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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 11 June 2021 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 hereby transmits the comments of the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia on the destruction of the Zoravor Surb Astvatsatsin church by Azerbaijan (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Armenia kindly requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto* as a document of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 4.

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



Annex to the note verbale dated 11 June 2021 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

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's comment dated 25 March 2021 on the destruction of Zoravor Surb Astvatsatsin Church

Today, the BBC released a video documenting the demolition of the Zoravor Surb Astvatsatsin Church near the town of Mekhakavan (Jebrail), which took place after the region fell under the Azerbaijani control. The same church had already been desecrated during the recent Azerbaijani aggression against Artsakh.

We strongly condemn this yet another case of a crime committed by Azerbaijan on the grounds of religious hatred. At the same time, the attempts of the Azerbaijani leadership to justify this barbarism are even more concerning, as it shows that this manifestation of vandalism was intentional in nature and is reminiscent of the systematic destruction of Nakhichevan's historical and cultural heritage.

This case of destruction of the place of worship after the recent war is not an isolated episode. The destruction of the more than 200-year-old "Kanach Zham" church in the city of Shushi of the Artsakh Republic proves that the cultural vandalism carried out by Azerbaijan is based on only one criterion - hatred towards the Christian Armenian people.

Despite the efforts to present itself to the world as a "center of tolerance and multiculturalism", Azerbaijan has so far consolidated its position as a pioneer in the destruction of the Christian heritage.

The destruction of the Armenian historical-cultural and religious heritage once again demonstrates that the assurances on the preservation of the Christian cultural values by the Azerbaijani authorities are false. The international community should undertake measures to stop and condemn the crimes, including the cultural genocide being committed by Azerbaijan since September 27 last year to date.
