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**Security Council
Seventy-fifth year**

Letter dated 15 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In reference to the letter dated 3 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia ([A/74/783-S/2020/279](#)), which contains as its annex the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia on the so-called “elections” held in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 31 March 2020, I would like to point out the following.

It is not a coincidence that these “elections” took place on 31 March – the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis, commemorated in Azerbaijan in memory of those thousands of civilians killed as a result of Armenian offensives in 1918. No doubt, such an ostentatious and cynical action will serve for nothing but to deepen mistrust and narrow the already elusive prospects of peace and reconciliation.

The “elections” were held despite the unprecedented spread of the coronavirus pandemic across the globe, thus once again vividly demonstrating that Armenia subordinates the well-being and safety of residents under occupation to political expediency, in total disregard of public morality and in violation of international humanitarian law. As a consequence, the first coronavirus cases in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan were reported immediately after these so-called “elections”.

The very fact of the statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia is yet another proof that the “elections” in the occupied territories of



Azerbaijan were staged by Armenia in an attempt to give the puppet regime it has set up in those territories the appearance of some kind of legitimacy. Evidently, this attempt has failed.

The “elections” were held in an environment of total illegitimacy, which stems from the continuing military occupation and ethnic cleansing of the territories of Azerbaijan and a clear violation of the Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the norms and principles of international law. The international community once again has overwhelmingly reaffirmed its consistent and principled position of collective non-recognition of the situation resulting from the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan by rejecting and invalidating the so-called “elections”, which thus have no effect whatsoever (see annex).*

Through its apparent misinterpretation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights treaties, Armenia once again demonstrated its unfamiliarity with the object and purpose as well as the letter and spirit of those documents. Armenia’s allegations and distortions of the essence of the rights and freedoms contained therein, which this country so desperately has been using in an attempt to camouflage its annexationist aspirations, are easily disproved by the following clarifications.

- International law is unambiguous in not providing for a right to unilateral secession from independent States and in not creating grounds and conditions for legitimizing such secession in any sense, including within the meaning of the right to self-determination. Nothing in the relevant international legal instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights, is construed as authorizing or encouraging in any sense the partial or total disruption of the territorial integrity of sovereign and independent States. Nor does the provision that “no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty” imply such authorization or encouragement with a view to undermining or questioning the territorial wholeness, structure and configuration of the States Members of the United Nations.
- The rule of law and equal protection under the law for all without discrimination are at the core of the international human rights protection system. The international human rights treaties are explicit in stating that nothing in these instruments may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights or freedoms recognized therein. To put it simply, no right can be exercised at the expense of the violation of the rights of others.
- Further, the rights prescribed in the International Covenants on Human Rights and other human rights instruments are given effect in the domestic legal order of States parties to these treaties, and the realization of these rights must be carried out in full conformity with the constitutional and legal framework of these States.¹
- In their statements regarding the conflict settlement process, the international mediators specifically refer to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Organization

* Circulated in the language of submission only.

¹ See, e.g., Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31 [80], “The nature of the general legal obligation imposed on States Parties to the Covenant”, [CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13](#), 26 May 2004; Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 9, “The domestic application of the Covenant”, [E/C.12/1998/24](#), 3 December 1998.

for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (then known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), which, inter alia, obliges the participating States to “respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to territorial integrity of States”.

