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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 31 March 2022 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 submits herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 31 March, the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis (see annex).

The Permanent Mission 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 31 March 2022 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

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on March 31 - Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis

March 31 is the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis, commemorating the victims of the bloody massacre perpetrated by Armenians against Azerbaijanis.

In March-April 1918, massacres were committed with utmost cruelty in the city of Baku, as well as other towns and districts of the Baku Province by the dashnak-bolshevik armed groups operating under the mandate of the Baku Council (Baku Soviet), and tens of thousands of civilians were killed only for their ethnic and religious affiliation. We commemorate the victims of these events and consider it important to preserve this memory in order to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Ethnic Armenian Stepan Shaumian, the Commissar Extraordinary for the Caucasus, admitted that 6,000 armed soldiers of the Baku Soviet and 4,000 from the Dashnaksutyun party participated in the massacres against the Azerbaijani people¹.

The genocide carried out against the Azerbaijanis along with Baku covered also Shamakhi, Guba, Iravan, Zangezur, Karabakh, Nakhchivan and Kars regions. During the first five months of 1918, more than 16,000 people were murdered with utmost cruelty in Guba province alone; a total of 167 villages were destroyed. Mass graves discovered in Guba region in 2007 constitute clear evidence of the inhumane acts committed by Armenians.

March massacres of 1918 were well prepared and ruthlessly implemented act by radical nationalist Armenians against Azerbaijanis on the grounds of racial discrimination and ethnic cleansing.

The Government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic established in 1918 the Extraordinary Investigation Commission in order to investigate the serious crimes perpetrated by Armenians and has taken a number of measures to preserve the true facts revealed by the Commission in the memory of the people and to inform the world community about these atrocities. The Extraordinary Investigation Commission which was comprised of the best lawyers of that time representing different nationalities – Russians, Jewish, Polish, Georgians and even Armenians, based on the evidences launched criminal cases against 194 individuals accused of different crimes against the peaceful population; 24 individuals in Baku and about 100 individuals in Shamakhi had been arrested for perpetrated crimes.

However, this process had been suspended after the demise of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, a full investigation of the events and its political-legal assessment had been prevented. Only after 80 years – on March 26, 1998 the adequate political assessment was given to these horrific events by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Genocide of Azerbaijanis", signed by National Leader Heydar Aliyev and 31 March was declared the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis.

The commemoration of the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis plays an important role in informing the world community about the massacre and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis in the past and present.

Through the policy of military aggression against Azerbaijan, which lasted for almost 30 years, Armenia continued to commit crimes against Azerbaijanis on ethnic grounds. One million Azerbaijanis fell victim to ethnic cleansing in Armenia and in occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Armenia also committed numerous war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide, including the Khojaly Genocide of February 1992. During the 44-day war, the Armenian armed forces deliberately targeted peaceful population of Ganja, Barda, Tartar

¹ «Шаумян С.Г. Избранные произведения», том 2, Москва 1978, стр. 259-260.

and other cities of Azerbaijan with missile attacks. In doing so, Armenia has brought back the memories of a century ago March Massacre.

We strongly condemn the deliberate policy pursued by Armenia, based on genocide, crimes against humanity, racial discrimination and ethnic cleansing, committed so far against the Azerbaijani people, and we emphasize the importance of ceasing Armenia's impunity in order to prevent the recurrence of these inhumane crimes in the future. Azerbaijan from its side will take all necessary legal measures to ensure peace and end impunity.

We commemorate the innocent victims of the March massacre with grief and mercy.
