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Agenda items 30, 57, 58, 66, 68, 73, 78, 84 and 132

Prevention of armed conflict

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

**Security Council
Seventy-eighth year**

Letter dated 17 January 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I have the honour to submit herewith the appeal by the Western Azerbaijan Community, an organization dealing with the protection of the rights of Azerbaijanis expelled from nowadays Armenia (see annex).

In the appeal, the Community demands that the Government of Armenia enable, within an international process, the safe and dignified return of ethnic Azerbaijanis to their homes in Armenia, and the realization of their collective and individual rights after their return, and requests the support of the international community in this matter.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 30, 57, 58, 66, 68, 73, 78, 84 and 132, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 17 January 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Appeal by the Western Azerbaijan Community to the international community (adopted at the meeting of the Governing Board of the Community)

Baku, 12 January 2023

Our organization, which was established as the Society of Azerbaijani Refugees in 1989 and was renamed to the Western Azerbaijan Community in 2022, deals with the protection of the rights of the Azerbaijanis, who were expelled from the area, which was their homeland for centuries, and which is now called Armenia.

Expelling Azerbaijanis from nowadays Armenia is an unprecedented injustice given its political, legal, and humanitarian dimensions.

The ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijanis was carried out in most cases with systematic efforts of state authorities by using violence, massacres, and other crimes against humanity and human rights violations. This process was especially violent and cruel in 1905–06, 1918–21, 1948–53, and 1988–91. The results of these acts, especially the deeds of the entities called “The Republic of Armenia” and “The Mountainous Republic of Armenia”, the Soviet Union, in particular its notorious leader Joseph Stalin, who ensured the transfer of Zangezur and other Azerbaijani-majority areas to Armenia in 1921 and signed the racist order on the deportation of one hundred thousand of ethnic Azerbaijanis from Armenia, as well as those of the Armenian SSR in 1988–91 remain unredressed. As a result of the ethnic cleansing, this territory has been inhabited exclusively by ethnic Armenians since 1991.

Azerbaijani cultural and historical heritage, including mosques and graveyards in nowadays Armenia, were destroyed, toponyms were changed, and systematic racial discrimination against Azerbaijanis was carried out in this country. The persons involved in ethnic cleansing and other crimes against ethnic Azerbaijanis, and their misdeeds are glorified in Armenia as a matter of state policy.

This unprecedented injustice created a sense of impunity among the ruling circles of Armenia and encouraged them to raise territorial claims, to use force and to conduct military occupation against the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, further massive ethnic cleansing, and other crimes against humanity.

The victorious self-defense operation, which Azerbaijan conducted in 2020 against the armed attack and occupation by Armenia, is a milestone event in restoring justice. Azerbaijan’s victory has increased prospects of peace between the two countries.

On the other hand, the inability of Azerbaijanis, who were expelled from nowadays Armenia, to return to their homes, the continuation of the policy of mono-ethnic statehood, ethnic cleansing, and racial discrimination in Armenia represent an immense injustice. This poses a grave threat to the maintenance of lasting peace.

As the decades-old credible representative of Azerbaijani community expelled from Armenia, our organization is determined to carry out its activity with increased vigor to restore the rights of the affected people. Based on the right to return enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil

and Political Rights, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and other important international acts, the Community aspires toward ensuring the return of Azerbaijanis expelled from nowadays Armenia to their homes in safety and dignity, and realization of their individual and collective rights after the return.

The increased emphasis by the international community on human rights and the unwavering willingness of Azerbaijanis expelled from Armenia to return to their homes further encourage the Community to step up its efforts in this direction.

Taking into account these, the Western Azerbaijan Community:

Demands from the Government of Armenia to enable within an international process the safe and dignified return of ethnic Azerbaijanis, who were expelled from the geographic area considered now as the territory of Armenia to their homes, and enable the realization of their collective and individual rights after their return;

Expresses gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for providing shelter to, caring for, and enabling peaceful development of ethnic Azerbaijanis expelled from nowadays Armenia, and *requests* the former to further assist these expellees in their endeavor to return in safety and dignity, and within an international process, to their homes, and enabling the realization of their collective and individual rights after their return;

Requests the Member States of the United Nations, the Organization of the United Nations, and all other pertinent international organizations, to assist the safe and dignified return of ethnic Azerbaijanis expelled from nowadays Armenia to their homes within an international process, and the realization of their individual and collective rights after their return.

/signature/

Aziz Alakbarli

Chairman of the Board of the Community