- Moreover, self-determination claims are unsustainable when they are accompanied by violation of international law, in particular its peremptory norms (*jus cogens*), such as those prohibiting the threat or use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. In such situations, the maxim *ex injuria ius non oritur* provides the basis for the obligation of non-recognition; that is, a legal right cannot stem from an unlawful act. As territory cannot be acquired through the unlawful use of force, States are obliged to not give legal credence – recognition of authority over the territory – to the unlawful acquisition.² This position has been clearly stated by the International Court of Justice and consistently followed in State practice.
- In its unanimously adopted resolutions [822 \(1993\)](#), [853 \(1993\)](#), [874 \(1993\)](#) and [884 \(1993\)](#), the Security Council not only did not mention the “people of Artsakh” and its “right to self-determination”, to which the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia refers, but rather condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories; reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of international borders; confirmed that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is an integral part of Azerbaijan; and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories. It is important to note that the resolutions of the Security Council were adopted after the extremist forces among the Armenian community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan unilaterally declared their “independence”. Consequently, the Security Council made it absolutely clear that this action had produced no legal effect whatsoever.
- In a similar vein, the OSCE Minsk Group, in its declaration of 4 November 1993, adopted in connection with the expansion of territorial seizures by the Armenian armed forces notwithstanding the Security Council resolutions, stated in particular that “no acquisition of territory by force can be recognized, and the occupation of territory cannot be used to obtain international recognition or to impose a change of legal status”.³
- Armenia continues to interpret arbitrarily and selectively the statements and documents adopted in the context of the conflict settlement process and portrays its own perceptions of the conflict as allegedly reflecting the position of the international community. It is evident, however, that Armenia refrains from mentioning the aforementioned key provisions of the resolutions of the Security Council and also passes over in silence the fact that OSCE, in its relevant documents and decisions adopted by all participating States of the organization, including Armenia, expressed its commitment to the Security Council resolutions, confirmed that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is part of Azerbaijan

² See James Crawford, “Opinion: third party obligations with respect to Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories”, 2012, para. 46.

³ [S/26718](#), enclosure I.

and called for the settlement of the conflict in accordance with the OSCE principles, commitments and provisions.⁴

- The status of the Nagorno-Karabakh region is unequivocal – it is the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan under Armenia’s unlawful occupation.
- The foundation and objective of the ongoing peace process is to ensure the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and the return of the forcibly displaced persons to their homes and properties. The achievement of that objective is a must, not a compromise. It is equally inevitable and pressing, as the unlawful use of force and the resulting military occupation and ethnic cleansing of the territories of Azerbaijan do not represent a solution and will never bring peace, reconciliation and stability. Azerbaijan considers no political solution to the conflict beyond this framework and participates in the settlement process on the basis of this understanding.⁵

Armenia’s allegation that the puppet regime it has established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is a “main party of the resolution of the conflict” and that those purportedly “elected” to the self-styled structures of that regime have any role in the peace process is fundamentally flawed and reveals the real purpose behind orchestrating the sham “elections” in the occupied territories on 31 March 2020. The following points need to be made in that regard.

- Having succeeded in expelling all Azerbaijanis from the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Armenia spares no effort to introduce the Armenian community of that region as its sole representative. Over the past two years, we have witnessed consistent attempts by the leadership of Armenia to derail the peace process, including by attempting to undermine the format of negotiations. It prompted the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to issue a statement on 9 March 2019, in which they urged to refrain from demanding unilateral changes to the format without the agreement of the other party.⁶
- The illegality of the puppet regime that Armenia has established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan has been repeatedly stated at the international level; it is under Armenia’s direction and control, and is ultimately nothing other than the product of aggression, ethnic cleansing and other atrocity crimes committed against Azerbaijanis on racial, ethnic and religious grounds. This puppet regime is not recognized as a State by any country or international organization, and all allegations by Armenia to the contrary have been repeatedly rejected by the international community.
- Besides the aforementioned resolutions of the Security Council, which reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan with the Nagorno-Karabakh region as its part, in its leading judgment of 16 June 2015

⁴ See Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, seventh meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials, Journal No. 2, annex 1, Prague, 28 February 1992; Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Budapest Document 1994: Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era*, 6 December 1994.

⁵ See the memorandum outlining the position of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the peaceful settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, annexed to the letter dated 24 December 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/74/632-S/2019/989).

⁶ Press statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group on the upcoming meeting of President Aliyev and Prime Minister Pashinyan, 9 March 2019.

in the case of *Chiragov and Others v. Armenia*, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights established that Armenia exercises effective control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Court found in particular that Armenia, “through its military presence and the provision of military equipment and expertise, has been significantly involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from an early date”, that “this military support has been – and continues to be – decisive for the conquest of and continued control over the territories in issue” and that the regime in those territories survives “by virtue of the military, political, financial and other support given to it by Armenia”.⁷ An eminent scholar compared the puppet regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan “with a great number of precedents, such as Manchukuo, Transkei and other South-African ‘bantustans are’”.⁸

