

OFFICIAL PAPERS

KHOJALY GENOCIDE AS AN INTERNATIONAL CRIME.....	7
KHOJALI GENOCIDE - THE TRAGEDY OF THE 20TH CENTURY.....	11
FROM THE REPORT OF "MEMORIAL" HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH CENTER	13
UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 822 (1993)	16
UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 853 (1993) REGARDING THE ARMENIAN / AZERBAIJANI CONFLICT	18
UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 844 (1993)	21
UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 874 (1993)	23
APPEAL TO THE ALL AZERBAIJANIS OF THE WORLD	25
RESOLUTION OF MILLI MAJLIS (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN.....	26
APPEAL OF KHOJALY INHABITANTS TO THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, TO THE STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	27
DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE GENOCIDE OF THE AZERBAIJANI PEOPLE.....	30
APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN IN CONNECTION WITH 9TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	33
ACTION PLAN DRAWN ON 14TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	34
APPEAL OF KHOJALY REFUGEES TO THE UNITED NATIONS, COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE.....	35

TO THE PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN ON 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	38
MILLI MAJLIS ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	40
TURKEY`S NGOS APPEAL TO GNAT TO RECOGNIZE KHOJALY TRAGEDY AS GENOCIDE	41
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY IN THE MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	42
REPORT BY AZERBAIJAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRESS SERVICE...	43
ADDRESS BY KHOJALY IDPS TO THE UNITED NATIONS, COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	44
KHOJALY IDPS CALL UPON UN, COE AND OSCE TO GIVE LEGAL AND POLITICAL ASSESSMENT TO KHOJALY GENOCIDE.....	46
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY IN THE MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF KHOJALY TRAGEDY	47
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDS KHOJALY GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY.....	48
AZERBAIJAN EMBASSY TO TURKMENISTAN MARKS 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE.....	49
ROK'S YONHAP: AZERBAIJAN DENOUNCES ARMENIANS ON ANNIVERSARY OF 'KHOJALY TRAGEDY'	50
KHOJALY VICTIMS REMEMBERED IN ST. PETERSBURG	51
THE BOOK "KHOJALY GENOCIDE IN THE MEMORY OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS" CAME OUT	52
KHOJALY COMMEMORATED IN VIENNA	53
MEMORY OF KHOJALY VICTIMS REVERED IN CHINA	54
AZERBAIJAN`S EMBASSY IN EGYPT ORGANIZES COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS TO MARK 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE	55

ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE COMMEMORATED IN MOROCCO	56
U.S. CONGRESSMAN MAKES STATEMENT ON 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY TRAGEDY	57
EUROPEAN COURT CONSIDERING ARMENIAN PRESIDENT'S ROLE IN MASSACRE.....	58
US AZERBAIJANIS SEND LETTER ON KHOJALI MASSACRE TO US PRESIDENT	59
ISLAMIC CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES KHOJALY MASSACRE.....	60
51 COUNTRY PARLIAMENTARIANS RECOGNIZE KHOJALY TRAGEDY AS CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY	61
OIC PARLIAMENTARY UNION ADOPTS RESOLUTION SUPPORTING "JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY" CAMPAIGN	62
286 PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AGAINST AZERBAIJANIS PUT ON THE WANTED LIST.....	63
PLAN OF EVENTS ON 18TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE IN AZERBAIJAN APPROVED	64
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO UNITED NATIONS SENT A LETTER TO SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION	65
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDS COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY IN MEMORY OF KHOJALY VICTIMS	66
ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALI GENOCIDE...	68
APPEAL OF KHOJALY INHABITANTS TO THE WORLD COUNTRIES, THE UNITED NATIONS, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (6 FEBRUARY 2012)	69
ADDRESS TO WORLD NATIONS, HEADS OF STATE, PARLIAMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (21 FEBRUARY 2012).....	72
MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (23 FEBRUARY 2012)	74

NATIONWIDE MARCH HELD IN BAKU ON THE OCCASION OF 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV PARTICIPATES IN THE MARCH (26 FEBRUARY, 2012)	75
AZERBAIJANI OMBUDSPERSON ISSUES STATEMENT ON 21ST ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (19 FEBRUARY, 2013)	78
AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENT SIGNS ORDER ON EXECUTION OF ‘JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY’ CAMPAIGN (13 FEBRUARY 2014).....	79
HEAD OF AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION APPROVES PLAN OF EVENTS ON 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (1 FEBRUARY 2015)	80
STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (19 FEBRUARY 2015).....	81
PLAN OF EVENTS ON 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE APPROVED (3 FEBRUARY 2016)	84
AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENT SIGNS ORDER ON 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (24 JANUARY 2017)	85
AZERBAIJAN APPROVES PLAN OF EVENTS ON 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (27 JANUARY 2017).....	86
THE STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (1 FEBRUARY 2017)	87
PLAN OF EVENTS ON 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE APPROVED (12 FEBRUARY 2018)	90
THE STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (14 FEBRUARY 2018)	91
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED CEREMONY TO COMMEMORATE KHOJALY GENOCIDE VICTIMS (26 FEBRUARY 2018)	94
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV SIGNS ORDER ON 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 5, 2019).....	95

