



---

Hügelgasse 2, A-1130, Wien | Tel.: + 43 (1) 403 13 22 | Fax: + 43 (1) 403 13 23 | E-mail: vienna@mission.mfa.gov.az

**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
1287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council,  
29 October 2020**

*Aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and situation  
in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan*

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan would like to update the Permanent Council on the ongoing aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and its consequences as well as situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in the reporting period since the last meeting of the Permanent Council on 22 October.

Azerbaijan once again demonstrating its goodwill and proceeding from the principles of humanism agreed to another humanitarian ceasefire starting as of 26 October, 08 am local time. The agreement was facilitated by the efforts of the United States following the separate meetings of Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan with their US counterpart held in Washington DC on 24 October. In the released joint statement the parties reaffirmed the commitment to implement and abide by the humanitarian ceasefire agreed in Moscow on 10 October. However, the armed forces of Armenia, in gross violation of this new humanitarian ceasefire, on 26 October, at 08:05 am, subjected to artillery fire the units of Azerbaijani armed forces located in the Safiyan village of Lachin region. Later, the city of Tartar and the villages of the Tartar district came under intensive shelling.

Thus, it is a third time in a row that Armenia has blatantly ignored and violated the agreed humanitarian ceasefire regime. This was preceded by violations of humanitarian ceasefire agreed in Moscow on 10 October and of humanitarian ceasefire achieved by the mediation efforts of Paris on 17 October. Consistent pattern of violations of these agreements by Armenia is demonstration of willful ignorance of its commitments and an open disrespect to the efforts of international mediators. This clearly resonates with announcements coming from the Prime Minister of Armenia that his country does not envision a peaceful diplomatic resolution of the conflict, confirming that the ultimate goal of Armenia is to continue the military occupation of the Azerbaijani territories.

Since the last PC meeting on 22 October and despite afore-mentioned agreements on humanitarian ceasefire, the armed forces of Armenia continued to deliberately and indiscriminately attack densely populated areas of Azerbaijan along the frontline and farther away from the conflict zone in blatant violation of international humanitarian law. These attacks are being carried out both from the territory of Armenia and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

On 23 October 2020, in the morning hours, the Armenian armed forces subjected to intensive fire the territory of Tartar, Aghdam and Aghjabadi districts of Azerbaijan. From 03.00 am to 12.00 pm, two UAVs of the Armenian armed forces in the direction of Aghjabadi district were destroyed by Air Defense Units of Azerbaijan. Two other UAVs were downed by means of special equipment.

Starting from the morning of 24 October 2020, the armed forces of Armenia continued to indiscriminately fire on residential areas of Barda, Goranboy, Naftalan and Tartar regions with rockets and heavy artillery. Armenian armed forces launched 9M528 “Smerch” missile in the direction of Tapgaragoyunlu village of Goranboy region (**Exhibit 1**).

Further to this, on 24 October 2020, 13 years old national of the Russian Federation Artur Mayakov died in hospital where he was placed after being seriously wounded on 17 October as a result of Armenia's ballistic missile strike on Ganja city.

From the night of 24 to 25 October 2020, units of the Armenian armed forces continued firing at residential areas in Goranboy and Tartar districts with small arms, mortars, various artillery and rocket systems. As a result of these attacks, 16 years old boy was killed in Kabirli village of Tartar district by 300 mm “Smerch” MLRS rocket (**Exhibit 2**).

On 26 October 2020, the armed forces of Armenia continued to shell Aghdam, Aghjabadi, Fuzuli and Tartar districts. Moreover, since morning hours, Armenia’s armed forces fired on the territories of Tovuz, Gadabay and Dashkesan districts from the Berd, Chambarak and Vardenis regions of Armenia. On the same day, the armed forces of Armenia fired on a secondary school in Garadagli village of Aghdam district (**Exhibit 3**). As a result, severe damage was inflicted upon the school. Overall, since the start of new aggression by Armenia on 27 September, more than 40 schools have been damaged by Armenia’s deliberate and indiscriminate attacks.

Furthermore, on 26 October 2020, after shelling of the Dashkesan region, located outside the combat zone, a fire broke (**Exhibit 4**) out in the forest in mountainous area. Urgent measures are being taken to prevent fire from spreading, although mountainous terrain makes it difficult to deploy special equipment to extinguish fire.

On 27 October 2020, Armenia continued to escalate tensions by launching attacks in various directions. 300 mm “Smerch” cluster munition rocket was launched on the residential areas of Barda district (**Exhibit 5**). As a result of this attack, 5 civilians, including an infant, were killed, 12 civilians were injured. In the evening of the same day, Tartar district also came under attack from 300 mm “Smerch” MLRS. As a result, Tartar branch of the Azerkhalcha Open Joint-Stock Company was seriously damaged.

