

**Azərbaycan Respublikasının
BMT yanında Daimi
Nümayəndəliyi**



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

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

**at the General Debate of the First Committee of the seventy-seventh session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

12 October 2022

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Azerbaijan is strongly committed to its obligations in the areas of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament and will continue supporting international efforts aimed at eliminating the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, achieving the goal of nuclear-weapons-free world, ending illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, addressing the challenges arising from new technologies and in cyberspace, ensuring respect for international humanitarian law and promoting confidence and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

The aggression committed against my country by neighboring Armenia in the early 1990s has seriously destabilized the security situation in the region.

A significant part of the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan was seized and remained under occupation for nearly thirty years, in clear violation of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Among other military and humanitarian ramifications of the war, Armenia used the occupied territories to conceal its military activities from the relevant international and regional arms control and verification mechanisms, including the deployment of forces and stockpiling undeclared and uncontrolled military equipment, armaments and ammunitions in these territories.

Over the years, Armenia has provided inaccurate and incomplete information about its armed forces in the Annual Exchange of Military Information under the OSCE Vienna Document and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

Another act of aggression by Armenia in the fall of 2020 became a logical consequence of its decades-long impunity. Direct and indiscriminate missile attacks that struck Azerbaijani cities and districts, including with the use of internationally banned cluster bombs, killed and wounded hundreds of civilians and destroyed numerous civilian objects.

Azerbaijan resolutely responded to protect its people and restore its territorial integrity, acting exclusively on its sovereign soil, in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

During the hostilities that lasted 44 days, the armed forces of Azerbaijan liberated more than 300 cities, towns and villages from occupation and the Trilateral Statement was signed on the 10th of November 2020, ending the thirty-year aggression and conflict.

Armaments worth billions of dollars belonging to Armenia that were destroyed or seized in the territory of Azerbaijan, along with losses of personnel of its armed forces, exposed Armenia's longstanding denial of its responsibility for aggression, occupation and non-compliance with the arms control regime.

The post-conflict realities offer an opportunity and real prospects for building peace, consolidating stability and investing in economic development and cooperation.

Therefore, right after the end of the conflict, Azerbaijan initiated the process of normalizing inter-State relations with Armenia, underscoring the pressing need for concrete results on three specific tracks forming the agenda of bilateral discussions, namely, the delimitation and demarcation of the State border; the soonest conclusion of a peace treaty; and the opening of transport communications in the region, as provided in the Trilateral Statements of 2020 and 2021.

However, during this period, despite the strong support from the international community to this initiative and diplomatic efforts made to move the normalization agenda forward, Armenia has done everything possible, in words and deeds, to obstruct the process and backtrack from the implementation of the reached agreements. The revanchist objectives behind Armenia's destructive position are evident.

The danger associated with this position manifested in a serious border escalation provoked by Armenia last month, prompting Azerbaijan to take adequate and proportionate countermeasures to neutralize the threat against its sovereignty and territorial integrity and ensure the safety of its military personnel and civilians.

This escalation was not an isolated episode, but another link in the chain of destabilizing actions by Armenia over the past months.

Armenia refuses to completely withdraw the remnants of its armed forces and illegal armed bands from the territory of my country and return to Azerbaijan eight enclave border villages, regularly violates the ceasefire and fails to prevent racist hate groups formed for the specific purpose of inciting and committing violence against Azerbaijanis to operate openly and notoriously on its territory.

In addition, a complex mines threat impedes ongoing rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and safe return of internally displaced persons. Throughout the conflict, Armenia indiscriminately planted hundreds of thousands of mines and other explosive devices in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan. As a result, more than 3300 citizens of my country became mine victims during the last thirty years, including 357 children and 38 women. In the post-conflict period, over the last two years, about 260 Azerbaijani civilians and military were killed or injured by mine explosions.

Moreover, despite the agreement on the cessation of all military activities, Armenia has continued to plant mines inside Azerbaijan. Thus, more than 3000 mines detected in the border districts of Azerbaijan were laid after the signing of the Trilateral Statement in November 2020.

Armenia must share accurate and comprehensive information about all minefields and cease and desist from mine terrorism against Azerbaijan. In addition, more international support to further develop and strengthen national mine action efforts in Azerbaijan are critically important to save lives and ensure the safe return of internally displaced persons to their homes.

Mr. Chairman,

Strengthening security and building trust among Member States is possible only through ensuring strict compliance with the fundamental norms and principles of international law, in particular those relating to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. They are universally binding and remain as important as ever for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security and the promotion of sustained economic growth, sustainable development, human rights and justice.

Thank you.