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**Security Council
Seventy-sixth year**

Letter dated 30 April 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In reference to the letter dated 14 April 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia and the annexed statement by that country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 April 2021 ([A/75/856-S/2021/364](#)), which contain false allegations about the Military Trophy Park inaugurated in Baku on 12 April 2021, I draw your attention to the following.

In the early 1990s, Armenia unleashed a full-scale war against Azerbaijan. As a result, a significant part of the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan was seized and remained under occupation for almost 30 years. The war claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people, and all captured areas were ethnically cleansed of their Azerbaijani population, comprising more than 700,000 people. Some of these acts, which constitute war crimes, also amount to crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

The largest massacre during the conflict was committed by invading Armenian forces against the civilians of the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly in February 1992. Within a very few hours, hundreds of Azerbaijanis, including women, children and the elderly, were killed, wounded or taken hostage, while the town was razed to the ground. The level of brutality is shocking: six families were totally exterminated; 25 children lost



both parents and 130 children lost one parent; 56 men were either burned alive, scalped, tortured, beheaded or blinded; and pregnant women were bayoneted.

The slaughter in Khojaly was tragically not unique, with civilians in many other Azerbaijani localities subjected to similar atrocities. Indeed, the offences committed by Armenian forces were not isolated or sporadic acts but were part of a widespread and systematic policy and practice aimed at killing Azerbaijanis and also at forcing them to leave their homes and possessions under the imminent threat of a horrifying massacre.

After continuous armed provocations, on 27 September 2020, Armenia perpetrated another act of aggression. The combat actions that followed lasted 44 days. Shelling with prohibited cluster munitions and ballistic missiles of major cities and towns of Azerbaijan located far from the front line where there were no military targets, including in particular a series of ruthless night-time missile strikes on the residential areas in the cities of Ganja and Barda, resulted in the killing of 101 Azerbaijani civilians, including 12 children. Over 400 civilians were wounded, some 84,000 people were forced to leave their homes and almost 5,000 private houses, apartment buildings and other civilian objects were either destroyed or damaged. Even hospitals, medical facilities, ambulances, schools, kindergartens, religious sites, cultural monuments and cemeteries were not spared.

Thanks to the bravery and heroism of its armed forces, Azerbaijan liberated more than 300 cities, towns and villages from occupation. Acting in full accordance with the inherent right of self-defence under the Charter of the United Nations and customary international law, Azerbaijan has fought within its internationally recognized territory to repulse aggression, end the occupation and protect its people facing the imminent threat of atrocity.

The liberation of the territories of Azerbaijan has revealed the horrific scale of destruction, vandalism and looting during the years of occupation. Most parts of these territories have literally been turned into a ghost land, as the entire civilian infrastructure and hundreds of historical, cultural and religious sites there were plundered, desecrated and destroyed. Defiled by Armenian graffiti, the mosques in the Aghdam, Gubadly and Zangilan districts were used as pigsties and cowsheds. Almost all graveyards were destroyed and vandalized in those territories.

Even the trilateral statement signed on 10 November 2020, which has ensured the cessation of hostilities, put an end to the armed conflict and set agreed parameters for establishing durable and lasting peace in the region, has not prevented the retreating armed forces of Armenia and the Armenian illegal settlers vacating the occupied territories from carrying out hate-fuelled acts, such as disassembling and burning houses, schools and other civilian objects, severing electric cables and poles, destroying gas stations, chopping down trees and setting forests on fire in an attempt to leave nothing behind.

Furthermore, during the years of occupation, most of the occupied territories were systematically and indiscriminately mined by Armenia. Since 10 November 2020, hundreds of Azerbaijani citizens, including civilians, have been killed or seriously wounded as a result of mine explosions in the liberated territories. Armenia refuses to release information about the minefields in the liberated areas, thus deliberately targeting human lives and attempting to impede post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and humanitarian efforts in those territories and the safe return of the internally displaced persons to their homes.

Against that backdrop, Armenia's resentment that the Military Trophy Park was opened on a date coinciding with the first human space flight of a Soviet astronaut 60 years ago is nothing but another outrageous example of absurdity, cynicism and impudence.

