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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Note verbale dated 16 March 2023 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 statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia made on the occasion of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the massacres of Armenians in Sumgait (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 items 4 and 9.

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



Annex to the note verbale dated 16 March 2023 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

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the massacres of Armenians in Sumgait

35 years ago, on February 27-29, 1988, amid the encouragement and criminal inaction of the Azerbaijani authorities, the massacres of the Armenians in the city of Sumgait were carried out, resulting in the killing of hundreds of Armenians, including children, women, elderly, while thousands were forcibly displaced.

The pre-planned massacres by the Azerbaijani authorities were carried out in order to brutally suppress the civilised struggle of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to live with dignity and peacefully in their historical homeland.

This mass crime committed on the grounds of national identity received a wide response and was condemned by the international community, including relevant resolutions adopted by the European Parliament. However, the real organisers and perpetrators of the crime not only weren't held accountable but also, encouraged by impunity and indulgence, raised a new wave of Armenophobia and intolerance, carrying out new pogroms and massacres of Armenians in Baku, Kirovabad and other Armenian-populated areas of Azerbaijan.

As a result of these bloody events, hundreds of thousands of Armenians had to leave their homes in haste, leaving behind their possessions and property, and during all these years they never got a chance to exercise their violated rights.

The subsequent events demonstrated that the mentioned crimes of the Azerbaijani authorities were not separate episodes, but vivid examples of state-planned Armenophobia, while their continuous manifestations forced the displacement of tens of thousands of Armenians from the Shahumyan region, Getashen, and as a result of the 44-day war also from Hadrut, Shushi and neighbouring regions.

35 years after the Sumgait massacres, for about 80 days, Azerbaijan has illegally blockaded the Lachin corridor. The purpose of this operation is to displace the remaining 120,000 Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh as well

Henceforth, Azerbaijan continues its policy of depopulating Nagorno-Karabakh by subjecting the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh to ethnic cleansing. In order to prevent it, targeted condemnation by the international community and the implementation of relevant international mechanisms is imperative.

Even today, ignoring the orders of the reputable international courts, Azerbaijan explicitly continues to destroy, desecrate and vandalise the Armenian historical-cultural monuments and sanctuaries, aiming to erase the Armenian trace in the territories fallen under its control. Simultaneously, the propaganda of hatred towards Armenians continues at the highest level, which aims to prevent the two nations from overcoming the environment of enmity

Today, paying tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of the pogroms against Armenians in Sumgait and other communities, we emphasise once again that Azerbaijan's Armenophobic rhetoric, maximalist aspirations and aggressive actions in response to efforts of Armenia to build stability and peace in the region, are inadmissible.

At the same time, the Republic of Armenia expresses its commitment to the peace agenda, believing that the establishment of lasting and comprehensive peace and security in the region is an urgent imperative.