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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their
implications for international peace, security
and development**

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

**Security Council
Seventy-fifth year**

Letter dated 5 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 27 September 2020, from their positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the armed forces of Armenia subjected the armed forces of Azerbaijan along the entire frontline and the adjacent populated areas in my country to intensive fire, with the use of large-calibre weapons, artillery and mortars. These acts have resulted in numerous deaths and injuries among civilians and military. Extensive damage was inflicted upon the civilian property and infrastructure in the area.

The armed forces of Armenia continue attack the cities, towns and villages in Azerbaijan from their positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the territory of Armenia with tactical ballistic missiles, large-calibre artillery and rockets. Since the outbreak of hostilities, in total, 25 Azerbaijani civilians, including children and elderly, were killed and 127 civilians were wounded, 316 houses and 56 other civilian objects, including hospitals, medical facilities, ambulances, schools, kindergartens and energy infrastructure, were either destroyed or damaged as a result of Armenia's shelling.

From 4 October 2020, the armed forces of Armenia expanded the area of their strikes, targeting the major cities of Azerbaijan and the critical civilian infrastructure of a regional importance situated far away from the combat zone.

Thus, on 4 October and the following day, the armed forces of Armenia launched massive missile attacks from the territory of Armenia against the densely populated residential areas of Ganja, the second largest city of Azerbaijan situated 60 km from the frontline. On 4 October, Mingachevir, the fourth largest city in Azerbaijan situated 100 km from the frontline, was hit with three "Smerch" rockets, two of which fell



unexploded in close vicinity to the Mingachevir Water Hydropower Complex and the private house, while the fourth rocket caused extensive damage to the house and wounded five civilians. The same day, the Turkoba village of the Khizi district of Azerbaijan, situated 200 km from the frontline and about 80 km from the capital city of Baku, and the Pirishikul village of the Absheron district of Azerbaijan, situated about 250 km from the combat zone and only 15 km from Baku were hit with “Scud” tactical ballistic missiles.

The evidence collected before and throughout the current hostilities clearly indicates that Armenia also actively recruits foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries to use in combats against Azerbaijan. For this purpose, Armenian diaspora organizations operating in various countries under the disguise of charity and non-governmental organizations raise funds and collect other material means to finance terrorist activities and support the aggression of Armenia and attacks of its armed forces against the civilian population in Azerbaijan. According to international mass media reports, thousands of ethnic Armenians from different countries have already arrived in the conflict zone or in the process of deployment.

Armenia has a long history of using foreign fighters, including terrorists of Armenian origin, to advance its malign foreign and security policy goals. Armenian terrorist organizations, such as the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG), have been actively involved in the aggression against Azerbaijan in early 1990s.

Before the latest act of aggression on 27 September 2020, there were reports on “300 militants belonging to the PKK transferred by Armenia from various countries in the Middle East and placed in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, where they have subsequently begun training with Armenia’s military”.¹ In addition to the deployment of PKK terrorists in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan,² there were also reports of Kurdish civilians from those countries earlier relocated in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and provided with one-time cash benefits or 20-year low-interest loans.³

Between 2011 and 2017, more than 20,000 Syrian nationals were settled in Armenia and in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.⁴ In 2016, former residents of the Syrian village of Yacoubiyah were enticed to settle en masse in Nagorny Karabakh.⁵ Since August 2020, nine families from Lebanon were settled in Nagorny Karabakh.⁶ The video footage appeared on 29 October 2020 shows the Lebanese national acknowledging fighting in the ranks of Armenia’s army against Azerbaijan.⁷

Armenia tries to recruit also the nationals from other countries and regions. Thus, the *Greek City Times* revealed that the first batch of fighters to go to Armenia will consist of approximately 80 Greek citizens, of which 50 are of Armenian origin and 30 are ethnic Greeks.⁸ According to the Greek media, the recruitment involved in total from 500 to 800 Greek nationals.⁹

¹ Middle East Monitor, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200930-armenia-transport-hundreds-of-pkk-militants-to-fight-azerbaijan/>.

² <https://twitter.com/LukeDCoffey/status/1312063454975590401>.

³ <https://turksam.org/daglik-karabag-a-yerlesen-pkk-ve-turkiye-nin-sinir-otesi-mudahale-hakki>.

⁴ Eurasianet. <https://eurasianet.org/karabakh-syrian-refugees-flee-one-war-zone-for-another>.

⁵ <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/two-potential-safe-zones-in-northern-syria>.

⁶ <https://en.armradio.am/2020/08/27/nine-more-lebanese-armenian-families-to-settle-in-artsakh>.

⁷ <https://twitter.com/ragipsoylu/status/1311035752847937539>.

⁸ <https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/10/01/greeks-going-to-artsakh-battlefront/>.

⁹ <https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/10/03/former-non-commissioned-officer-im-going-to-artsakh-with-500-800-greeks-to-crush-the-turks/?amp>.

Armenia and Armenian diaspora organizations bear legal liability for these actions, which clearly run contrary to international law and resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017) of the Security Council, which prohibit the use of foreign terrorist fighters and oblige States to suppress such acts and financing of terrorism.

Pursuant to resolution 2178 (2014), “individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict” are defined as foreign terrorist fighters.

The States in whose territories these activities are carried out or financed also bear responsibility and under the obligation to suppress the mobilization of foreign terrorist fighters and prosecute the travel or attempted travel abroad for terrorist purposes. In that regard, it is critical that the respective authorities of Member States, origin or transit, exercise due diligence in light of the increased intensity of travel by their nationals and residents to Armenia and undertake necessary preventive border control measures, as well as take all required steps to prevent their territories from being used for supporting or financing terrorist activities against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is determined to take all measures stemming from its rights under the relevant bilateral and multilateral mechanisms with a view to curbing terrorist activities within its internationally recognized territory and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 40, 86 and 114, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
