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Note verbale dated 16 December 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 a memorandum circulated at the 26th meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, held on 5 and 6 December 2019, on the position of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the peaceful settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan (see annex).

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict started in the late 1980s as a result of the territorial demands of Armenia, leading to the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent administrative districts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which constitute 20 per cent of the internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

As a result of ethnic cleansing and then the war waged by Armenia against Azerbaijan from 1987 to 1994, more than 1 million Azerbaijanis were forcefully expelled from their ancestral lands, thereby becoming internally displaced persons and refugees.

The economic, social and cultural rights of internally displaced persons and refugees forcefully expelled from those territories are still being violated by Armenia today.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva 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 16 December 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

Position of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the peaceful settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Republic of Azerbaijan remains committed to the resolution of the conflict by political means within the format of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The legal and political frameworks for the conflict settlement are laid down in U.N. Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993), and 884 (1993), as well as in the relevant documents and decisions of the OSCE.

The resolution of the conflict is possible only on the basis of the norms and principles of international law, as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, in full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders.

Azerbaijan adheres to the step-by-step approach in the settlement of the conflict, which is premised on the U.N. Security Council resolutions and the OSCE decisions, in particular the Budapest Summit decision of 1994.

The first step shall be the elimination of the major consequences of the conflict, thus ensuring immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, to be followed by the return of the forcibly displaced Azerbaijani population to their homes and properties in these territories in safety and dignity, opening of all communications in the region for mutual use and rehabilitation and economic development of these territories.

The next stage of the settlement process shall be the elaboration and definition of the status of self-determination for the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region within Azerbaijan, in accordance with the Constitution and legislation of Azerbaijan. Such a status shall ensure peaceful coexistence of the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of the region and guarantee full enjoyment by all of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.

The definition of the status shall take place in peaceful conditions through a legitimate process with direct, full and equal participation of the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, namely, the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities, and in their interaction with the Government of Azerbaijan exclusively in the framework of a lawful and democratic process.

Azerbaijan considers no political solution to the conflict beyond this framework and participates in the settlement process based on this understanding.

The political settlement of the conflict will create favourable conditions for comprehensive economic development and mutually beneficial cooperation.
