts by Armenia to misrepresent this human rights organization with fabrications:

Our research and that of the Memorial Human Rights Centre found that the retreating militia fled Khojaly along with some of the large groups of fleeing civilians. Our report noted that by remaining armed and in uniform, the Azerbaijani militia may be considered as combatants and thus endangered fleeing civilians, even if their intent had been to protect them.

Yet we place direct responsibility for the civilian deaths with Karabakh Armenian forces. Indeed, neither our report nor that of [the Centre] includes any evidence to support the argument that Azerbaijani forces obstructed the flight of, or fired on Azeri civilians.⁴

Moreover, pronouncements by high-ranking officials of Armenia, along with publications of Armenian authors, also unambiguously confirm that Armenian forces carried out targeted attacks against Azerbaijani civilians in the town of Khojaly in February 1992, as a result of which hundreds of its residents were killed, wounded and taken hostage, while the town was razed to the ground.

The former Minister of Defence and President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, who had previously been a senior commander of the unlawful armed groups in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, which had participated in the seizure of Khojaly and mass killings of its inhabitants, said the following in an interview very clearly:

Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against

² See, e.g., [A/74/776-S/2020/261](#); Communiqué of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the so-called “elections” held in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, available at [www.namazerbaijan.org/pdf/acdoc6.pdf](#); statement by the Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union on the so-called presidential and parliamentary elections, available at [ceas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/76801/nagorno-karabakh-statement-spokesperson-so-called-presidential-and-parliamentary-elections_en](#); press statement by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, available at [www.osce.org/minsk-group/449410](#); statement by the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, “OIC rejects the holding of elections in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh”, available at [www.oic-oci.org/topic/?t_id=23303&t_ref=13971&lan=en](#); statement by the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States, available at [www.turkkon.org/en/haberler/statement-by-the-cooperation-council-of-turkic-speaking-states_1986](#).

³ [A/74/718-S/2020/149](#).

⁴ Letter dated 23 March 1997 from the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia. Available at [www.hrw.org/news/1997/03/23/response-armenian-government-letter-town-khojaly-nagorno-karabakh#](#).

the civilian population. We needed to put a stop to all that. And that's what happened.⁵

In reply to a question regarding whether things could have happened differently and whether he had any regrets about the death of thousands of people, S. Sargsyan responded without remorse that “he has absolutely no regrets”, since “such upheavals are necessary, even if thousands have to die”.⁶

These self-explanatory revelations by a person who held the highest political and military positions in Armenia not only disprove any denial of responsibility for the crimes committed by the Armenians in Khojaly and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, but also demonstrate the real threat posed by Armenia's policy to peace, security and stability in the region and beyond.

That hatred, animosity and intolerance on ethnic and religious grounds are at the core of this policy is evidenced in the unconcealed conviction of the Armenian leadership regarding the “ethnic incompatibility” between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. While such an odious concept has been part and parcel of the long-standing ideology followed in Armenia, this specific phrase was used for the first time in a statement of Robert Kocharian when he was the President of Armenia. As the then Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimmer, said, “Kocharian's comment was tantamount to warmongering” and a manifestation of “bellicose and hate rhetoric”. The then President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Peter Schieder, observed that, “since its creation”, the Council of Europe had “never heard the phrase ‘ethnic incompatibility’”.⁷

Jirair Libaridian, who was chief adviser to the first President of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrossian, at the time of the Khojaly massacre, admitted that it was “very difficult for an Armenian to write about Khojali” because “something unacceptable did happen, something that involved killings and mutilation of Azeri civilians by Armenian forces in Karabakh”.⁸

The Armenian author Markar Melkonian, who dedicated his memoirs to the “glorious road” followed by his brother – the notorious international terrorist Monte Melkonian, who personally took part in the assault on Khojaly – describes in detail how Armenian soldiers butchered the peaceful inhabitants of this town. Thus, as he puts it, some inhabitants of Khojaly had almost made it to safety, after fleeing for nearly six miles, when “[Armenian] soldiers had chased them down”. The soldiers, in his words, “unsheathed the knives they had carried on their hips for so long, and began stabbing”.⁹

Experts describe the slaughter in Khojaly as the worst atrocity of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war.¹⁰ The recently published comprehensive report on war crimes in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia's responsibility¹¹ provides convincing evidence as to the range, variety and consistency

⁵ Available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/24/president-interview-andtragic-anniversary/9vpa>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Council of Europe criticizes Armenian President”, RFE/RL Newline, 17 January 2003. Available at www.rferl.org/content/article/1142847.html.

⁸ Gerard Libaridian, “An Armenian perspective on Khojali”, February 2014. Available at www.opendemocracy.net/en/armenian-perspective-on-khojali/.

⁹ Markar Malkonian, *My Brother's Road: An American's Fateful Journey to Armenia* (London and New York, I. B. Tauris), 2005, pp. 213–214.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Laurence Broers, *Armenia and Azerbaijan: Anatomy of a Rivalry* (Edinburgh, 2019), p. 37; and Thomas de Waal, “Time for an Armenia-Azerbaijan history ceasefire”, 25 February 2020, available at <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/81137>.

¹¹ A/74/676-S/2020/90.

of Armenia's violations of the rules and customs of war. That those who committed war crimes continue to enjoy immunity and are glorified in Armenia proves that this Member State's policy of aggression, racism and deep-rooted hatred remains unaffected by changes in its Government and differences among political figures in the country.

The objectives of lasting peace and genuine reconciliation require action by the United Nations, its relevant organs and mechanisms, Member States, other relevant international organizations and the international community as a whole to ensure justice and accountability.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 32, 37, 68, 70, 75 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
