



**UN Human Rights Council
Forty-fourth Session**

**Statement
delivered by Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

17 July 2020

Madame President,

I would like to inform the UN Human Rights Council on the current situation, including also in the human rights field, in the de-facto war unleashed by Armenia against Azerbaijan.

On July 12, 2020, regular army units of Armenia in blatant violation of international law and cease-fire regime, once again launched a cross-border attack against Azerbaijani border guards along the international border between the two states in the Tovuz region of Azerbaijan, which led to military escalation and caused numerous casualties. The attacks are still going on. This overt act of aggression also deliberately targeted civilian population and residential areas in the immediate vicinity to the state border in violation of international humanitarian law, when on July 13-14, Armenia was indiscriminately shelling civilian infrastructure in border districts of Azerbaijan with large-calibre artillery and multiple launch rocket systems.

As a result of these attacks, a number of Azerbaijani civilians including elderly people, and twelve Azerbaijani border guards were killed and many injured. Serious damage was inflicted upon the border line residential areas of Azerbaijan. I would like to stress that Armenia's latest military attack, which according to the minister of defence of Armenia was carried out "to occupy new advantageous positions", was launched across the international border rather than along the line of contact around the Azerbaijani territories in its south-west that are presently illegally occupied by Armenia.

Armenia's artillery shelling and missile launches against Azerbaijani territory occurred in close vicinity of international energy and transportation lines from the Caspian region and Central Asia to Europe crossing Azerbaijan. Moreover, the ministry of defence of Armenia yesterday threatened to target and destroy the dam of a huge water reservoir in Azerbaijan which is close to the border, thus preparing to use big technological and industrial sites as weapons of mass destruction against civilian population.

By attacking the border guards in Azerbaijan, Armenia has attempted to expand the scope of confrontation, and Armenia's appeal for the military support from the Collective Security Treaty Organization which it is a member of, discloses real intentions behind this unprovoked act of war against Azerbaijan. The situation continues to be extremely tense, and all attacks of Armenian military have been met with appropriate countermeasures by Azerbaijan.

Madame President,

By these military attacks, the aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan which has been raised to a new level should be seen as a continuation of its recent inflammatory actions challenging fundamental principles of international law applicable in the ongoing settlement process, and remains both a major threat to regional peace and security and another blow to the negotiation process.

Presently, 20 percent of Azerbaijan's internationally recognized territories are under the occupation of Armenia for 28 years, 750,000 Azerbaijanis have been ethnically cleansed from these territories in 1992, in addition to 300,000 Azerbaijanis ethnically cleansed from their historic homes in Armenia proper as early as in 1987.

As always, the human rights of civilian population become the first victim under this situation. Therefore, the United Nations and its Security Council, as well as specialised bodies of the OSCE in charge of settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, must display willingness and responsibility to stop the aggressor and demand its compliance with the relevant UN Security Resolutions and other international legal documents on this conflict. The UN Human Rights Office and the Human Rights Council have to finally show determination to restore violated human rights of more than one million of Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs who have become victims of Armenia's policy of aggression. The absence of such meaningful steps will ultimately lead to the erosion of international law in relations between States and loss of trust by populations in rule of law in international relations.

It is the silence of international community and impunity enjoyed by Armenia that encourages this country for further military adventures. Armenia's continuous disrespect to international law and the UN Charter, as well as its reckless policy of military expansion at the expense of Azerbaijani territories must be strongly condemned and stopped by UN Member States. Armenia bears full responsibility for such provocative military actions that further aggravate the situation in the region, and if not ceased the Armenia's attacks would ultimately trigger the counter actions of Azerbaijan in self-defence in full compliance with the UN Charter.

Thank you.