- Armenia’s allegations about the role of the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in the peace process is curious insofar as it persistently refuses even to recognize the mere existence of the Azerbaijani community of this region of Azerbaijan, whereas, in its relevant documents and decisions, OSCE recognizes that the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan consists of two equal communities, namely, the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities. None of these or any other documents and decisions designates the Armenian community as “elected representatives”. On the contrary, the summary of conclusions of the additional meeting of the Council of OSCE (then known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), held in Helsinki on 24 March 1992, explicitly refers to the representatives of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan as “interested parties”, which could be invited to the Minsk Conference once it is convened and after consultation with the States participating in the Conference.⁹ Moreover, in connection with Armenia’s groundless claims, the President of the OSCE Minsk Group made important clarifications in respect of the equality between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan as “interested parties”:

On the basis of the mandate of the Council of Ministers of CSCE of March 24, the solution of the problem belongs to the Chairmanship of the [Minsk] Conference, after consultation with the eleven countries of the Minsk Group. Other aspects of this problem have been by and large agreed to: it was thus decided that the “interested parties” would take part in the proceedings of the working groups in conditions of equality with the other participants, whereas at the plenary sessions they would only be present and, if necessary, could express their views only through the Chair.

These decisions, however, concern both “interested parties” without any distinction between them. In the course of his consultations, the Italian Chairman could not find any consensus among the other countries of the Minsk Group for the Armenian thesis according to which the 24 March mandate would enable him to give the Armenian party of Nagorno

⁷ European Court of Human Rights (Grand Chamber), *Chiragov and Others v. Armenia*, Application No. 13216/05, 16 June 2015, paras. 180 and 186.

⁸ Alain Pellet, “Legal opinion on third party obligations with respect to illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan”, *A/71/880-S/2017/316*, annex, para. 76.

⁹ See final document of the additional meeting of the Council of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Helsinki, 24 March 1992.

Karabakh a formal priority over the Azeri party, or even call the former “elected representatives”.¹⁰

- The format of the OSCE Minsk Conference was agreed by the OSCE participating States by consensus, including Armenia, and endorsed in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and is not a subject of renegotiation.
- Armenia’s allegation, contained in another of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ statements on the same issue, that the so-called “elections” in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan “derive from the logic and fundamental documents of peaceful process” is one more example of gross distortion.¹¹ The OSCE documents and decisions, in particular the Budapest Summit decision of 1994, along with the resolutions of the Security Council, laid down the step-by-step approach to the settlement of the conflict. A number of essential steps have to be taken to reach a stage when the “interested parties”, comprising the representatives of the two communities of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, elected through the legitimate and lawful process, could be invited to the Minsk Conference once it is convened. Such steps should start with the elimination of the major consequences of the conflict, thus ensuring the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan as demanded by the above-mentioned Security Council resolutions, to be followed by the return of the forcibly displaced Azerbaijani population to their homes and properties in these territories in safety and dignity.
- No doubt, all the inhabitants of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, including the expelled Azerbaijani population, are entitled to the full enjoyment of human rights on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, in accordance with the Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the applicable international human rights instruments. Elections in the Republic of Azerbaijan, including its territories currently under the Armenian occupation, or in any other State Member of the United Nations shall be organized in accordance with the Constitution, the Electoral Code and other relevant legislation of the concerned State. This is what international standards for conducting elections and human rights obligations demand, including the OSCE commitments related to elections, in particular the Copenhagen Document of 1990. That elections are a State-driven process based on constitutional provisions and national laws follows also from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. Thus, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) makes it clear in its 2019 report that the preconditions for meeting the principle of free and fair elections are absent in the annexed and occupied territories and that the individuals residing in such territories are entitled to continue to participate in the elections of the State to whom the territory lawfully belongs, whose nationality in principle they maintain from the standpoint of international law.¹²
- The latest elections in Azerbaijan were held on 9 February 2020 in its entire territory. As was the case in previous elections, owing to the continued

¹⁰ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Communication No. 279, Prague, 15 September 1992, p. 3.

¹¹ Statement of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia, 31 March 2020.

