

Statement by the Republic of Azerbaijan

**Interactive dialogue with the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on
the Prevention of Genocide**

**31st session of the Human Rights Council
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Mr. President,

Distinguished Special Adviser,

It is very unfortunate that in the 21st century the humankind again and again witnesses mass atrocity crimes and crimes of genocide. After the adoption of the Genocide Convention in 1948, as well as after Khojaly, after Rwanda, after Srebrenica – every time we say “never again”. However, the history has shown that these crimes continue to be committed. We are of the view that, we do not learn lessons from the history. We repeatedly make the same mistakes by not attaching necessary attention to putting an end to impunity for these crimes. Thus, as long as the perpetrators of these crimes are not held responsible for their acts we are doomed to witness new genocides throughout the world. Ending impunity is essential not only for the purpose of individual criminal responsibility for this type of crimes, but also for peace, truth, justice, and non-recurrence. As a striking example of this, we are of the view that, if the international community, in particular United Nations had displayed necessary and timely reaction to the Khojaly genocide in 1992 and its perpetrators had been held responsible, the subsequent genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica would have not happened. It should be highlighted that just within few hours on 26 February 1992, with the direct involvement of the current political and military leadership of Armenia, its armed forces killed more than six hundred innocent Azerbaijani civilians, including women, children and the elderly, with special cruelty in little Azerbaijani town of Khojaly.

Dozens of countries have already recognized this crime as genocide. Ending impunity of the perpetrators of this mass atrocity, who are still holding top positions in the Armenian government, would be the tribute to justice and to the victims of this tragedy.

In conclusion, we would like to ask the distinguished Special Adviser, to kindly elaborate on the nexus between genocide prevention phenomenon and continued representation in governments of its perpetrators.

Thank you.