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Agenda items 32, 60, 61, 69, 71, 84 and 132

Prevention of armed conflict

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and
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**Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia
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Promotion and protection of human rights

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**

**Security Council
Seventy-ninth year**

Letter dated 27 December 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I have the honour to submit herewith the Chair's conclusions of the Second International Conference on "The Right to Return: Advancing Justice for Azerbaijanis Expelled from Armenia", held on 5 and 6 December 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan (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, 60, 61, 69, 71, 84 and 132, and of the Security Council.

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



Annex to the letter dated 27 December 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Chair's conclusions of the Second International Conference on "The Right to Return: Advancing Justice for Azerbaijanis Expelled from Armenia", held on 5 and 6 December 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan

More than 200 participants from 51 countries, including parliamentarians, public and political figures, civil society activists, and scholars, gathered at the Second International Conference on the topic "Right of Return: Advancing Justice for Azerbaijanis Forcefully Expelled from Armenia." The conference focused on the issue of the return of Azerbaijanis forcibly expelled from Armenia and the global issue of forced displacement.

Participants noted that displacement is one of the most serious violations of human rights and that the forced expulsion of Azerbaijanis from Armenia remains a significant and unresolved injustice.

Participants emphasized that the right of return is firmly established in international law and recognized as a fundamental human right. They highlighted key legal frameworks supporting the right of return, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Pinheiro Principles, and customary international law.

Concerns were raised regarding Armenia's refusal to allow the safe and dignified return of Azerbaijanis who had been forcibly displaced. They called upon the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to examine whether the Court has jurisdiction over Armenia's ongoing obstruction of the right to return given Armenia's obligations under international law and the Rome Statute, and to investigate any potential violations.

Participants stressed the importance of restoring property rights during the return process. They urged the Armenian government to take necessary steps to return confiscated or forcibly seized property, provide compensation for losses incurred during forced displacement, and comprehensively address damages. They noted that while compensation is important to address the material and emotional losses of displaced individuals, it cannot serve as a substitute for the right of return to ancestral lands or be employed to deny this right.

Participants expressed concern over Armenia's systematic destruction of Azerbaijanis' cultural heritage, including mosques, cemeteries, and historical monuments. They condemned this as an attempt to erase Azerbaijani identity and called for the involvement of UNESCO and other international organizations to assess, protect, and restore this cultural heritage. The importance of preserving cultural heritage for peace and mutual understanding was also emphasized.

Participants reminded that Azerbaijanis were the first victims of conflicts in the post-Soviet period, and that the international community's insufficient response led to the emergence of other conflicts. They underscored that the full restoration of the safe right of return for Western Azerbaijanis could serve as a positive example for resolving conflicts worldwide.

Participants affirmed that justice is essential for peace and lasting stability. They called on Armenia to stop glorifying those responsible for crimes against Azerbaijanis, dismantle structures that continue to promote discord between the two

nations, and begin constructive dialogue with the Western Azerbaijan Community. They stressed the importance of Armenia's addressing historical injustices against Azerbaijanis and creating conditions for coexistence and peace.

Participants urged the UN and member states to take diplomatic efforts to support safe return of Western Azerbaijanis and ensure that the return process is comprehensively planned and adequately resourced. They acknowledged the expected challenges in the reintegration of returnees and emphasized the need for coordinated efforts to rebuild infrastructure, provide humanitarian aid, and implement long-term development programs in areas where Western Azerbaijanis are expected to return.

They called on the Armenian government to eliminate policies and constitutional provisions that hinder regional peace and accept opportunities for economic and social cooperation. They noted that opening communications in line with Armenia's obligations would contribute to the development and stability of the South Caucasus.

Participants confirmed their determination to uphold the right of return as a core principle of regional peace and justice. They emphasized that the peaceful, safe, and dignified return of Western Azerbaijanis is not only a political priority but also a test of collective commitment to ensuring human rights and dignity.

Participants commended the leadership and efforts of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, in ensuring the supremacy of international law, defending the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, the restoration of liberated territories, and maintenance of justice and peace. They also expressed their support for the Western Azerbaijan Community's approach for a peaceful, safe, and dignified return in accordance with human rights, and the norms and principles of international law.

This summary reflects the key points raised during the conference and serves to promote justice for Azerbaijanis forcibly displaced from Armenia, as well as peace, security, and reconciliation in the region.
