



Speaking time: 1.5 min

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

General Debate on Agenda Item 9

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance,
follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme
of Action**

Statement

**delivered by Mr. Emin Aslanov, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of
the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International
Organizations in Geneva**

19 March 2021

Mr. Vice-President,

We would like to draw the attention of the Human Rights Council to the on-going acts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and the widespread use of online and offline hate speech by the authorities of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan and its population. The full version of this statement, along with an annexed report on violation by Armenia of its international obligations on elimination of racism and racial discrimination will be uploaded to the extranet.

Mr. Vice-President,

Discrimination against Azerbaijanis by Armenian nationalists has historical roots. Starting from early 20th century, Azerbaijanis have been repeatedly subjected to bloody massacres where thousands of them were brutally killed and their property were razed to the ground by Armenian nationalists.

Genocidal policy of Armenian authorities against Azerbaijanis continued in a bloodier manner during the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan since 1992. Occupation by

Armenia of one fifth of internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan during the course of the war in 1992-1994 was accompanied by forceful displacement of around 1 million Azerbaijanis from their homes and deliberate killing and maiming of civilians because of their ethnic Azerbaijani identity. Armenia for years prevented the return of displaced Azerbaijani population to their native lands and illegally established settlements in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Massacres of Azerbaijanis in Khojaly (1992), Garadaghli (1992) and Balligaya (1992) were vivid examples of this harsh discrimination policy.

The largest massacre during the conflict was committed in 1992 against the civilians and defenders of the town of Khojaly, in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. As a result of the attack and capture of the town, 613 civilians were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly people because they were Azerbaijanis. Another 1,000 people were wounded, and 1,275 people were taken hostage. To this day, 150 people from Khojaly remain missing. The town of Khojaly was chosen as the first step in the further occupation and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijani territories, aimed at spreading terror in the hearts of people, panic and fear caused by the horrifying massacre. Intentional targeting of Azerbaijani civilians continued after establishment of ceasefire in 1994, which included deliberate killing of civilians residing across the line of contact, abduction and kidnapping.

According to the latest official census (2011) in Armenia, there is no single Azerbaijani left in the territory of the country, though only few decades ago the number of Azerbaijanis living in Armenia was more than 300 thousand.

Armenia failed to pursue a policy of eliminating racial discrimination, as required by its international obligations, including under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and instead disseminated, including in public statements by high-ranking officials and via its media and educational institutions, false narratives and racist propaganda intended to stock ethnic and national hatred of Azerbaijan and its people, and to promote the superiority of Armenia and Armenians.

Many high-ranking Armenian officials, including at the level of President, Prime Minister and members of Parliament, openly expressed discriminatory, insulting and hateful language in relation to Azerbaijanis.

Armenia has committed genocide not only against Azerbaijanis, but also the cultural heritage of Azerbaijan. The recent de-occupation of Azerbaijani territories from Armenian occupation has revealed that Armenia has during the years of occupation taken consistent steps to erase the tracks of Azerbaijani cultural heritage therein for the purpose of falsifying the historical background of those territories.

Unfortunately, anti-Azerbaijani sentiment has been absorbed at all layers of society in Armenia. Armenian children are brought up with hatred against Azerbaijanis. Compelling the schoolchildren to insult the national flags of Azerbaijan in their first school day has become an ordinary practice in this country.

Discrimination policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan has acquired also a religious dimension. Prime Minister of Armenia has framed the recent military hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan as “civilizational frontline between Christian Armenia and Muslim Azerbaijan”. Mosques and other religious shrines in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan had for years been destroyed, desecrated, humiliated and used as animal stables by Armenia.

Online hate speech is another prevailing discriminatory practice in Armenia. Azerbaijani diplomats and community members in other countries have continuously been targeted by cyber bullying and life-threatening messages by Armenian social media users orchestrated by Armenian authorities.

All the above-mentioned discriminatory actions by Armenia were intensified during the recent hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the course of the aggression Armenia deliberately targeted the densely populated civilian settlements in Gəncə, Bərdə and other cities of Azerbaijan located far from the theatre of active hostilities with the use of heavy artillery and ballistic missiles with cluster munitions. As a result of these deliberate attacks 100 Azerbaijani civilians, including several families as a whole, were killed. During the active phase of hostilities, the representatives of Armenian political elite persistently called on the Armenian army to target civilian population and critical civilian infrastructure.

This statement, together with a brief non-exhaustive report about violations by Armenia of its international obligations on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination in relation to the Republic of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis will be circulated for your consideration. We urge all States and international organizations to take decisive actions to compel Armenia to put an end to its deep-rooted policy of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance as well as wide spread hate speech against Azerbaijan and its population.

Thank you.