

Right of reply by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

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High-Level Segment

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Mr. President,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan has taken floor to exercise the right of reply to the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia during the High-Level Segment.

The statement of Armenian representative included references to the alleged violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of Azerbaijan, which deserves particular attention. In this regard, I would like to say the following. It is true that for more than 20 years there is an ongoing international armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. And it is very regretful that there are many losses of life from both sides to the conflict. It is important to underline that the only cause for these losses is the military occupation by the Republic of Armenia of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and 7 adjacent Azerbaijani districts. It is well known that in circumstances in which one State has illegally used force to occupy the territory of another State and has neglected its obligation to settle an international conflict by peaceful means, the claims by Armenian representative that the victim State, in this case Azerbaijan is under an obligation to respect the principle of the non-use of force vis-à-vis the aggressor State, which is Armenia, are redundant. Needless to say, if sustained, such claims would inevitably legitimize the *fait accompli* achieved by the aggressor, tend to entrench positions of control achieved as a result of the illegal use of force, encourage impunity rather than contribute to the triumph of justice.

The principle of the non-use of force, which has been flagrantly violated by Armenia as early as in 1992, must be put into effect by the complete withdrawal of the armed forces of Armenia from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan as envisaged by four UN Security Council resolutions in 1993, which still have not been implemented. This is the only settlement to the conflict.

Thank you