¹² European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), “Report on the compliance with Council of Europe and other international standards of the inclusion of a not internationally recognized territory into a nationwide constituency for Parliamentary elections”, 6–7 December 2019, paras. 34, 44 and 54.

occupation of a part of the territory of Azerbaijan, no voting took place in the electoral constituencies in the occupied Khojaly, Shusha, Khojavand, Aghdam, Tartar, Kelbajar, Lachin, Qubadli, Zangilan, Jabrayil and Fizuli districts of Azerbaijan. Polling stations of the electoral districts in these occupied territories, which are temporarily not or only partially under the Government control, were relocated within other electoral districts of Azerbaijan, which is reflected in the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights election observation report released in February 2020¹³. The Central Election Commission of Azerbaijan made necessary arrangements for the internally displaced persons from the occupied territories to vote in specially organized precincts for candidates from their home districts. The Central Election Commission also appealed to the citizens of Azerbaijan of Armenian origin residing in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to participate in these elections.

Finally, in its statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia made reference to the escalation along the front line four years ago, attempting to distort the actual situation and groundlessly establish a nexus between the fighting in 2016 and the illegal “elections” held on 31 March 2020. Evidently, these allegations of Armenia are fundamentally flawed.

As is known, since the very first day of the conflict, combat operations have been conducted exclusively inside the territory of Azerbaijan, almost in the middle of the country, affecting its civilian population and infrastructure. This was also the case during the outbreak of violence against Azerbaijani civilians and civilian objects by Armenian forces that occurred in 2016, which has become a direct result and a continuation of Armenia’s policy of aggression against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories. As a result of Armenia’s deliberate attacks in April 2016, 34 towns and villages in Azerbaijan were shelled, causing casualties among civilians and the servicemen of the armed forces of Azerbaijan, as well as destroying or substantially damaging private and public property, including residences, schools and kindergartens.¹⁴

Armenia must realize the lack of any prospect of its attempts to mislead the international community as to the essence, causes and consequences of the war it unleashed, refrain from wasting time to make irrelevant and out-of-context statements in the future and engage faithfully in the conflict settlement process.

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 32, 37, 68, 70, 75 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

¹³ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, “International Election Observation Mission, Republic of Azerbaijan, early parliamentary elections, 9 February 2020: Statement of preliminary findings and conclusions”, 10 February 2020, p. 6.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Malcolm Shaw and Naomi Hart, “Report on war crimes in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia’s responsibility”, A/74/676-S/2020/90, annex, paras. 113–115.

Annex to the letter dated 15 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Position of the international community with regard to the illegitimate “elections” staged by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan on 31 March 2020

I. International organizations

COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC SPEAKING STATES

Statement by the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States¹

Istanbul, 31.03.2020

The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States condemns the so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which constitute a clear violation of the norms and principles of international law, including Helsinki Final Act of 1975, and the related UN Security Council Resolutions.

Holding the so-called elections in the occupied territories undermines the efforts within the OSCE Minsk Process to find a peaceful settlement for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We call on the OSCE Minsk Group and the international community not to recognize these illegitimate elections.

The Member States of the Turkic Council reaffirm their commitments to the norms and principles of international law and reiterate the importance of the early settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Statement by the Chair of the Delegation of the European Parliament to the EU–Armenia Parliamentary Partnership Committee, the EU–Azerbaijan Parliamentary Cooperation Committee and the EU–Georgia Parliamentary Association Committee, MEP Marina Kaljurand on the so-called elections in Nagorno-Karabakh²

Brussels, 31.03.2020

Today, ‘presidential and parliamentary elections’ have been held in Nagorno-Karabakh. I wish to reiterate, in line with previous statements from the European Union, that we do not recognise the constitutional and legal framework of these so-called elections and their outcome cannot prejudice the determination of the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh. Moreover, organising these ‘elections’ does not help to create conditions conducive to reconciliation.

The European Union continues to firmly support the OSCE Minsk Group and its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I call on the sides to step up their commitment to the negotiation process and to the strict

¹ <https://www.turkkon.org/en/haberler/statement-by-the-cooperation-council-of-turkic-speaking-states1986>.

² <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/mt/dsca/product/20200331DPU25005>.

observance of the ceasefire, exercising the greatest possible restraint and avoiding any provocations.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Nagorno-Karabakh: Statement by the Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the so-called presidential and parliamentary elections³

Brussels, 31.03.2020

In view of the so-called ‘presidential and parliamentary elections’ in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March 2020, the European Union reiterates that it does not recognise the constitutional and legal framework within which they are being held. This event cannot prejudice the determination of the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiation process.

