



# General Assembly Security Council

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**General Assembly  
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Agenda items 14, 32, 60, 61, 69, 71, 84, 110 and 132

**Culture of peace****Prevention of armed conflict**

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for  
Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and  
displaced persons and humanitarian questions**

**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**

**Measures to eliminate international terrorism**

**The responsibility to protect and the prevention of  
genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes  
against humanity**

**Security Council  
Seventy-ninth year**

## **Letter dated 16 October 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I am writing to register our strongest protest in connection with two communications both dated 30 September 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia and their annexes ([A/79/387](#) and [A/79/388](#)), which we flatly reject as the products of hatred and disinformation.

These communications are illustrative of Armenia's unwillingness to abandon its territorial claims and fake narratives and engage genuinely in efforts towards promoting and consolidating peace and stability in the region.

This is precisely why Armenia, under various unconvincing arguments, is stubbornly refusing to root out the territorial claims from its Constitution and a number of legal and political acts, which underpinned the aggression against Azerbaijan in the past and constitute the main obstacle to the normalization of relations today.



That Armenia is yet to comply with its international obligations and commit to the culture of peace is evidenced also by its brazen practice of using old or fake names to refer to the localities in Azerbaijan. The aforementioned communications are testament to Armenia's overt disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, in clear contradiction with both the international legal order and the ongoing process of the normalization of relations between the two States. They further expose the falsity of Armenia's statements about its alleged interest in creating an environment conducive to moving this process forward.

For the same purpose, Armenia distorts and falsifies history, trying to impose a repeatedly refuted narrative about its "millennia-old heritage" in the region. Among the numerous examples of such falsifications, suffice it to recall once again the modern workshop for the production of "medieval" cross-stones discovered in the Kalbajar district of Azerbaijan after its liberation from Armenia's occupation at the end of 2020. Those cross-stones were oxidized and treated with vinegar so that they appeared old, in order to be eventually exhibited as "undeniable" argument for "Armenian centuries-long roots" in the region.<sup>1</sup> That Armenia has never commented on this revealing fact speaks for itself.

Armenia also continues to ignore the large-scale atrocities against Azerbaijani cultural and religious heritage committed both on its own territory and in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan with the sole purpose of advancing ethnonationalist goals and denying and distorting Azerbaijani history, culture and ethnic identity.<sup>2</sup>

In this regard, it is worth paying attention to the fact that the Western Azerbaijan Community appealed to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), expressing deep concern about the destruction of Azerbaijani cultural heritage in Armenia and urging the sending of a fact-finding mission to ascertain the state of Azerbaijani cultural heritage there and the compliance of Armenia with its international obligations.<sup>3</sup>

During the 30-year occupation, most occupied districts, cities and villages of Azerbaijan were razed to the ground and Azerbaijani cultural heritage in those territories suffered considerable damage. Thousands of cultural objects, including monuments of world and national importance, mosques, temples, mausoleums, museums, exhibits, art galleries, archaeological sites and libraries, were looted and destroyed. Azerbaijani religious sites were also desecrated, their remnants looted and religious symbolism perverted through their use as stables or animal pens. The deliberate use of mosques as pens for pigs and cows during the occupation was a premeditated vile action intended as a particular insult. More than 900 cemeteries in those territories were either destroyed or desecrated. They were targeted deliberately owing to their family, historical and cultural importance to our people.

The offences against Azerbaijani cultural and religious heritage have been internationally condemned in the strongest possible terms.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., [A/75/872-S/2021/429](#); [A/75/899-S/2021/512](#) and [A/77/829-S/2023/246](#).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, [A/75/872-S/2021/429](#), [A/76/848-S/2022/437](#) and [A/77/829-S/2023/246](#).

<sup>3</sup> Azerbaijan State News Agency, "Western Azerbaijan Community sends letter to UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay", 27 March 2023. Available at [https://azertag.az/en/xeber/western\\_azerbaijan\\_community\\_sends\\_letter\\_to\\_unesco\\_director\\_general\\_audrey\\_azoulay-2545088](https://azertag.az/en/xeber/western_azerbaijan_community_sends_letter_to_unesco_director_general_audrey_azoulay-2545088).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, resolution 10/49-POL "On the Elimination of the Consequences of the Aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan" and the resolution "The destruction and desecration of Islamic historical and cultural relics and shrines in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan resulting from the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan", both adopted at the forty-ninth session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, held on 16 and 17 March 2023 in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Available at [https://new.oic-oci.org/Lists/ConferenceDocuments/Attachments/2487/49\\_pol\\_res\\_en.pdf](https://new.oic-oci.org/Lists/ConferenceDocuments/Attachments/2487/49_pol_res_en.pdf) and [https://new.oic-oci.org/Lists/ConferenceDocuments/Attachments/2494/49\\_cs\\_res\\_en.pdf](https://new.oic-oci.org/Lists/ConferenceDocuments/Attachments/2494/49_cs_res_en.pdf), respectively.

