



237 Route des Fayards, CH-1290 Versoix, Switzerland Tel: +41 (22) 9011815 Fax: +41 (22) 9011844 E-mail: geneva@mission.mfa.gov.az Web: www.geneva.mfa.gov.az

Check against delivery

**UN Human Rights Council
Fortieth Session
Clustered Interactive Dialogue
with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
Right of Reply
delivered by Shahriyar Hajiyev, Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**

March 5, 2019

Mr. President,

We have taken the floor to exercise our right of reply to the untrue and deceptive remarks made by the delegation of Armenia.

Blaming Azerbaijan for “hate speeches” is ridiculous, as it is well-known that it is Armenia which has occupied the territories of Azerbaijan and carried out total ethnic cleansing both in Armenia and in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan by expelling all Azerbaijanis and other non-Armenians and creating a mono-ethnic state.

Inter-ethnic incompatibility and other nationalistic ideas have been and continue to be the official policy of Armenian leadership in order to create ethnic hatred and enmity for extending its occupation policy. The facts prove that today 30.000 Armenians live in Baku alone, while one cannot find a single Azerbaijani living in Armenia. By bringing such claims in international fora, including the Human Rights Council, the real intention of Armenia is to divert the attention of international community from its ongoing aggression and occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan.

Justifiable demands of Azerbaijan to put an end to the occupation of its territories should not be falsely portrayed as the existence of hate speeches in Azerbaijan. It is also the international community that demands the withdrawal of Armenian military from the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and 7 adjacent districts of Azerbaijan through the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. It is in the best interests of Armenia to fulfill its international law obligations if this country is serious about its long overdue development as a sovereign and independent state.

Thank you.