In the morning of 28 October 2020, the armed forces of Armenia attacked the city center of Barda with “Smerch” MLRS (**Exhibit 6**). As a result of this atrocious terrorist attack, 21 civilians, including children, were killed and more than 70 people were seriously wounded. One of the volunteers of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was killed while delivering humanitarian aid to civilians. Being thus far the deadliest single attack on civilian areas of Azerbaijan, it once again exposed the terrorist nature of Armenia’s military-political leadership. Deliberate killing

of peaceful population in the city of Barda constitutes another war crime and crime against humanity committed by Armenia.

Right after the attacks on Barda city on 27 and 28 October, spokesperson of the Armenian Ministry of Defence Shushan Stepanyan made statements on her twitter page (**Exhibit 7**), saying that Armenian or “Artsakh” armed forces have nothing to do with it and that it is “an absolute lie and a dirty provocation”. These statements basically suggest that it is Azerbaijani side that is killing its own civilian population and as such, embodies a very low point reached by Armenian leadership in an attempt to deny its responsibility for atrocious crimes against Azerbaijani civilians.

Furthermore, just at the same time as Armenian armed forces attacked Barda, Armenian propagandists spread fake news about alleged bombardment by Azerbaijan and Turkey of maternity hospital in Khankendi with F-16 jets (**Exhibit 8**). It is clear that the shared photos depict an abandoned building rather than a functional hospital, as there are no traces of damaged medical equipment or even elementary pieces of furniture. This fake fits well into disinformation campaign widely employed by Armenia to divert attention from and cover up its heinous attacks on civilian population of Azerbaijan.

Since the outbreak of hostilities on 27 September 2020, deliberate and indiscriminate attacks of the armed forces of Armenia against the cities, towns and villages in Azerbaijan, as of 29 October 2020, claimed the lives of 90 civilians, including children, women and elderly, 392 civilians were wounded, 2406 private houses, 92 residential buildings and 423 other civilian facilities were either destroyed or damaged (**Exhibit 9**).

Deliberate and indiscriminate attacks carried out by the Armenian armed forces on densely populated civilian areas of Azerbaijan, including those located far away from the conflict zone, indicate that Armenia does so in order to inflict high level of casualties and cause disproportionate harm among civilian population and civilian objects. Such attacks constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity and an act of state terror, for which all perpetrators, including those at the highest echelon of political military leadership of Armenia must bear international legal responsibility. Against the background of irrefutable evidence attesting to continuous bombardment of cities and other densely populated civilian areas of Azerbaijan, Armenia continues to deny its responsibility for the atrocious crimes committed against Azerbaijani civilians during the conflict. In this regard, Azerbaijan calls on the participating States and the international community as a whole to strongly condemn the barbaric and atrocious methods of warfare employed by Armenia. These inhumane acts call for justice and accountability.

Last week we brought to the attention of the OSCE’s Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) the urgent need of full implementation by all OSCE participating States of their relevant collectively agreed commitments in the politico-military dimension in order to deny Armenia any means to commit further crimes against civilian population of Azerbaijan with weapons and ammunition that it continues to get mainly from OSCE participating States through various schemes of trafficking. Against the backdrop of unabated attacks on civilian population of Azerbaijan, we reiterate our call on all OSCE participating States concerned to take prompt actions arising from their relevant OSCE commitments and to reconsider their military-technical cooperation with Armenia.

Alongside indiscriminate attacks on civilians, Armenia is also deliberately aggravating the situation in various directions of the frontline, especially along the restored state borders of Azerbaijan. The

Armenian military-political leadership must now realize and reckon with the fact that the restored state borders of Azerbaijan in the territories previously occupied by Armenia are not a zone of conflict anymore, but internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan, over which Azerbaijan has sovereignty. The inviolability of these state borders must be ensured and any provocation by Armenia in this direction will be assessed as an attack on our territorial integrity. Azerbaijan reserves the right to destroy any legitimate military target that would threaten its territory, regardless of its location.

Several days ago the Ministry of Defence of Armenia released a photo of Armenia's Defence Minister David Tonoyan together with Armenian soldiers (**Exhibit 10**). One of the soldiers sitting next to the minister is wearing a military uniform identical to the one used by the State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This is an intentional misrepresentation and constitutes a clear case of false flag operation, which is forbidden under laws and customs of war. Several minutes later Defence Ministry's press service deleted these photos from the official accounts.

Let us remind that most recently Armenia has released an utterly unprofessional fake video of foreign mercenaries wearing uniforms of the State Border Service of Azerbaijan, alleging that they are fighting on Azerbaijan's side. An Armenian soldier sitting next to the Defence Minister of this country sheds light on these allegations of Armenia and proves that such shows are staged by Armenia.

