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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their
implications for international peace, security
and development**

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Letter dated 16 July 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and with reference to my letter dated 24 July 2018 (A/72/940-S/2018/738), I have the honour to draw your attention once again to the intolerable situation with regard to the Azerbaijani civilians Dilgam Asgarov and Shahbaz Guliyev, whom the Armenian side continue to hold as hostages, in breach of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

On 11 July 2014, the Armenian armed forces brutally killed an Azerbaijani civilian, Hassan Hassanov, and captured Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev while they were visiting the graves of their relatives in the occupied Kelbajar district of Azerbaijan. The Armenian side not only did not release Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev but also fabricated charges against them and unlawfully sentenced Mr. Asgarov to life imprisonment and Mr. Guliyev to 22 years in jail, while the body of Mr. Hassanov was returned to Azerbaijan, with the facilitation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, after almost three months, on 2 October 2014.

The images of Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev before and after their capture, which the Armenian side made available to the public to exert psychological pressure on their families and relatives, clearly demonstrate that they were subjected to torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment.

Illegitimately depriving Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev of liberty and arbitrarily keeping them in captivity despite the appeals of the international community are yet further proof of contempt for human rights, intolerance and hatred at the core of Armenia's policy of aggression, occupation and ethnic cleansing.

Five years have passed since Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev were taken hostage. The Republic of Azerbaijan expects that the United Nations, including its relevant human rights mechanisms and procedures, will not remain indifferent to the fate of Mr. Asgarov and Mr. Guliyev, who are suffering from serious health problems, and



will spare no effort to ensure their immediate and unconditional release and reunification with their families.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35 and 41, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