The EU recalls its firm support to the OSCE Minsk Group and, in particular, to its Co-Chairs’ efforts to bring about progress beyond the status quo and substantive negotiations towards comprehensive and sustainable peace. The EU stands ready to further support efforts, aimed at early, peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)

Communique of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the so-called “elections” held in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan⁴

New York, 04.04.2020

1. The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement underlines the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and reaffirms that no State shall recognize as lawful the situation resulting from the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
2. In that connection, the NAM Member States do not recognize the so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” held in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and consider them as illegitimate.
3. The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement once again expresses, in line with paragraph 662 of the Outcome Document of NAM Baku Summit, its support to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and to the settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the basis of the United Nations Security Council resolutions ([S/RES/822](#), [S/RES/853](#), [S/RES/874](#), [S/RES/884](#)).

³ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/76801/nagorno-karabakh-statement-spokesperson-so-called-presidential-and-parliamentary-elections_en.

⁴ <https://www.namazerbaijan.org/pdf/acdoc6.pdf>.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

Statement by the NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, and NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia⁵

Brussels, 31.03.2020

With regard to the “general elections” that took place today in Nagorno-Karabakh, NATO does not accept the results of these “elections” as affecting the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh and stress that the results in no way prejudice the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. NATO supports the OSCE Minsk Group, including the recent statement of the Co-Chairs on this issue.

ORGANIZATION FOR DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – GUAM⁶

Kyiv, 31.03.2020

Nagorno-Karabakh region is Azerbaijan. ODEDGUAM condemns the so-called elections held on 31 March 2020 in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan by Armenia.

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

Press Statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group⁷

Moscow / Paris / Washington, D.C., 31.03.2020

The OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs (Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Stéphane Visconti of France, and Andrew Schofer of the United States of America) have taken note of the so-called “general elections” in Nagorno-Karabakh, the first round of which took place on 31 March.

In the context of a comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Co-Chairs recognize the role of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh in deciding its future in accordance with the principles and elements reiterated in the Co-Chairs' statement of 9 March 2019. The Co-Chairs note, however, that Nagorno-Karabakh is not recognized as an independent and sovereign state by any of the Co-Chair countries or any other country.

Accordingly, the Co-Chairs do not accept the results of these “elections” as affecting the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh and stress that the results in no way prejudice the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

⁵ Official Facebook account of Mr. James Appathurai, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, and NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, <https://www.facebook.com/JamesAppathurai/>.

⁶ Official Twitter account of the Secretariat of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, @GUAMSecretariat.

⁷ <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/449410>.

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Copenhagen, 02.04.2020

The OSCEPA firmly supports the work of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and calls upon all OSCE participating States to respect the principles and commitments of the Helsinki Final Act.⁸

Copenhagen, 09.04.2020

Members of Bureau of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly ...stressed that the coronavirus crisis should not be exploited to curtail human rights, and emphasized that the recent “elections” held in internationally unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia were illegitimate and could aggravate the public health threat.⁹

ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)

OIC Rejects the Holding of Elections in the Occupied Nagorno-Karabakh¹⁰

Jeddah, 31.03.2020

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) view the holding of elections in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 31 March 2020 as in contravention to the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The OIC General Secretariat further referred to the resolutions and decisions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe which supports a peaceful solution to the conflict on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES (TURKPA)

Statement by the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking Countries¹¹

Baku, 03.04.2020

The Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries (TURKPA) condemns any violation of the norms and principles of international law, in particular so-called “elections” in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan undermining peaceful resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

TURKPA reiterates the strongest support for the earliest settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as it was repeatedly enshrined in its declarations.

⁸ Official Twitter account of the OSCE PA, @oscepa.

⁹ <https://www.oscepa.org/news-a-media/press-releases/2020/osce-parliamentarians-endorse-un-sg-s-global-ceasefire-call-discuss-european-response-to-covid-19-pandemic-and-plan-pa-activities>.

¹⁰ https://www.oic-oci.org/topic/?t_id=23303&t_ref=13971&lan=en.

¹¹ Official twitter account of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries, @TURK_PA.

