



**UN Human Rights Council
46th Session
(22 February – 23 March 2021)**

**Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur Special Rapporteur on minority issues
First Right of Reply
delivered by Mr. Shahriyar Hajiyev
Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**

15 March 2021

Thank you, Madame Vice-President,

We are exercising our right of reply in response to the statement made by the delegation of Armenia.

Azerbaijan traditionally has a multi-cultural and multi-confessional society. Different ethnic minorities and religions co-exist in harmony throughout centuries in our country.

The legislative and policy measures pursued by the Government of Azerbaijan within the framework of the state policy of multiculturalism, are aimed at creating the necessary conditions for preservation of the national, racial, linguistic and religious diversity of the country.

It should be also noted that in accordance with the Criminal Code of our country, actions directed on excitation of national, racial or religious hostility or establishment of the superiority of citizens on the basis of their national or racial belonging, bear criminal responsibility. The crime also comprises actions being done via mass media.

Madame Vice-President,

Unfortunately, the people of Azerbaijan have always been the target of Armenia for ethnic hatred nowadays, in social media. The source of aggression of Armenia in the early 1990s, was its territorial claims against our country accompanied with notorious ideas of ethnic incompatibility, presented by its leaders. Thus, all the Azerbaijanis living in their ancestral lands, had been subjected to brutal ethnic cleansing and had been forcefully expelled from Armenia. All the material traces of Azerbaijanis exhibiting once their existence in Armenia, had been erased and changed by Armenia, in particular the religious sites.

Being almost a mono-ethnic state, Armenia has expelled all the Azerbaijanis living in Armenia in late 1980s and in addition to that has ethnically cleansed all Azerbaijanis by occupying the territories of Azerbaijan. The driving force was indeed territorial claims backed by the ethnic hatred propagated at the state level against Azerbaijanis. Armenia does not respect its international obligations arising from international instruments.

In conclusion, we stress the urgent need for taking concrete measures by Armenia to put an end to the deep-rooted racism, xenophobia and wide spread hate speech within the Armenian society against the people of Azerbaijan.

I thank you.