



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
15 August 2023

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-seventh session**

Agenda items 30, 58, 66, 68, 84 and 132

Prevention of armed conflict

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

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

Promotion and protection of human rights

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 14 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 14 August 2023 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Jeyhun Bayramov, regarding the continued attempts by Armenia to mislead and manipulate the international community, including the United Nations and its Security Council, about the situation with respect to the part of the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan, where the Russian peacekeeping contingent has been temporarily deployed (see annex).

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, 58, 66, 68, 84 and 132, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar T. Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 14 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Letter dated 14 August 2023 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you with respect to Armenia's continued attempts to manipulate the international community, including the United Nations and its Security Council.

Following the series of attempts in different international formats, Armenia has once again appealed to the United Nations Security Council in an attempt to instrumentalize it for political, military and informational manipulation and a blackmailing campaign. This cannot but undermine the authority and reputation of this august body.

Armenia is a country that had for almost 30 years brazenly disregarded the four resolutions of 1993 and the series of presidential statements of the Security Council demanding full, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from the territory of Azerbaijan. Against this backdrop, Armenia's appeal to the Security Council is nothing other than a sign of extreme political hypocrisy.

It is of particular importance to highlight that Armenia's appeal to the Security Council on groundless allegations of the "worsening humanitarian situation" and "continued blockade" comes at a time when Armenia itself deliberately and intentionally obstructs all the efforts made through international partners to find a balanced, law-based and reasonable solution on the ground.

To recall, the wide-range abuse of the Lachin road by Armenia over the past three years has necessitated Azerbaijan's legitimate and legal action of establishing a border checkpoint to ensure security and order on its border. While Armenia attempted to portray these efforts as a "blockade" and requested the International Court of Justice to issue an order on removal of the checkpoint, the Court in its order of 6 July has unanimously rejected this request.

Armenia did not reconcile with the reality of being deprived of the means to supply and sustain its not fully withdrawn armed forces in the territory of Azerbaijan, and to illicitly extract Azerbaijan's natural resources. Therefore, Armenia has started a propaganda campaign worldwide and has imposed a series of military and other obstructions to the normal functioning of the border checkpoint, as well as to the use of other routes, such as the Aghdam-Khankendi road for the delivery of goods to the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan.

Following the series of intensive consultations and shuttle diplomacy efforts, agreements were finally reached with respect to the delivery of humanitarian cargo to the Garabagh region through various routes, as well as the organization of the meeting between the Special Representative of Azerbaijan and representatives of local Armenian residents.

In the first context, concrete blocks and all other physical barriers imposed by the Armenian side on the use of the Aghdam-Khankendi road should have been removed to allow for the delivery of humanitarian cargo by the International Committee of the Red Cross to meet the needs of local residents. This should have been followed by an intensification of usage of the Lachin road by the Committee within 24 hours. All the involved parties, including the Russian peacekeeping contingent and the Committee, were prepared to realize this deal in practice.

In the second context, a meeting with Azerbaijan's Special Representative and representatives of local Armenian residents was agreed to take place in Yevlakh city, Azerbaijan.

Regrettably, on 5 August 2023, Armenia, through its illegally installed puppet regime, stepped back from both agreements at a last moment by introducing politically motivated and illegitimate preconditions and various pretexts.

In other words, what Armenia cynically seeks from the international community in general, and the United Nations Security Council in particular, was indeed within reach days ago as the result of active involvement of international actors, including the members of Security Council. This did not materialize only due to the refusal by Armenia itself.

Had Armenia and its subordinate illegal structure honoured the agreements, the situation would have been solved back in early August, providing a reasonable framework for the delivery of humanitarian cargo through the Aghdam-Khankendi road and other routes to the residents of the Garabagh region and the resumption of routes for the passage of persons, goods and vehicles.

