



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
26 November 2019

Original: English

---

## Human Rights Council

### Forty-third session

24 February–20 March 2020

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 state that the Republic of Azerbaijan took over the chairmanship in the Non-Aligned Movement in the 18th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku, 25–26 October 2019.

In this regard, the Permanent Mission would like to draw attention to the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan during the opening of the 18th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement (see annex).

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**

**Speech of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev**

Dear heads of State and Government!

Dear guests, ladies and gentlemen!

I sincerely greet the participants of the 18th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement and say “Welcome!” to you all.

I express my gratitude to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for its chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement in 2016–2019.

The Non-Aligned Movement serves to promote universal values and demonstrates a commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries. The Non-Aligned Movement, which includes 120 countries, is the largest political institution after the UN General Assembly that represents states of the world.

In 2011, Azerbaijan was admitted to the Non-Aligned Movement. In the short time of participation in the Non-Aligned Movement, our country gained great authority by resolutely defending the norms and principles of international law.

The 17th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the countries participating in the Movement held in 2016 adopted a unanimous decision to hold the next summit in Baku and assign Azerbaijan chairmanship in the 2019–2022 period. This is a testament of respect, confidence and trust in our country. I regard this as support for our policy on the part of the Non-Aligned Movement, which unites the majority of the countries of the world, and want to express my gratitude to you for this decision again.

During chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan will build its priorities and activities on the historical Bandung principles. The Bandung principles, covering such concepts as respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity of all countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, protection of mutual interests and promotion of cooperation, coincide with the fundamental principles of Azerbaijan’s foreign policy.

We have to step up efforts to ensure universal respect for the norms and principles of international law. In this context, there is a great need for reforms in the UN. Violent change of borders, violation of the territorial integrity of countries with the use of force, interference in internal affairs are unacceptable.

During its chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan will make effort to establish and develop a dialogue with other institutions, expanding the geography of cooperation. Most countries of the Non-Aligned Movement are developing countries, therefore, it is very important to develop economic cooperation within the framework of the Movement. In this sense, Azerbaijan’s accession to the Group of 77 last month makes it possible to step up efforts in the socioeconomic sphere on an international scale. Of particular importance is the assertion through joint efforts of the interests of participating states within the UN.

Special attention should be paid to the threats faced by the least developed, small and landlocked island states. Since 2005, Azerbaijan has provided humanitarian and technical assistance to more than 90 countries. The Azerbaijan Agency on Assistance for International Development implements projects in the field of poverty reduction, development of science, culture, healthcare, information technology, rational use of water resources, grant programs and other fields in various countries.

Since 2018, Azerbaijan has been providing member-states of the Non-Aligned Movement with full scholarship for studies in higher educational institutions of our country. Today, 37 young people from 31 participating states are benefiting from this program.

Youth policy in Azerbaijan is defined as a priority area. Azerbaijani youth is brought up in a national spirit, in accordance with traditional values, in the spirit of attachment to the homeland and patriotism. This is why we took the initiative to host the Youth Summit for the first time in the history of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Youth Summit, held on the eve of the current Summit, was joined by young people who arrived in our country from 40 countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests!

The state independence of Azerbaijan is only 28 years old. A week ago, on 18 October, we celebrated the date of the restoration of our independence. Nagorno-Karabakh, which is historical land of Azerbaijan, as well as seven districts adjacent to it, or almost 20 per cent of the internationally recognized territories of our country, have been under Armenian occupation for more than 25 years. Armenia has carried out a policy of ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijanis. As a result, more than a million Azerbaijanis found themselves in the position of refugees and internally displaced persons. At that time, the population of Azerbaijan was 8 million people, and our country was in one of the leading places in the world for the number of refugees and internally displaced persons per capita. Armenia has committed the Khojaly genocide against Azerbaijanis. As a result of the Khojaly genocide, 613 innocent people, including 106 women and 63 children, were brutally murdered just because they were Azerbaijanis. More than a thousand people went missing.

The Khojaly genocide has been recognized by more than 10 countries of the world. The four resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council in 1993 contain a requirement for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the territory of Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, these resolutions have not been implemented. Sometimes Security Council resolutions are implemented in a matter of days, but it also happens that they remain on paper for 26 years, as is the case with the conflict Azerbaijan has faced.

There must be an end to this policy of double standards. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other authoritative organizations have adopted resolutions and decrees requiring the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Taking this opportunity, I want to express my gratitude to the participating states for the support expressed in the documents the Non-Aligned Movement has adopted so far in relation to resolving the conflict in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Armenia has destroyed all historical monuments, mosques and cemeteries in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, plundered museums and our material and spiritual values. By deliberately trying to erase the Azerbaijani footprint in the occupied territories, Armenia is converting all place names to Armenian. Contrary to international humanitarian law, Armenia also pursues an illegal resettlement policy in the occupied territories and engages in illegal economic activities.