The Military Trophy Park symbolizes the triumph of international law and justice over a decades-long policy of aggression, ethnic cleansing and colonization. Immortalizing victory in the war for freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity, including through exhibiting military trophies and mannequins, is widely practised throughout the world.

In contrast to Armenia, which has used thousands of vehicle licence plates of Azerbaijanis who were forced to flee from their homes and properties in the occupied territories as decorative tiles on walls in public toilets, the Military Trophy Park displays the long-established defence lines of the armed forces of Armenia on the seized Azerbaijani lands, and various types of armaments and military equipment seized in those territories, including ballistic missiles and cluster bombs. These armaments and equipment have been used to kill Azerbaijani soldiers fighting for the territorial integrity of their country and Azerbaijani civilians alike, destroy civilian properties and cultural heritage, prevent internally displaced persons from returning to their homes and sustain and cement the occupation under the cover of the ceasefire and peace process.

The military trophies collected in the park expose Armenia's long-standing deception about its alleged non-participation in the conflict and the non-presence of its armed forces in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The Military Trophy Park has neither the purpose nor intention whatsoever to denigrate or dehumanize anybody. Nor are there any grounds for drawing parallels between the park and the members of the Armenian sabotage group currently under investigation, who were deployed from Armenia to the territory of Azerbaijan for terrorist purposes after the cessation of hostilities, in flagrant violation of international law and the aforementioned trilateral statement of 10 November 2020.

No doubt, Armenia's smear campaign against the Military Trophy Park and other similar false allegations are aimed at diverting the attention of the world community from its own responsibility for aggression and atrocity crimes committed during the conflict.

References in the aforementioned letter of the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the Second World War and Nazis are definitely misplaced, as they should be readdressed, first of all, to Armenia itself as a country practising the notorious racist "tseghakronism" ideology built upon hatred towards other nations, notably Azerbaijanis and Turks, and openly glorifying its infamous founder, a convicted Nazi criminal Garegin Ter-Arutunyan (nicknamed "Nzhdeh"), who, together with another Nazi collaborator, Drastamat Kanayan (nicknamed "Dro"), have been raised to the rank of national heroes in Armenia.

The well-known international terrorist in the 1980s, Monte Melkonian, is also among the national heroes in Armenia. He was sentenced to six years in prison in a European country and after release used his skills to kill and expel Azerbaijani civilians until he was liquidated by the Azerbaijani military in 1993.

Over the years of war and occupation, the leadership of Armenia has cynically publicized the outcomes of aggression against Azerbaijan as a "glorious victory", ostentatiously celebrated the seizure of the sacred Azerbaijani city of Shusha, overtly promoted the outrageous ideas of ethnic incompatibility and repeatedly made ultra-racist references vis-à-vis Azerbaijanis as a nation, calling all Azerbaijanis a "nomadic and barren tribe" and presenting the conflict as a "civilizational front line".

More than five months after the end of the war, a worrying level of hatred and Azerbaijanophobia is on the rise in Armenian society. It is disturbing to see that anyone who dares to speak about reconciliation and peaceful coexistence with Azerbaijan is treated as a "traitor". Moreover, irresponsible and dangerous revanchist

ideas and intolerance are propagated at the State level and shared across the whole political spectrum in Armenia.

As an aggressor State, Armenia itself is responsible for numerous casualties among its armed forces. It is the policy of Armenia and the miscalculations stemming from its reliance on endless impunity that have made this outcome irreversible. Today in Armenia, the families of those who have died in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are protesting against the adventurist policy of their government and demanding an answer to the question of why their relatives had to die on a foreign soil. The reciting of fake narratives by the Armenian authorities is unhelpful in finding a correct answer to this question, overcoming the deep political crisis facing the country nowadays and relieving the grief in its society.

Armenia must come to terms with its glaring misdeeds and realize that the objectives of durable and lasting peace and stability can in no way be achieved through territorial claims, groundless accusations, hatred and animosity towards neighbouring States and peoples and contempt for their legitimate rights to live on their own homeland. Azerbaijan is confident that there exists no alternative 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 is determined to advance the agenda of reconciliation, peaceful coexistence, development and cooperation.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 15, 34, 35, 40, 64, 70, 72, 86 and 135, and of the Security Council.

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