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Agenda items 31, 61, 69, 71, 83 and 129

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genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes
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**Security Council
Seventy-ninth year**

Letter dated 2 May 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I write in connection with the groundless and misleading comments made by the representative of France in regard to the relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia at the Security Council meeting on 19 April 2024 in connection with the item entitled “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe”.

It is noteworthy that these comments were voiced on the very day when Azerbaijan and Armenia achieved tangible progress in the delimitation of the border between the two States. This development is particularly important as it was the result of their direct dialogue and negotiations and ensured the peaceful return to Azerbaijan of its four villages that had been under Armenia’s occupation since the early 1990s. It is equally important that the negotiations and their outcome exposed the falsity of the actively propagated narrative about Azerbaijan’s alleged plans to resolve the outstanding issues by force.

In his statement, the Secretary-General welcomed the agreement reached on 19 April between the respective State commissions on the delimitation of the State border between Armenia and Azerbaijan and encouraged the parties to continue the delimitation and demarcation of the remaining sections of the border and to tackle all outstanding bilateral issues towards achieving full normalization of relations.



The President of the General Assembly also welcomed the latest progress between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the delimitation of the border and encouraged the parties to build on this progress to fulfil complete normalization of relations based on respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

A number of other international organizations and Governments delivered similar statements. It is not surprising that France was not among them.

We remember well how France, abusing its status as a permanent member of the Security Council and its mandate as one of the mediators in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe-led conflict settlement process between Armenia and Azerbaijan, resisted with all its might any action and effort that would ensure the end of the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and the resolution of the conflict based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States concerned.

Therefore, the support that France expressed in its statement for the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, while respecting international law and the territorial integrity of the two countries, is evidently deceptive. This statement is equally hypocritical as it does not fit in with France's stubborn refusal to call part of my country's sovereign territory by its legal name – the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan – along with its ongoing attempts to draw dividing lines in the South Caucasus and militarize the region.

The disinformation that France spreads nowadays reveals how it is intolerant of the fact that Azerbaijan liberated its territories from 30 years of occupation, restored its sovereignty and territorial integrity, eliminated the threat of violent separatism and created conditions conducive to building a peaceful, stable and prosperous region, in full compliance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

What France called a "military offensive on 19 September" were the local counter-terrorism measures taken by Azerbaijan on its sovereign soil, in the Garabagh region, in the face of severe security threats posed by the illegal presence there of more than 10,000 heavily armed Armenian troops. The commitment to withdraw them from the territory of Azerbaijan was prescribed by paragraph 4 of the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 (see [S/2020/1104](#)).

However, despite numerous calls and demands from Azerbaijan, in the period that elapsed after the signing of the trilateral statement, for two years and 10 months, not only was this commitment not implemented, but the activities of these forces intensified at an alarming rate. As a result, the number of casualties among Azerbaijani civilians and military increased steadily. Consequently, Azerbaijan legitimately exercised its inherent right and responsibility to protect its people, defend its territorial integrity and restore peace and stability in the region.

Moreover, during the same period, our repeated invitations to dialogue and meetings to discuss and resolve issues related to ensuring the orderly reintegration of the Armenian residents of the Garabagh region to be part of multi-ethnic Azerbaijan as equal citizens were also ignored. As to those residents who decided to voluntarily relocate to Armenia and other countries, it was their choice, although Azerbaijan, by all available means, encouraged them to stay. In stark contrast to what France asserted, both the United Nations mission to the region and local Armenians themselves attested that they had not been forced to leave by Azerbaijan.

Allegations to the contrary are regrettable also against the backdrop of the complete ignorance of France of the rights of more than 250,000 Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia and their descendants, as well as of over 700,000 Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, most of whom are still unable to return to their homes in the

liberated territories because of the ravages of war and the serious threat caused by landmines and other explosive devices.

France further inappropriately and selectively referred to the ongoing legal proceedings between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the International Court of Justice. The Court has never found Azerbaijan to be in breach of any of its decisions, including that of 17 November 2023. Moreover, France deliberately passed over in silence the proceedings instituted by Azerbaijan against Armenia in the Court and refrained from equally calling for the implementation of the provisional measures in respect of Armenia delivered by the Court in its order of 7 December 2021.

Instead of wasting time misleading the international community about the situation and processes in the South Caucasus, France must cease and desist from its destabilizing activities in the region and from interfering in the internal affairs of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is committed and determined to continue its efforts towards eliminating the devastating consequences of the war, promoting conflict prevention, justice and accountability, advancing the results-oriented normalization process and building sustainable peace 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 31, 61, 69, 71, 83 and 129, and of the Security Council.

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