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Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written submission by the Human Rights Defender* of Armenia

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Human Rights Council the written submission by the Human Rights Defender of Armenia, which is being circulated in accordance with rule 7 (b) of the rules of procedure of the Council (see resolution 5/1, annex) and with the arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2005/74.

* National human rights institution with A status accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.



Submission by the Human Rights Defender of Armenia**

Statement of the Human Rights Defender (Ombudsman) of Armenia on the Human Rights situation related to Nagorno Karabakh conflict

The Human Rights Defender of Armenia presents the current statement to your attention concerning the most recent military offences and subsequent human rights violations along the border between Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) and Azerbaijan.

Early this morning Azerbaijan began launching indiscriminate military aggressive air and artillery attacks against the Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) along the entire line of the border.

Numerous civilians reported that villages, towns and the capital of Stepanakert are targeted. This extremely worrying news was also officially reported by the Human Rights Defender and the Defense Army of Artsakh. Large-scale violence and damages have been already caused to civilians. Life and health of Armenian children, women and the entire population of Nagorno Karabakh is under a very real threat.

Severe casualties and damages are already caused to the peaceful population of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) as a result of the large-scale military offensive launched by Azerbaijan since early morning today. Martakert, Martuni, Stepanakert and other cities, many villages are under large-caliber artillery shelling.

A child and a woman were killed and two civilians were wounded at around 11 a.m. in Martuni Region of Nagorno Karabakh, as reported by the Nagorno Karabakh Human Rights Defender (Ombudsman). More cases of severe casualties have been evidenced.

All official and media reports, peaceful population's alarming complaints prove that the shelling is targeted.

Schools, houses and other civilian objects are under indiscriminate attacks with very real threat to life and health of women, children and the entire population of Nagorno Karabakh.

These gross violations of human rights are in absolute violation of Geneva Conventions and customary International Humanitarian Law.

These military attacks are even more condemnable during the new Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic. The Secretary-General of the United Nations called for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world due to the threat of coronavirus.

The Human Rights Defender of Armenia maintains direct contacts with the Human Rights Defender of Artsakh and peaceful Armenian population who have submitted their alarming complaints to the Armenian Ombudsman.

Serving as the National Human Rights Institution of Armenian and being vested with human rights protection mandate, the Human Rights Defender of Armenia conducts its activities based on principle of human rights protection in (post)-conflict situations.

Given the immense importance of role of the UN institutions and agencies in human rights protection and promotion of humanitarian values, I kindly ask for your reaction which would contribute to the prevention of further hostilities and gross violations of human rights.

The photos in relation to the above-named circumstances are available through the following link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dQws6XRg8DQhWA9nzFca1GG1ka7V70Vz?fbclid=IwAR1YFrqJ_UzPeqP4m-mF2RTAWEGE7uXMMb6ECekGA4VRtdgq5KLe9Nlwtck.

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