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Prevention of armed conflict**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications
for international peace, security and development****The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan****Right of peoples to self-determination****Promotion and protection of human rights****The rule of law at the national and international levels****The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide,
war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity****Security Council
Seventy-sixth year**

Letter dated 8 February 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

At the end of the 1980s the people of Azerbaijan went into the streets and squares of Baku and throughout the republic to protest against unlawful territorial claims of neighbouring Armenia, killings, persecution and mass expulsion of more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis from their ancestral lands in Armenia and the unjust policy pursued by the leadership of the Soviet Union towards Azerbaijan. In response, the Soviet leadership resorted to force to suppress the free expression of popular will.

Over the night from 19 to 20 January 1990, following a series of externally organized and instigated provocations aimed at destabilizing the situation on the ground and attaching a radical character to legitimate demands and aspirations, 26,000 Soviet troops attacked Baku and other cities and towns in Azerbaijan. As a result of a full-scale military assault, 147 civilians were killed and 744 people were wounded.

Among other acts, the invaders were observed executing the wounded, firing at passers-by and at dwellings, stores, medical and other facilities. In several cases, tanks and other armoured vehicles crushed or opened fire upon moving as well as parked vehicles. Clearly marked ambulances were targets of shooting and also were not allowed to aid the wounded. Some residents were shot in their apartments,



building entryways and on buses. During the examination of bullet wounds, experts noted the excessive damaging effects of the bullets.

By using military force, the Soviet leadership hoped to frighten the people of Azerbaijan, break their will and maintain the communist rule in the republic. However, the “Black January” gave a new impetus to the national liberation movement. On 22 January 1990, 2 million people attended the funeral ceremony in Baku. On 18 October 1991, Azerbaijan restored its independence and soon after was admitted to the United Nations.

In that context, I would like to point out the following in connection with the letter from the Permanent Representative of Armenia, which has as its annexes the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and a paper in the name of the unlawful and criminal puppet regime that it has set up in the occupied Daghlyq Qarabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) region of the Republic of Azerbaijan ([A/75/710-S/2021/42](#)).

No doubt, by disseminating apparent lies about the tragic events in January 1990, Armenia tries to distort the root causes of the war that it unleashed against Azerbaijan and conceal its own heinous crimes.

It is not surprising that the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia is silent about the citizens of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia of Azerbaijani origin, who solely because of their ethnic identity were the first to be subjected to violence and abuse, starting in November 1987, and that the Azerbaijanis were the first victims of the conflict.

The statement also omits to mention that both Armenia itself and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan were ethnically cleansed of more than 1 million Azerbaijanis and that the process of their mass expulsion was accompanied by killings, torture, enforced disappearances, the destruction of property and pillaging.

As to annex II to the aforementioned letter, it is null and void per se. Armenia’s attempts to mislead the international community by falsifications of this kind are futile and devoid of any substance. The circulation of such papers is also tantamount to war propaganda and advocating atrocity crimes committed against Azerbaijanis on racial, ethnic and religious grounds.

The sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan over the Daghlyq Qarabagh region is unquestionable. The historical and legal facts are clear in that regard.¹

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 34, 35, 40, 71, 72, 86 and 135, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

¹ See, for example, the identical letters dated 20 September 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council ([A/74/450-S/2019/762](#)); and Malcolm N. Shaw, “Report on the fundamental norm of the territorial integrity of States and the right to self-determination in the light of Armenia’s revisionist claims”, [A/74/961-S/2020/729](#) (22 July 2020), annex, paras. 154–178.