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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 Assembly debate on the Annual Report of the Security Council (A/76/2)**

*9 June 2022*

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening this meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council for 2021. Like others, I also wish to extend our congratulations to the newly elected members of the Security Council.

The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are fundamental constituents of the international legal order and remain as important as ever. The objectives of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international law, justice, human rights and sustainable development are hardly achievable if these universal purposes and principles are disregarded or misinterpreted to whitewash illegal actions.

More specifically, regarding Chapter IV of Part V of the annual report, as is known, in response to the territorial claims, aggression and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law by Armenia against Azerbaijan in the early 1990s, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993). In these resolutions, the Council explicitly condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the resulting occupation of its territories; expressly reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory; and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of occupying Armenian forces from all the occupied territories.

However, these condemnations and binding demands were simply ignored by Armenia. On the contrary, over this period, Armenia spared no effort to consolidate and cement the results of the aggression, colonize the occupied territories and erase Azerbaijani cultural heritage there, in clear violation of international law and the resolutions of the Security Council.

Additionally, Armenia gradually toughened rhetoric at the highest level, threatening to unleash new war for new territories and declaring the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan as part of Armenia.

Moreover, despite the ceasefire, Armenian forces repeatedly shelled Azerbaijani settlements along the so-called line of contact, resulting in dozens of civilians killed and wounded. From 2015, there was a re-escalation in and around the occupied territories and on the border between the two States. In April 2016 and July 2020, Armenia provoked large-scale hostilities, which caused numerous casualties among Azerbaijani civilians and servicemen and the extensive material damage.

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. In the course of hostilities that lasted 44 days, the armed forces of Azerbaijan liberated more than 300 cities, towns and villages from occupation, putting an end to the thirty-year aggression and conflict.

This was a long overdue development demanded by the Charter of the United Nations, international law, justice and the resolutions of the Security Council.

To hold Armenia to account for its egregious violations of international law, Azerbaijan has instituted legal proceedings, including within the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. Additionally, several individuals were prosecuted and punished for war crimes and terrorist and mercenary activities.

At the same time, Azerbaijan initiated the process of normalizing inter-State relations with Armenia based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders. We look forward to the soon commencement of negotiations on a bilateral peace treaty and tangible progress within a reasonable time-frame, along with the early reopening of transport routes and the delimitation and demarcation of the State border between the two countries.

However, the communications circulated by Armenia in the reporting period and listed in the annual report of the Security Council demonstrate how it is far from complying with its international obligations and engaging faithfully in the promotion of the peace agenda in the region.

Thus, references in these communications to the localities within Azerbaijan under various fabricated titles and the circulation of worthless papers on behalf of a fake entity are evidently in contradiction with the objectives of peace and law. Such papers per se have no validity whatsoever, as we have consistently and continuously stated in our relevant correspondence addressed to the Secretary-General and circulated among Member States.

Furthermore, unfortunately, the drafters of the Security Council annual report have relied on outdated terminology, erroneously referring to non-existent “Nagorny Karabakh”. By his decree of 7 July 2021, the President of Azerbaijan established the Karabakh and East Zangazur economic regions.

In this context, it is essential to recall that, in accordance with the principle of exclusive competence of the State in regard to its own territory and the ensuing principles of international standardization of geographical names established within the United Nations, only geographical names standardized by the competent national authorities must be recognized and used within the United Nations. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States is an absolute imperative.

Mr. President,

Domestically, Azerbaijan prioritized the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the liberated territories and their reintegration into the country’s economy to ensure the safe return of the displaced population and high standard of living. Impressive large-scale works are now under way.

However, challenges remain. The most pressing among them is a complex mines threat, which impedes reconstruction efforts and safe return of internally displaced persons. Around 3300 persons became mine victims during the last thirty years. In the post-conflict period, since 10 November 2020, more than 220 Azerbaijani civilians and military were killed or injured by mine explosions, as Armenia fails to share accurate and comprehensive information about the hundreds of thousands of landmines it indiscriminately laid on Azerbaijan’s territory. Accountability of Armenia, along with the targeted and sustainable international technical and financial assistance to further strengthen and increase national mine action capacities and efforts in Azerbaijan are critically important to save lives and strengthen peace.

Additionally, there are almost 4,000 citizens of Azerbaijan, both civilians and military, remaining missing in connection with the conflict. Armenia fails to clarify the whereabouts of these persons, who fell into its hands but have not been seen since. It is worth mentioning that both the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted the resolutions on missing persons, which, inter alia, reaffirm the obligations of States under international humanitarian law to account for missing persons. The rights of the victims and their families require that these obligations be translated into immediate action.

In concluding, Mr. President, Azerbaijan is determined to strengthen security and stability, promote accountability and advance post-conflict peacebuilding, reconciliation, reintegration, peaceful coexistence and development in the region.

Thank you.