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Letter dated 15 May 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit to you the information of the Press Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the ongoing measures on the restoration of the internationally recognized border between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the strengthening of the border protection system, undertaken in accordance with international law and the statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation, signed on 10 November 2020.

It should be noted in this regard that, following the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991, both Armenia and Azerbaijan came to independence in accordance with international law within the boundaries that they had had as Republics of the USSR. The Agreement Establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed on 8 December 1991, and the Alma-Ata Declaration of 21 December 1991 both contain an obligation on all signatory States, including Armenia and Azerbaijan, to respect “the inviolability of existing borders”. Since then, Azerbaijan has repeatedly stated its strong commitment to this principle implying the rule for defining the borders of new States.¹

¹ See, for example, [A/74/450-S/2019/762](#) and [A/74/961-S/2020/729](#).



At the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992, Armenia unleashed full-scale war against Azerbaijan and occupied a significant part of the sovereign territory of my country. In 1993, the Security Council adopted four resolutions – 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) – condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories and reaffirming respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. The Council further demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

However, these key demands have not been implemented by Armenia. On the contrary, Armenia not only continued to flagrantly violate the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, but on numerous occasions even challenged the very mentioning of this principle in international documents and the validity of the aforementioned rule that provides for the international legitimation of the border between them.

Evidently, such actions and the position of Armenia could not deprive Azerbaijan of its right to territorial integrity. Over the years, we have made consistent efforts to put an end to the occupation and resolve the conflict through negotiations. However, Armenia did not refrain from its attempts to sustain and cement the outcomes of its unlawful use of force and had continuously resorted to various provocations on the ground.

As a consequence, in response to another armed attack by Armenia at the end of September 2020, Azerbaijan undertook and successfully accomplished a counteroffensive operation, in the exercise of the inherent right to self-defence, liberating more than 300 cities, towns and villages from occupation, including the districts of Gubadly and Zangilan bordering on Armenia. Two other border districts, namely, Lachin and Kalbajar, were returned to Azerbaijan following the withdrawal of the armed forces of Armenia from these districts, under the terms of the aforementioned trilateral statement.

In the subsequent period, Azerbaijan and Armenia have been engaged in clarifying the boundary line between them based on the corresponding official maps available to both countries. This ongoing process is carried out through direct technical contacts between the sides involving their border protection services. Such contacts have helped resolve the emerging border issues in the liberated Gubadly, Kalbajar and Zangilan districts of Azerbaijan. Moreover, showing goodwill, Azerbaijan allows the use by the citizens of Armenia of the Gorus-Gafan highway, part of which passes the territory of Azerbaijan after the clarification of the boundary line in that area.

Against that background, there is no doubt that the provocative campaign of accusations launched by Armenia in recent days in connection with the situation around the Garagol Lake has basically domestic goals ahead of the snap parliamentary elections, which will be held next month in an atmosphere of acute political and economic crisis facing the country. Under these circumstances, hate propaganda towards Azerbaijan and revanchist slogans are the only incentives offered by the rivalries, who are those that unleashed a war against Azerbaijan in the early 1990s, on the one side, and the current authorities that lost this war 30 years later, on the other.

Besides, after three decades of occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan and the absence of a border regime between the two countries, Armenia has yet to come to terms with the need to respect the borders of a neighbouring State and continues to encroach on its territorial integrity. The dissemination of false historical narratives, the circulation of fabricated papers in the name of non-existent entity, references to the localities within the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan under

different fake names and reviving revanchist aspirations are just few examples to mention.

All border issues should be resolved through the established channel of communication between the border authorities of the two countries. Since 12 May 2021, the leadership of the State Border Service of Azerbaijan has been in the area, and negotiations are under way to normalize the situation around the Garagol Lake.

Azerbaijan also provided all the necessary information to international partners, who deemed it important to listen to the positions of both sides. As Armenia continues to mislead the international community, it is essential not to forget about its longstanding track record of falsifications and fabrications. This is the country that, despite numerous irrefutable facts testifying to the opposite, for decades stubbornly denied that it had committed aggression against Azerbaijan, occupied its territories, expelled hundreds of thousands of civilians from their homeland, destroyed and plundered the captured districts and cities and murdered thousands of Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the conflict.

As we have repeatedly stated, and I reiterate it once again, Azerbaijan has no land claims to any State, but will not yield an inch of its territory to anyone. Azerbaijan is committed to the normalization of inter-State relations between the two countries based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders and expects the reciprocity on the side of Armenia.

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 15, 34, 35, 40, 64, 70 and 86, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar T. Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 15 May 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information of the Press Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

13 May 2021

According to the trilateral statement signed on 10 November 2020, with the improvement of weather conditions in the areas of the liberated Lachin and Kalbajar districts bordering on Armenia, which have a difficult mountainous terrain and climatic conditions, the border forces of Azerbaijan are deployed in the positions of our country. This process is carried out in the usual mode and in a systematic manner.

Measures to strengthen the border protection system implemented within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan are carried out on the basis of the maps available to each side that define the border line between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since regaining their independence, there has been no State border between the two countries for obvious reasons, and for this reason we speak about the complicated technical process, which is currently accompanied by disagreements between the sides.

It is surprising that the Armenian side reacted inadequately to this process and made provocative statements. We believe that attempts by official circles to use this issue for political purposes in connection with the pre-election situation in Armenia are unacceptable.

Since 12 May, the leadership of the State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been sent to the area, negotiations are underway with the border guards of the opposite side and appropriate steps are being taken to normalize the situation.

We recommend that the political and military circles of Armenia not be alarmed, accept the reality of the inter-State border regime along the Zangilan, Gubadly, Lachin and Kalbajar districts of Azerbaijan and not unreasonably aggravate the situation in the region. Such cases can and should be resolved through mutual contacts between the military on both sides.

From its side, Azerbaijan is committed to resolving tensions in the region and calls for appropriate steps to be taken to that end.
