



**UN Human Rights Council
Forty Sixth Session
High-Level Segment**

**Right of Reply
delivered by Mr. Seymur Mardaliyev
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**

24 February 2021

Madame President,

I am exercising this right of reply to the statement made by the Armenian Foreign Minister on Monday.

Instead of disseminating fabricated propaganda against Azerbaijan which we totally reject, we invite Armenia to grasp new realities emerged in the region following the trilateral Statement of 10 November 2020. The reality is that Azerbaijan has effectively restored its territorial integrity and sovereignty over its internationally recognized territories by enforcing Armenia to peace. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict does not exist any longer and went to the history.

If Armenia is genuinely interested to be a part of a regional peace building and to benefit from opportunities emerged following signing the trilateral Statement which has laid unique ground for normalization of inter-state relations between the two nations on the basis of respect of each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders, it should focus on fulfilling its obligations under the Statements of 10 November 2020 and 11 January this year in a good faith including through halting to deploy terrorist-sabotage groups to the territories of Azerbaijan and withdrawing all its remaining military from the territories of Azerbaijan.

Refusal by Armenia to provide the maps of mined areas in accordance with its obligations under the international humanitarian law continues to cause serious threats to lives and safety of Azerbaijani population and affects the realization of the inalienable right of displaced Azerbaijani population to return to their homes in safety and dignity.

As for the unfounded claims by the Armenian Foreign Minister regarding security of Armenian population and its heritage, let me reiterate that citizens of Azerbaijan of Armenian origin residing in the conflict-affected territories will be reintegrated into Azerbaijan's political, economic and social domains enjoying same rights and freedoms as all other citizens of multiethnic Azerbaijan do. In the same spirit, as a multicultural society, Azerbaijan is committed to protect all cultural and religious heritage in Qarabağ region including by restoring and repairing all cultural and religious objects destroyed and vandalized during the Armenian occupation.

As for the members of the terrorist-sabotage group of the Armed Forces of Armenia captured in the de-occupied Xocavənd region of Azerbaijan, these persons are not considered prisoners of war in accordance with international humanitarian law since they were deployed to the territories

of Azerbaijan on 26 November 2020 – two weeks after the trilateral Statement on cessation of hostilities had been signed – by illegally crossing the international border from Armenia into Azerbaijan, and committed acts of sabotage and terrorism against the Azerbaijani military personnel and civilians that resulted in killing of four Azerbaijani soldiers and seriously wounding one civilian. They are liable under the criminal legislation of Azerbaijan and the investigation is underway.

Madame President,

In conclusion, we strongly believe that all efforts should be directed to use this unique opportunity to establish a long-lasting peace and stability in the region. Azerbaijan is committed to the trilateral statements and demonstrates its willingness to turn over the pages of hostility, hatred and confrontation in order to build the future of the region.

I thank you.