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Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 31 October 2019 from the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to submit herewith the joint declaration of heads of religious confessions in Azerbaijan (see annex).

It should be noted that Armenia – as an occupying power in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, does not comply with its international humanitarian law obligations, among others, by destructing cultural heritage and changing the demographic composition of the occupied territories. The occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan by Armenia has been carried out with ethnic cleansing, expelling the native inhabitants of the occupied territories and violating their fundamental human rights.

The Permanent Mission kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto* as a document of the forty-third session of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 4.

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.



**Annex to the note verbale dated 31 October 2019 from the
Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations
Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United
Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Joint declaration of heads of religious confessions in Azerbaijan in the
name of the one creator**

Continuing its aggressive deeds one more time, the occupant Armenia in a spiritual sense, violates the norms of international law – conventions and other documents adopted by the civilized world on the protection of spiritual heritage, against our religious monuments. Purposeful terror committed against Juma Mosque – the religious architectural monument built in 1883 by the prominent Azerbaijani architect Karbalayi Safikhan Qarabaghi in honour of the Khan of Karabakh Ibrahim Khalil's daughter Govharaga in the occupied Shusha city of Azerbaijan.

Armenia the country that also destructed cultural, historical, and religious heritage belonging to Azerbaijani nation in the occupied territories, prepares for provocative so-called “opening” of Govharaga Mosque in Shusha, destroyed by Armenians themselves after “repair” and “restoration” works. Armenia tries to deceive international community and tries to show itself as a country, that approaches historical monuments, with care, with so-called “opening” of the mosque after “repair” works. It is further obvious example of illegal activity of Armenia and its criminal regime in the occupied territories. The point, which disappoints and troubles us, is that, according to the disseminated news, criminal regime carries out these works together with “Part Saman Jahan” Company of neighbouring Muslim country of Iran.

Armenian extremists regularly destroying mosques, cemeteries, other temples in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, currently by changing historical view of the mosque behind the veil of fake humanism, under pretext of restoration, falsify its ethnic identity, and engaged in removal of cultural heritage belonging to Azerbaijanis, in the occupied lands. Undoubtedly, after the “repair and renovation” the mosque will undergo fake changes, and will be presented with corrections that distort history similarly to the previous cases with ancient Albanian churches and other temples.

We – heads of the religious confessions, residing in Azerbaijan, strongly condemn this so-called care campaign for the religious and Cultural Monument in Shusha, evaluate the actions of Armenians against our religious and cultural monuments in the occupied territories as a policy of inadmissible extortion that undermines international conventions and declare that there is no any justification for this. Armenian side committing these provocative deeds demonstrates that as always, again avoids the negotiation process for the peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and does not refrain from the hypocrisy to the format of the joint statements made by the religious leaders.

We call on the international community to express their determination against the acts of vandalism against the Govharagha Mosque, the historical and religious monuments in all our occupied territories, referring to the provisions of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954), the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992), urge them to take serious actions to prevent it to happen again.

(Signed) Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukr Pashazadeh
Chairman of Caucasus Muslims Board

(Signed) Aleksandr
Archbishop of Baku and Azerbaijan

(Signed) Milikh Yevdayev
Head of Community of the Mountain Jews in Azerbaijan

(Signed) Robert Mobili
Chairman of the Christian Alban-Udin Community in Azerbaijan

Baku, October 11, 2019