In April 2016, as a result of the military provocation committed by Armenia, six Azerbaijani civilians were killed, including a child, 26 were injured, hundreds of houses were destroyed. Karabakh is the original Azerbaijani land, and the conflict should be resolved only within the framework of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan pursues an independent foreign policy. Based on national interests and justice, this policy has helped us make many friends. A good example of this is the election of Azerbaijan in 2011 as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council with the support of 155 states. During its membership in the Security Council, Azerbaijan made an important contribution to strengthening international peace and security, ensuring justice and becoming an active participant in international political processes.

Azerbaijan also contributes to international peacekeeping operations established on the basis of the mandate of the UN Security Council. Our country has regularly hosted meetings of the high military leadership of Russia-NATO and Russia-USA. There are about 200 countries in the world. The election of Azerbaijan by these countries for the above-mentioned meetings is an indicator of respect for our independent foreign policy.

Distinguished guests, the first years of independence were very difficult for Azerbaijan. During the reign of the corrupt, cowardly and incompetent Popular Front of Azerbaijan, our country was exposed to great misfortunes. Civil war was instigated in Azerbaijan. Only the ascent of President Heydar Aliyev to power on the request of the Azerbaijani people in 1993 saved our country from even greater tragedies. Azerbaijan embarked on the path of democratic and sustainable development. Stability and calm were established in the country.

Azerbaijan is committed to such values as democracy, human rights and freedoms. This has deep historical roots. We are proud that the first democratic republic in the Muslim East was established in Azerbaijan a hundred years ago, women were granted the right to vote. In fact, we beat most Western countries in this respect. Democratic development is Azerbaijan's conscious choice. All fundamental human rights and freedoms, the rule of law and freedom of the press are guaranteed in Azerbaijan.

Over the past 15 years, the economy of Azerbaijan has developed rapidly and the gross domestic product more than tripled. Over \$270 billion in investment has been made in Azerbaijan, half of which is foreign. Azerbaijan's external debt accounts for only 17 per cent of the gross domestic product. According to this indicator, we are in ninth place in the world. Poverty in Azerbaijan is at 5 per cent. This year alone, the minimum wage and social benefits have doubled, the minimum pension has increased by 70 per cent. A total of 68,000 families, or more than 280,000 people, receive targeted social assistance. Each family receives monthly social assistance equivalent to approximately \$140. Over the past 15 years, more than 3,200 schools and more than 640 hospitals and medical facilities have been built or renovated in Azerbaijan. The literacy rate in Azerbaijan is close to 100 per cent. More than 300,000 internally displaced persons have been provided with free houses and apartments. A monthly equivalent of an average of \$180 is paid to IDP families.

Azerbaijan's successes are receiving recognition of the international community. The World Bank's Doing Business report for 2020 ranks Azerbaijan among the world's top 20 most reforming states. A report by the Davos World Economic Forum ranks Azerbaijan in 10th place for the long-term government strategy and fifth in the world in terms of the leadership's commitment to reform.

Azerbaijan is a space-faring state. We currently have three satellites – two are telecommunications and one is for surveying the surface of the Earth. Eighty per cent of our population uses Internet.

Energy security is provided in Azerbaijan. Referring to the report of the Davos World Economic Forum again, I must say that Azerbaijan ranks second in the world in terms of access to availability. At the same time, Azerbaijan supplies energy to a number of countries. Azerbaijan, which plays the role of a bridge between the Asian and European continents, a country that has no access to the world ocean, has initiated and implemented a number of regional transport projects. As an active participant in the East-West and North-South transport corridor projects, we are currently working on other important projects – South-West and North-West. Thus, Azerbaijan, as a reliable transit country, makes a valuable contribution to multilateral international cooperation.

Climate change is a global threat. Azerbaijan supports international efforts to combat its consequences. Azerbaijan has ratified the Paris Agreement and set the goal of reducing by 2030 the level of greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent compared to the base year 1990. Azerbaijan uses only environmentally friendly gas and hydroelectric power stations to produce electricity.

Azerbaijan has a rich tradition of tolerance and multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is a way of life for the Azerbaijani people. The Baku Process initiative we launched 11 years ago with the participation of member-countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

and the Council of Europe is also supported by the UN. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres regarded the Baku Process as a front line for promoting a dialogue of cultures since 2008. Established as a logical continuation of the “Baku Process”, the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in our country every two years, has already been recognized by resolutions of the UN General Assembly as the main global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue.

Distinguished guests, I am sure that the upcoming discussions within the framework of the Summit will serve the realization of the goals on the agenda of the Non-Aligned Movement. During its chairmanship of the Movement, Azerbaijan will make consistent efforts to implement its priorities jointly with member-states.

I wish the Summit success and I want to say “Welcome!” to you again! Thank you for attention.

---