As a matter of fact, Armenia would have no objective, legitimate or reasonable ground, to object to the usage of the Aghdam-Khankendi road for the delivery of goods to the Garabagh region, if it were genuinely concerned with the ordinary residents of the region. This road is connected to the one of the major transportation highways of Azerbaijan, also known as the Silk Road (M2 highway), and thus provides a reliable connection to international markets as well. Compared with the 59 km-long Lachin-Khankendi road passing through mountainous and serpentine terrain, this road is only 18 km from Aghdam to Khankendi. Armenia's refusal is only based on political motives to sustain ethnic hatred.

Thus, there should be no doubt that, notwithstanding the intensive engagement by Azerbaijan with the Russian Federation, the United States, the European Union and International Committee of the Red Cross for finding ways out of the situation, Armenia is deliberately obstructing diplomatic efforts.

An appeal to the Security Council is a part of this campaign and serves to distract attention from finding practical solutions on the ground. Such a course of action is by no means in the interests of the local Armenian residents of the Garabagh region, which became hostage to the malign political purposes of Armenia.

It is indicative that Armenia is not willing to be a genuine negotiation partner in finding solutions at the negotiation table. Instead, it artificially ignites tension in the region with a view to continuing manipulation and misleading at the international level.

The above-mentioned political obstructions by Armenia are not isolated from its increased illegal and provocative military activities. Over the past weeks, the Armenian armed forces illegally remaining in the territory of Azerbaijan in blatant violation of international law, as well as of Armenia's commitment under paragraph 4 of the trilateral statement of the leaders of Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and Armenia of 10 November, have intensified the military-engineering works and other military build-up.

The use of radio-electronic warfare equipment illegally deployed in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan is of particular concern. Not only civilian aircraft of the Azerbaijani Airlines, but also those of foreign countries have been subjected to radio-electronic interference over past weeks, posing serious risk to their safety.

In parallel to the illegal military build-up and activities in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan where the Russian peacekeeping contingent has been temporarily

deployed, the large-scale accumulation of weaponry and other military equipment and personnel along the undelimited State border has been also observed over past days in an apparent effort to go into another military adventure.

The above-mentioned fully resembles the pattern that had been typical of Armenia throughout almost 30 years until September 2020, to imitate talks, escape from previously undertaken commitments at the last minute and commit political, military and other provocations at every stage of negotiation to avoid taking concrete decisions.

Over the past 30 years Armenia has consistently maintained such destructive behaviour in negotiations, while ignorance by the then-mediators and inaction by the broader international community, including the Security Council, further emboldened Armenia's current political leadership to take even more aggressive rhetoric and action. The so-called "new war for new territories" concept of the Armenian leadership eventually led the region to large-scale war in the autumn of 2020. In exercise of its inalienable right to self-defence, Azerbaijan liberated its territories from Armenia's 30-year-long military occupation and with its own means ensured the realization of the demands of the Security Council, which had remained on the paper.

Today, the fragile post-conflict normalization process being pursued with the active engagement of international actors faces the serious risk of disruption amid Armenia's political and military adventure.

Azerbaijan has offered peace to Armenia based on equal and reciprocal respect for the legitimate interests of both sides through mutual recognition of and respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders. On another track, Azerbaijan pursues the policy of reintegration of ethnic Armenian residents of the Garabagh region as equal citizens, guaranteeing all the rights and freedoms envisaged in the Constitution of Azerbaijan and all relevant international human rights mechanisms to which Azerbaijan is a signatory. At the same time, Azerbaijan's adherence to both these tracks is without prejudice to its right to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity by all legitimate means safeguarded in the Charter of the United Nations and other universal international law instruments.

At this critical juncture, sober apprehension of existing risks and an adequate response by the international community to Armenia's brazen provocations are more necessary than ever to overcome the challenges facing the inter-State Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization process and the reintegration of local ethnic Armenian residents into Azerbaijan's political, legal and socioeconomic framework. It is of critical importance to ensure that the historic opportunity for durable peace is not missed.

(Signed) Jeyhun **Bayramov**