



General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 January 2025

Original: English

Seventy-ninth session

Agenda items 32, 71, 80, 84 and 132

Prevention of armed conflict

Promotion and protection of human rights

Crimes against humanity

The rule of law at the national and international levels

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

Letter dated 20 January 2025 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 20 January 2025, Azerbaijan commemorates the thirty-fifth anniversary of the “Black January” tragedy and pays tribute to the memory of its sons and daughters who became innocent victims of the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force and violence sanctioned by the central Soviet Union authorities to suppress the free expression of popular will.

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on that occasion (see annex).

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, 71, 80, 84 and 132.

(Signed) Tofiq **Musayev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 20 January 2025 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of 20 January – National Mourning Day

20 January 2025

The anniversary of the bloody massacre committed 35 years ago on the night of 19–20 January by the former USSR against civilians in order to suppress the national liberation movement of the people of Azerbaijan is annually commemorated in our country as 20 January – National Mourning Day.

On 20 January – National Mourning Day, which is both a moment of profound sadness and pride in our contemporary history, we honour with deepest gratitude all our Martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country.

The discriminatory policy of the former Soviet authorities against our country and people at a time when fabricated provocations such as the “Sumgayit events” were orchestrated and implemented in order to justify the continuation of unfounded territorial claims of Armenia against Azerbaijan in 1980s, as well as the mass deportation of the Azerbaijanis from the territories of present-day Armenia, led to the rise of the national liberation movement of the people of Azerbaijan.

In an attempt to put down the national movement which advocated for the independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, on the night of 19–20 January 1990, the units and special forces of the Soviet Army, as well as the internal troops’ contingent, brutally massacred the civilian population in Baku, Sumgayit, Lankaran and Neftchala. As a result of the 20 January military aggression, which was one of the most heinous crimes against humanity of the last century committed against innocent people, including children, women and the elderly, in violation of all norms of international law, 150 civilians were killed, 744 were seriously wounded and 4 went missing.

Notwithstanding the complexity of that period and the precautions taken by the former Soviet authorities to prevent the spread of the truth of 20 January, the fact that the brutal massacre was brought to the attention of the international community immediately, the day after the tragedy, is associated with the name of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev. Following the restoration of our independence and the return of the National Leader to power in our country, the crimes committed against our people, including the 20 January tragedy, were given a political and legal assessment, and in March 1994 a decision “On the tragic events committed in Baku on 20 January 1990” was adopted by the Milli Majlis (Parliament).

Although the 20 January tragedy was planned and implemented with the aim of crushing the resistance of the people of Azerbaijan, this brutal massacre marked a turning point in the history of our people’s independence, solidarity and national liberation movement, as well as the beginning of the inevitable collapse of the USSR, which had long been delayed.

The unity and determination of our people, who had overcome the most challenging days and the most complex struggles of history, became the foundation of the brilliant victory of the Glorious Azerbaijan Army led by the Victorious Commander-in-Chief during the 44-day Patriotic War, which resulted in ensuring our

territorial integrity, as well as the end of the occupation and conflict as a result of the counter-terror measures, which led to the complete restoration of our sovereignty on 19–20 September 2023.

On the 35th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy, which profoundly shaped the history of our independence, we solemnly commemorate our Martyrs who sacrificed their lives for our country and territorial integrity and wish good health to our citizens who experienced health losses along that way!

Long Live Azerbaijan!