II. Individual States

AUSTRALIA

Statement by the Embassy of Australia in Turkey¹²

Ankara, 03.04.2020

Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise the ‘elections’ which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. It is more important than ever the OSCE Minsk Group continues its role in the peace process to achieve a negotiated settlement.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Note verbale of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan¹³

Sarajevo, 04.04.2020

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina expresses its respect to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and has the honour to confirm that it condemns any violation of the norms and principles of international law, considering that the so-called “elections” in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan contradict the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the OSCE’s decision advocating peaceful resolution of the conflict on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of Azerbaijan’s internationally recognized borders.

CANADA

Statement by the Embassy of Canada in Turkey¹⁴

Ankara, 01.04.2020

Canada supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and doesn’t recognize the so-called “elections” held in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31/3. Such “elections” undermine efforts, including by the OSCE Minsk Group, to achieve a peaceful settlement of the NK conflict.

CHINA

Statement by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China¹⁵

Beijing, 14.04.2020

China’s position on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh is clear and consistent. We hope relevant parties will resolve disputes through political dialogue and uphold

¹² Official twitter account of Mr. Marc Innes-Brown, Ambassador of Australia to the Republic of Turkey, @AusAmbTurkey.

¹³ Note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 04.04.2020 (Unofficial translation).

¹⁴ Official twitter account of the Embassy of Canada to the Republic of Turkey, @CanEmbTurkey.

¹⁵ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference on 14 April 2020, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1769716.shtml.

regional peace and stability. China will continue promoting stability and development in the region.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic on “Presidential and Parliamentary Elections” in Nagorno-Karabakh¹⁶

Prague, 01.04.2020

On March 31, 2020, the so called „presidential and parliamentary elections” took place in the Nagorno-Karabakh. In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic underlines that the Czech Republic does not recognize the constitutional and legal framework within which these elections were being held.

The Czech Republic fully supports the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group and its co-chairs and calls on all parties involved in the conflict for further peace processes, and supports the statement of UN Secretary-General of March 23, 2020, calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world.

REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia¹⁷

Tallinn, 31.03.2020

Estonia does not consider the so-called elections in Nagorno Karabakh as legitimate. We continue to support the mediation efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

FINLAND

Statement by Päivi Peltokoski, Director of Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland¹⁸

Helsinki, 31.03.2020

Finland doesn't recognize the so called elections in Nagorno Karabakh. The same applies to all elections in separatist regions. We align us with this statement by the European External Action Service.

GEORGIA

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia¹⁹

Tbilisi, 01.04.2020

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia reaffirms its support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and does not

¹⁶ https://www.mzv.cz/baku/en/bilateral_relations/statement_of_the_ministry_of_foreign.html.

¹⁷ Official twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, @MFAestonia.

¹⁸ Official twitter account of Päivi Peltokoski, Director of Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland @PaiviPeltokoski.

¹⁹ [https://mfa.gov.ge/News/sagareo-saqmeta-saministros-ganckhadeba-\(32\).aspx?CatID=5](https://mfa.gov.ge/News/sagareo-saqmeta-saministros-ganckhadeba-(32).aspx?CatID=5).

recognize the so called presidential and parliamentary elections held on March 31, 2020 in N. Karabakh.

Georgia supports exclusively peaceful settlement of N. Karabakh conflict in line with the norms and principles of international law.

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

Tbilisi, 15.04.2020

Georgia supports territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Georgian side does not recognize the so called independence of Nagorno Karabakh and therefore does not recognize the 2nd round of the so called presidential elections held in this region of Azerbaijan.

Georgia supports territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and supports the peaceful settlement of conflict based on the principles and norms of international law.

GERMANY

Statement by Mr. Michael Siebert, Director for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany²⁰

Berlin, 01.04.2020

We do not recognize the legal framework of the so called “presidential and parliamentary elections” that took place yesterday in Nagorno-Karabakh. Both the elections and their results are considered illegal.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has called for the peaceful settlement of conflicts over Nagorno-Karabakh in reaction to the forthcoming elections in the disputed region²¹

Tehran, 31.03.2020

Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has called for the peaceful settlement of conflicts over Nagorno-Karabakh in reaction to the forthcoming elections in the disputed region.

In remarks on Monday, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Seyyed Abbas Mousavi pointed to the upcoming elections in the disputed Karabakh region, saying, “The Islamic Republic of Iran is opposed to any measure leading to the escalation of tensions and disputes in the region.”

