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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 28 February 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia 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 Armenia 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 transmit the statement made by the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Armenia on the commemoration of the anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Armenia 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 28 February 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia on commemoration of anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait

Today we are commemorating the victims of the anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait. In the closing days of February, 1988, the Armenian population of Sumgait was subjected to mass killings and atrocities, perpetrated with unspeakable cruelty.

The Sumgait pogroms marked the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, when Azerbaijan responded to the peaceful appeal of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination with mass violence and pogroms of Armenians. This in fact also formed the essence of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: to ensure the security of the people of Artsakh through exercise of their right to self-determination.

The Sumgait atrocity was the first identity-based mass crime in Europe since the end of the Second World War, and it was followed by better planned new crimes of wider scale in Baku, Kirovabad and occupied territories of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic - Shahumyan region, parts of Martakert and Martuni regions.

Azerbaijani authorities' assessment of Sumgait massacre clearly reflects the absence of their willingness to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. For three decades Azerbaijani authorities shifted their assessment tactics - from glorification of perpetrators to blaming victims in organizing the pogroms. Only the absence of will of the Azerbaijani side to take responsibility for massive and grave human rights violations, and their genocidal intent against Armenians remain unchanged.

Today we commemorate the victims of the Sumgait massacres with a strong commitment to prevent such crimes against the Armenian people.
