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Prevention of armed conflict

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

**Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia
and related intolerance**

Promotion and protection of human rights

Responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts

The rule of law at the national and international levels

**The responsibility to protect and the prevention of
genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes
against humanity**

**Security Council
Seventy-eighth year**

Letter dated 7 June 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The continued provocative circulation by Armenia of various papers on behalf of a non-existent entity and references in its official communications and statements to the localities within Azerbaijan under fabricated names are clear indicators of Armenia's unswerving adherence to its long-standing policy of territorial claims, ethnic cleansing and cultural erasure. The letter dated 11 May 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia ([A/77/884-S/2023/338](#)) is the most recent example of this kind, as well as of a blackwashing campaign against Azerbaijan.

Being the product of apparent falsehood, racist propaganda, lawlessness and contempt for human rights, such pronouncements and papers per se have no validity whatsoever, as we have consistently and continuously stated in our relevant correspondence addressed to the Secretary-General.¹ Moreover, they are in stark

¹ See, for example, [A/77/697-S/2023/35](#), [A/77/773-S/2023/141](#) and [A/77/868-S/2023/295](#). See also the statement by the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the 2023 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in connection with the report submitted by the Republic of Armenia (4 May 2023), available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/uneggn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/documents/item4a_Azerbaijan_statement.pdf.



contrast to the statements made by the leadership of Armenia on the recognition of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

The hypocrisy of Armenia is self-evident, as the circulation by it of worthless papers in the name of a fictitious entity in the United Nations is tantamount to overt contempt for the Charter of the Organization and undisguised encroachment on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The illegal military presence of Armenia on the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan and attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of my country also testify to deep contradictions and incompatibility in the commitments and deeds of Armenia.

As to the legal place names of the Republic of Azerbaijan, they are contained in its most recent national report to the third session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.² In addition, the annex to the report provides the list of 125 geographic names identified by the State Agency for Geodesy and Cartography of Azerbaijan as falsified by Armenia.³

In its aforementioned letter, Armenia also attempted to deny its responsibility for the destroyed and barbarously exploited environment in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan and, in particular, for the deplorable state of the Sarsang water reservoir. However, the facts testify to a situation diametrically opposite to what Armenia asserts.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly warned about long-term and severe damage to its environment caused by the aggression and 30 years of occupation of its territories by Armenia.⁴ In particular, the neglect and mismanagement of the Sarsang water reservoir, dam and irrigation canal in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan resulted in a humanitarian crisis, as 400,000 Azerbaijanis living in the downstream regions were deprived of water for both vital domestic and agricultural purposes, as well as causing severe environmental impacts such as soil erosion, dehydration and desertification.

In its resolution of 26 January 2016, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe described Armenia's actions as environmental aggression aimed at creating humanitarian and environmental problems for the citizens of Azerbaijan.⁵

In its report of April 2022, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) environmental scoping Mission to the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan noted, in particular, that "poor operation and maintenance of nine reservoir dams, *kahriz* underground irrigation systems and associated hydraulic infrastructure" in the then occupied territories of Azerbaijan resulted in "a significant deterioration in the capacity to manage water resources in a coherent and optimal manner".⁶ The report further observed that "mining and quarrying operations were generally conducted

² Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/documents/GEGN.2_2023_140_CRP140.pdf.

³ Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/documents/GEGN.2_2023_140_CRP140_Annex%201.pdf.

⁴ See, for example, the report on illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, contained in the annex to the letter dated 15 August 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, (A/70/1016-S/2016/711).

⁵ Resolution 2085 (2016) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, entitled "Inhabitants of frontier regions of Azerbaijan are deliberately deprived of water", adopted on 26 January 2016. Available at <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=22429&lang=en>.

⁶ Report of the United Nations Environment Programme environmental scoping mission to the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan (April 2022), p. 10. Available at https://eco.gov.az/frq-content/plugins/pages_v1/entry/20221223145000_59496900.pdf.

with inadequate environmental oversight and supervision, including a lack of effluent treatment and site rehabilitation”.⁷ The Mission also documented evidence of “instream quarrying of gravel and sand, which is one of the most aggressive and destructive forms of quarrying”.⁸ According to UNEP, “[t]his has created environmental impacts at three levels: i) deforestation and land degradation; ii) suspended sediment pollution (turbidity) in rivers; and iii) chemical pollution of water, soil, and biota”.⁹

Despite the end of the conflict and the liberation of the territories of Azerbaijan from occupation, those negative impacts continue to date, along with the continued pollution of transboundary rivers flowing from Armenia into Azerbaijan.

Earlier this year, Azerbaijan commenced an inter-State arbitration under the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) to hold Armenia accountable for its extensive destruction of environment and biodiversity.¹⁰

Azerbaijan will not leave unanswered the threats and claims to its sovereignty and territorial integrity and the rights and safety of its citizens and will continue its efforts towards preserving and sustaining peace and stability and advancing post-conflict peacebuilding, reintegration and development in the region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 30, 58, 66, 68, 73, 84 and 132, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See the press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on arbitration filed by Azerbaijan against Armenia for widespread environmental destruction (19 January 2023), contained in the annex to the letter dated 19 January 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/77/707-S/2023/52).