Pointing to the plans to hold elections in the geographical region known as Nagorno (mountainous) Karabakh, Mousavi said, “We believe whatever measure that further complicates the path to the settlement of disputes between our two neighbouring states, namely the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, must be avoided.”

²⁰ Official twitter account of Mr. Michael Siebert, @GERonOstpolitik.

²¹ <https://en.mfa.ir/portal/NewsView/579145>.

The Foreign Ministry spokesperson also stressed the need for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the international principles and law.

ITALY

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy²²

Rome, 31.03.2020

No recognition of the so-called presidential and parliamentary elections in Nagorno Karabakh by Italy.

REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia²³

Riga, 31.03.2020

Latvia does not consider the so-called presidential and parliamentary elections in Nagorno Karabakh as legitimate. We continue to support the mediation efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

MONTENEGRO

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro²⁴

Podgorica, 02.04.2020

Montenegro reiterates its firm support to the #OSCE Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs efforts to bring about progress beyond the status quo and substantive negotiations towards comprehensive and sustainable peace.

The so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” in Nagorno-Karabakh, held on March 31, 2020 don’t serve that goal, nor can prejudice the determination of the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh, or the outcome of the ongoing negotiation process.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova: Regarding the so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” on the Nagorno-Karabakh / Mountain Karabakh region²⁵

Chisinau, 01.04.2020

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration considers illegal the so-called “presidential and parliamentary elections” which took place in the Nagorno-

²² Official twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, @ItalyMFA.

²³ Official twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, @Latvian_MFA.

²⁴ Official Twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, @MFA_MNE.

²⁵ <https://www.mfa.gov.md/ro/content/cu-privire-la-asa-zisele-alegeri-prezidentiale-si-parlamentare-din-regiunea-nagorno>.

Karabakh region on March 31, 2020, as they are contrary to the norms and fundamental principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

The Republic of Moldova does not recognize these so-called “elections” as such in the context of the process of negotiations under the OSCE regarding the identification of a special status for the Nagorno-Karabakh region that could lead to the peaceful overcoming of the conflict in this region.

In this regard, the MFAEI reiterates the readiness of the Republic of Moldova to continue to support the efforts of the international community, in particular the OSCE Group in Minsk and its Co-Presidents, in order to peacefully and comprehensively regulate the political conflict around the Nagorno-Karabakh region, that will be able to contribute effectively to the consolidation of peace and security in the South Caucasus.

NORWAY

Note verbale of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan²⁶

Oslo, 07.04.2020

Norway does not recognize the independence of the so-called “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic”. Accordingly, Norway does not recognize the elections held on 31 March. Norway supports the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to facilitate a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

PAKISTAN

Statement by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan²⁷

Islamabad, 09.04.2020

The Presidential and Parliamentary elections held on 31 March 2020 in Nagorno-Karabakh, occupied territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, is a clear violation of international norms. The election constitutes a clear breach of international law and UN Security Council resolutions. It is taken as an attempt by Armenia to hamper the ongoing negotiation process for finding lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through peaceful means. Pakistan reaffirms its principled position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and reiterates its support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

²⁶ Note verbale of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Oslo, 07.04.2020.

²⁷ Transcript of the Press Briefing by Spokesperson on Thursday, 09 April, 2020, <http://mofa.gov.pk/transcript-of-the-press-briefing-by-spokesperson-on-thursday-09-april-2020/>.

ROMANIA

Press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania regarding the so-called “presidential and legislative” elections in Nagorno-Karabakh²⁸

Bucharest, 31.03.2020

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers that the so-called “presidential and legislative” elections held in the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh – on March 31, 2020 – lack legitimacy. The Romanian MFA expresses its trust in the fact that the poll will not adversely affect the process of identifying a viable and negotiated solution for the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterates its support for the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group, the only entitled format that can facilitate the peaceful and durable regulation of the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, and encourages the sides to manifest the political will which is necessary in this process.