Speaking of the use of mercenaries and terrorists by Armenia, in addition to the information that our Delegation provided in the recent PC meetings and shared through document distribution system, there is further credible evidence presented by international media, citing intelligence information, regarding the deployment of PKK terrorists to Azerbaijan's occupied city of Shusha. These terrorists are dressed in military uniform of the armed forces of Azerbaijan, which is a clear violation of laws and customs of war as well as of commitments on the use of foreign terrorist fighters. Moreover, these tricks used by Armenia can prove extremely dangerous, as Armenia can potentially stage perpetration of war crimes by the armed forces of Azerbaijan against civilian Armenian population using its servicemen or FTFs camouflaged in Azerbaijani uniform and then mobilize all its propaganda resources in an attempt to put responsibility on Azerbaijan. This is a dangerous development and Delegation of Azerbaijan warns all pS of adverse consequences of this practice employed by Armenia.

Having exhausted its manpower on the battlefield, Armenia not only continues to recruit mercenaries and terrorists, but most recently turned to employing children as soldiers in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The recent videos and photos spread on social media clearly testify to this dangerous and unacceptable development (**Exhibit 11**). By using children in the military operations Armenia violates the protection guaranteed for children under the IV Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilians and its Additional Protocol, as well as the rights of children enshrined in the UN Child Rights Convention and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, in particular Article 1 and Article 2. While using children as combatants Armenia deprives them of their fundamental rights, in particular the right to life and the right to protection, as children might become military targets as combatants.

Moreover, Armenia which presents itself as one of the "advocates" of the Safe Schools Declaration does not hesitate to use school buildings and even kindergartens for military purposes. Recently circulated photos of a meeting of commanders of Armenian armed forces in a kindergarten proves that Armenia camouflages military headquarters inside kindergartens, thus committing grave violations of

its international obligations (**Exhibit 12**). Relevant international organizations need to thoroughly investigate these cases and take necessary measures to prevent further breaches of rights of children by Armenia.

We would like to further update the PC that as a result of counter-offensive conducted by Azerbaijani armed forces, as of today Azerbaijan liberated 4 cities, 178 villages and 3 settlements in Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Zangilan, Gubadli, Khojavand and Tartar districts of Azerbaijan, thus implementing the UN Security Council resolutions 874 and 884 demanding the withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from these territories of Azerbaijan.

The amount of military equipment of Armenian armed forces destroyed and captured by the armed forces of Azerbaijan in the course of our counter-offensive keeps growing (**Exhibit 13**). Thus, as of 29 October, Azerbaijani armed forces destroyed and captured 308 tanks of Armenian armed forces. To compare, in the latest annual exchange of military information within the Vienna Document and CFE Treaty, Armenia declared to possess only 145 tanks. Our armed forces also destroyed and captured 561 artillery pieces, while Armenia declared to have only 242 artillery pieces. These vast differences in numbers speak for themselves and once again testify to Armenia's grave violations of its commitments and obligations under relevant politico-military instruments, which we repeatedly have been bringing to the attention of the FSC and most recently PC. It also reveals a high scale of militarization of the occupied territories, which pursued the obvious goal to consolidate the unlawful occupation of these territories. One can only wonder how many more pieces of military equipment are still left at the disposal of Armenian armed forces in the occupied territories.

The responsibility for the consequences of counter-offensive measures, which Azerbaijan is obliged to take in connection with the continued illegal presence of the Armenian armed forces in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in order to protect its population, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, lies entirely with the Republic of Armenia.

Armenia officials and agents of the unlawful puppet regime it has set up in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan continue to issue provocative and warmongering statements confirming that Armenia's military-political leadership is not interested in getting back to the negotiations table and seek resolution of the conflict by peaceful means. Armenia's Prime Minister's latest address to the nation on 27 October 2020 vividly demonstrated this attitude for yet another time.

The irresponsible position of Armenia's leadership expressed in its failure to honor commitments on humanitarian ceasefire, repeated blatant violations of this ceasefire moments after it enters into force, unabated indiscriminate attacks on civilian population of Azerbaijan which constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity, a series of warmongering statements and public denunciations of peaceful negotiated resolution of the conflict based on agreed core principles, attempts to propagate the illegal puppet regime set up in the occupied territories, are the chief reasons for the current impasse. Armenia's sense of impunity and permissiveness must be urgently addressed by the international community, in particular the OSCE and Co-chairing countries of the Minsk Group, since it leaves no room for any meaningful negotiation with the current Armenian Government. Armenia must be brought back to the logic and understandings underlying the OSCE Minsk Group-led negotiation process before it is too late.

Armenia must demonstrate in words and deeds that it is genuinely interested in peace in the region; it must cease its policy of annexation and ethnic cleansing; it must comply with its international obligations and withdraw its forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, which will pave the way for the achievement of lasting peace, security and stability in the region.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.