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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 19 November 2019 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 presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to draw attention to the following.

On May 8, 1992, the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia occupied a historical Azerbaijani city of Shusha. As a result of the occupation, Shusha city and 30 villages of Shusha district were destroyed, 195 innocent civilians were killed, 165 were wounded and 58 persons went missing. More than 24.000 inhabitants of Shusha were subjected to ethnic cleansing.

The occupation of Shusha was part of Armenia's systematic policy of occupation and aggression against Azerbaijan. As an outcome of this policy, Armenia occupied the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent districts of Azerbaijan by use of force, conducted notorious ethnic cleansing against more than one million Azerbaijanis in the seized territories and committed other serious war crimes and crimes against humanity.

After the occupation, about 135 cultural, religious and historical monuments have been destroyed or artificially changed. One of such monuments is "Yukhari (Upper) Govharaga" mosque.

In this regard, the Permanent Mission submits herewith the statement of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan on "repair-restoration" of Yukhari Govharagha mosque by Armenia. The actions of Armenia intend to falsify historical facts and continue the policy of occupation violating human rights of Azerbaijani IDPs that have been forcefully expelled from their native lands.

The Permanent Mission kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto* as a document of the forty-third session of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 4.

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



Annex to the note verbale dated 19 November 2019 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 Azerbaijani community of Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan on “repair-restoration” of Yukhari Govharagha mosque by Armenia

Destroying the cultural, historical and religious heritage of Azerbaijani people in the occupied Azerbaijani lands, Armenia is preparing for the provocative “opening” of the Yukhari Govharagha mosque in Shusha following the “repair-restoration”.

This is the one more vivid sample of illegal activity carried out in our occupied territories by Armenia and its vassal criminal regime.

As it is known, the Yukhari Govheraga Mosque was built by architect Karbalai Safihan Sultanhuseyn oglu Garabagi upon the instructions of the daughter of Ibrahimkhalil Khan Govheraga.

The “opening” of the mosque after the “restoration” is the next cheap show that Armenia plans to mislead the international community. Armenia tries to present itself in the world as a country that cares about historical monuments. If Armenia really respects historical monuments and is interested in their restoration, then why destroys hundreds of cultural and historical religious monuments belonging to our people? Why are the footprints of other mosques, churches and other monuments in Shusha timely destroyed by Armenian vandals? Who will use the Yukhari Govharaga Mosque while the Azerbaijanis, the native inhabitants of Shusha, are expelled?

It also hurts us that the Armenian invaders are trying to change the architecture of this architectural monument of our people and design the mosque as a “Persian mosque”. This once again shows that Armenia is engaged in the theft, loss, and destruction of the cultural heritage of Azerbaijanis in the occupied territories. By declaring the Yukhari Govharaga mosque a “Persian mosque”, Armenia falsifies history and tries to rewrite it. It also shows that Armenia is a fake, tolerant country.

According to the media, the repair and restoration work of the Yukari Govharaga Mosque is being carried out by the Iranian company Part Saman Cahan. It upsets us – IDPs. We accept it as disrespect towards the Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people in general.

We – as an Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno Karabakh region declares that the first step we will do after returning to our homeland is to restore our cultural, historical and religious monuments. We are sure that the day is not far.

The only solution of the conflict is possible with the withdrawal of Armenian occupation troops from our lands, the return of expelled Azerbaijanis, peaceful coexistence of both communities of Azerbaijan’s Nagorno-Karabakh region within internationally recognized borders of our country.