SAUDI ARABIA

Note verbale of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Baku to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan²⁹

Baku, 15.04.2020

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Baku ... informs the esteemed Ministry that the position of the Kingdom is consistent with the position and the statement issued by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which is the position of all Muslim States. The Kingdom supports the resolution of the conflict by peaceful means on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognised borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in accordance with the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

SWITZERLAND

Note verbal of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan³⁰

Bern, 08.04.2020

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Bern and ... informs the Embassy that, in accordance with the principles of international law and in full respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Department considers these “elections” null and void.

The unresolved conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh continues to be a serious concern. Therefore, Switzerland reiterates its full support for the mediation efforts of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and welcomes the commitment by the leaders of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia to dialogue and

²⁸ <http://mae.ro/en/node/52171>.

²⁹ Note by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Baku, 15.04.2020 (Unofficial translation).

³⁰ Note by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Switzerland, Bern, 08.04.2020.

negotiation. Switzerland encourages both sides to continue their conversations in this spirit, as there is no alternative to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

TURKEY

Press Release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Regarding the So-Called Elections to be Held on 31 March 2020 in Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region under Armenian occupation³¹

Ankara, 30.03.2020

The so-called Presidential and Parliamentary elections to be held on 31 March 2020 in Armenian occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, is a manifestation of the efforts to unilaterally legitimize the current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is contrary to international law. This step is a flagrant violation of international law, including the UN Security Council Resolutions and the OSCE principles.

At a stage when there are talks within the OSCE Minsk Process to find a peaceful settlement for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, holding the so-called elections in the occupied territories undermines the efforts towards a peaceful and lasting resolution. We call on the international community, including the OSCE Minsk Group, not to recognise these elections.

Turkey does not recognise these illegitimate elections, which will constitute yet another violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. As a member of the OSCE Minsk Group, Turkey will continue to support the efforts for finding a just and lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

UKRAINE

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the non-recognition of the so-called "presidential and parliamentary elections" in Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan (March 31)³²

Kyiv, 31.03.2020

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine strongly condemns the so-called "presidential and parliamentary elections", held on March 31 in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The results of these pseudo-elections have no legal consequences whereas they are contrary to the rules and principles of international law.

Ukraine once again expresses its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan in its internationally recognized borders and stands for peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

³¹ http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_82_-yukari-karabag-da-duzenlenmesi-ongorulen-sozde-secimler-hk.en.mfa.

³² <https://mfa.gov.ua/en/news/statement-ministry-foreign-affairs-ukraine-non-recognition-so-called-presidential-and-parliamentary-elections-nagorno-karabakh-azerbaijan-march-31>.

UNITED KINGDOM

Statement by the British Embassy in Azerbaijan³³

Baku, 01.04.2020

The British Embassy issued a statement on the ‘elections’ which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March:

The UK does not recognise the ‘elections’ which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March.

The UK reiterates its full support for the OSCE Minsk Group’s role in the peace process and encourages Azerbaijan and Armenia to accelerate efforts to build confidence and achieve a negotiated settlement.

Statement by the British Embassy in Azerbaijan³⁴

Baku, 13.04.2020

The British Embassy issued a statement on the Presidential ‘elections’ in Nagorno-Karabakh, the second round of which is taking place on 14 April:

The UK does not recognise the Presidential ‘elections’ in Nagorno-Karabakh, the second round of which is taking place on 14 April.

The UK again underlines its support for the OSCE Minsk Group and the Co-chairs’ role in the peace process. We support the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Azerbaijan, while underlining the importance of universally recognised principles and norms of international law. We encourage Azerbaijan and Armenia to accelerate efforts to build confidence and achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Statement by the U.S. Department of State³⁵

Washington, D.C., 06.04.2020

The United States has taken note of the so-called “general elections” held in Nagorno-Karabakh on March 31. In the context of a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, the United States, as a co-chair country of the OSCE Minsk Group, recognizes the role of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh in deciding its future. The United States does not, however, recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent and sovereign state – no does any other country. Accordingly, it does not accept the results of these so-called “elections” as affecting the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh, or prejudging the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The United States remains strongly committed to helping the sides achieve a just and lasting peaceful settlement to the conflict and will remain fully engaged in the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to achieve this goal.

³³ <https://www.facebook.com/ukinazerbaijan/>.

³⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/ukinazerbaijan/>.

³⁵ Statement by the U.S. Department of State to the Azertac News Agency, 06 April 2020.