Armenia's allegations about the "military aggression" and "ethnic cleansing" are equally false and preposterous. It is ironic to hear accusations of this kind from the country, which violated every norm and principle of international law and whose agenda throughout the past conflict was to rid the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan of their Azerbaijani inhabitants by force and acts of mass murder and to prevent their return, replace them with ethnic Armenians and ultimately colonize these territories by changing their demography and character. The international community thoroughly documented and condemned these actions, qualifying them as amounting to ethnic cleansing and the "unacceptable scorched earth policy".<sup>5</sup>

The counteroffensive operation and the local counter-terrorism measures carried out by Azerbaijan in the fourth quarter of 2020 and in September last year, respectively, put an end to the unlawful occupation of its territories and ensured the restoration of my country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Azerbaijan fought not against a fictitious entity or civilian residents, but against the regular armed forces of Armenia, as well as terrorist and mercenary groups under its command and control, deployed in the then-occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The weapons surrendered by the armed forces of Armenia or detected in the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan since 20 September 2023, including tanks, armoured vehicles, heavy artillery systems, rockets, surface-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft missile systems, mortars, anti-tank weapons, electromagnetic warfare equipment and millions of rounds of ammunition,<sup>6</sup> demonstrate the scale and imminence of security threats posed by the illegal presence of these forces and groups on the territory of Azerbaijan.

All actions that Azerbaijan was compelled to take in response to Armenia's repeated unlawful use of force were in full compliance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

As for the residents who decided to migrate to Armenia and other countries, it was their choice, which they made based on the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose residence, despite persistent appeals from Azerbaijan to stay on an equal basis with all other residents of the country.

The United Nations inter-agency mission that visited the region refuted the allegations that the local residents and their property were targeted during the security measures or thereafter. Thus, the mission reported that it "saw no damage to civilian public infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and housing, or to cultural and religious structures", "did not observe any destruction of agricultural infrastructure" and "did not come across any reports – neither from the local population interviewed nor from the interlocutors – of incidences of violence against civilians ...".<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Security Council resolution [853 \(1993\)](#) adopted on 29 July 1993, para. 3; Report by the Chairman of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) Council on her visit to the Transcaucasian participating States, CSCE Communication No. 301, Prague, 19 November 1993, p. 8; General Assembly resolution [48/114](#), adopted on 20 December 1993; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "International protection considerations regarding Azerbaijani asylum-seekers and refugees", September 2003, para. 52; report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin: mission to Azerbaijan ([A/HRC/8/6/Add.2](#)), 15 April 2008; and European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Azerbaijan: Analysis of Gaps in the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons* (October 2009), p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> See [A/78/609-S/2023/900](#).

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, "UN team completes mission to Karabakh", 2 October 2023. Available at <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/248051-un-team-completes-mission-karabakh>.

In stark contrast, the same mission “observed destruction and mine action needs” in the Azerbaijani-populated city of Aghdam,<sup>8</sup> which was razed to the ground along with hundreds of other cities, towns and villages in Azerbaijan during their occupation by Armenia from the early 1990s to 2020.

Armenia’s allegations to the contrary are particularly cynical given the fact that approximately 300,000 Azerbaijanis were expelled and dispossessed and are now prevented from returning to their ancestral homeland in Iravan, Vedi, Basarkechar, Hamamli, Zangibasar, Gafan, Garakilsa, Meghri, Gorus and other districts, cities, towns and villages throughout Armenia. Furthermore, most of more than 700,000 Azerbaijani internally displaced persons are still unable to return to their homes in the liberated territories owing to the ravages of war and the serious mine threat, further aggravated by Armenia’s refusal to share full information of the locations of landmines, booby traps and other explosive devices that it indiscriminately planted to target the people and maximize the harm.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that Armenia will not be able to conceal its malicious intentions by cowardly hiding behind the worthless papers of its pocket non-governmental organizations, hastily created only to mirror the activities of the Western Azerbaijan Community, just as it failed to camouflage its aggression against Azerbaijan by installing the puppet regime in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan and circulating similar papers on its behalf in the United Nations and other international organizations. There will be no return to the past, nor will Armenia benefit from further manipulation and obstruction of the prospects of peace, development and cooperation.

Azerbaijan has been and remains fully committed to the objectives of a peaceful, secure, stable and prosperous region and will continue its efforts towards that end.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14, 32, 60, 61, 69, 71, 84, 110 and 132, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.