PLAN OF EVENTS ON 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE APPROVED (FEBRUARY 11, 2019)	96
THE STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 18, 2019)	97
NATIONWIDE MARCH TO COMMEMORATE 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE HELD IN BAKU. PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV JOINED THE MARCH (FEBRUARY 26, 2019)	100
PLAN OF EVENTS ON 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE APPROVED (FEBRUARY 12, 2020)	102
STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN REGARDING THE 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 19, 2020)	103
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED CEREMONY TO COMMEMORATE KHOJALY GENOCIDE VICTIMS (FEBRUARY 26, 2020)	105
BAKU ISSUES OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 26, 2020)	106
AZERBAIJANI OMBUDSPERSON RELEASES STATEMENT ON 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 22, 2021)	109
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT MEHRIBAN ALIYEVA: TRAGEDIES LIKE KHOJALY GENOCIDE CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN (FEBRUARY 26, 2021)	111
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV AND FIRST LADY MEHRIBAN ALIYEVA VISITED KHOJALY GENOCIDE MEMORIAL (FEBRUARY 26, 2021)	112
HEADS OF RELIGIOUS CONFESSIONS IN AZERBAIJAN APPEAL TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ON KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 22, 2022)	113
AZERBAIJANI OMBUDSMAN ISSUES STATEMENT ON 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALI GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 22, 2022)	116
NATIONWIDE MARCH TO COMMEMORATE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE WAS HELD IN BAKU PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV AND FIRST LADY MEHRIBAN ALIYEVA JOINED THE MARCH (FEBRUARY 26, 2022)	118

STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE OCCASION OF THE 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY (FEBRUARY 23, 2023).....	119
AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUES STATEMENT ON 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 24, 2023).....	121
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV VISITED KHOJALY GENOCIDE MEMORIAL (FEBRUARY 26, 2023)	123
AZERBAIJANI OMBUDSPERSON ISSUES STATEMENT ON 32ND ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 22, 2024)	124
AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUES STATEMENT ON 32ND ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 25, 2024).....	126
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV MADE POST ON ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 25, 2024)	128
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV OBSERVED A MINUTE OF SILENCE TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (FEBRUARY 26, 2024)	129
PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV LAID FOUNDATION STONE FOR KHOJALY GENOCIDE MEMORIAL AND MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF GENERAL PUBLIC (FEBRUARY 26, 2024)	130

KHOJALY GENOCIDE AS AN INTERNATIONAL CRIME

The legal definition of genocide was provided for by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948 (resolution number 260 (III)) as any of the following acts committed with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- killing members of the group;
- causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group;
- forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Special intention is a prerequisite for an act to be qualified as genocide. This aspect distinguishes genocide from similar international crimes. All actions to be qualified as genocide, must be committed deliberately. Such actions cannot be taken incidentally or negligently. However, merely having an intent to commit acts, mentioned above, as well as general understanding of their possible consequences is not enough to qualify them as genocide. What is required here, is revelation of the link between the specific intent of the perpetrator and the harmful results of his/her conduct. Nonetheless, direct and public incitement to commit genocide is a complete crime regardless of whether actual harm was caused or not.

In Khojaly case, the existence of the genocidal intent can be inferred, inter alia, from the fact that special traps were prepared in advance and then used for shooting civil Azeris, who were trying to escape.

The fact that those acts were aimed at the Azeri national group was also obvious.

The analysis of the crime of genocide shows that there are three major elements thereof:

- victims of the above-mentioned violent acts must belong to a particular national, ethnical, racial or religious group;
- there must be a specific intent (mens rea) to destroy such group in whole or in part;
- any of the genocidal acts must be actually committed (actus reus).

Consequently, genocide can be committed only against certain national, ethnical, racial or religious group. Similar actions directed against, for example, political or social group cannot be qualified as genocide.

The concept of genocide requires the existence of a specific intent regarding general consequences of an illegal deed. As a feature of genocide, intent includes following aspects:

- intent must not to be directed against one or more persons belonging to a certain group, but rather to the group as such. In other words, the qualifying criteria is not the victims' personalities, but their being a member of the certain group;

- intent must be aimed at a group, as such. Genocide means denial to accept the right to exist of entire human group. To the contrary, killing of a human being (homicide) is characterized as a denial of the right to exist of an individual being. Consequently, actus reus (prohibited act) may be committed against even one person, but mens rea (intent) must be directed against the existence of the entire human group;

- intent must contain the desire to destroy a group in whole or in part;

- such a group must be national, ethnical, racial or religious.

It is not required that a group be indeed totally or partially destroyed, so that the responsibility for genocide be inferred. For that, it is necessary that the acts, constituting the material element of the crime concerned, be committed with such an intent.

The concept of extermination, which constitutes a material element of genocide, includes, inter alia, killings by means of different methods.

The International Court of Justice held in its judgment on Barcelona Traction case that prohibiting acts of genocide constituted an erga omnes obligation. The ICJ has considered the basic principles of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as a part of the customary international law obligatory for all states.

II. Legal basis for qualification of Khojaly massacre as an international crime.

The following instruments must be considered as a legal basis for qualifying Khojaly massacre as an international crime.

1. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (came into force in 1951) adopted by UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948 (resolution number 260 (III)).

2. Statute of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal (although this statute does not point out genocide actions directly, these actions constituting genocide are considered to be crimes against humanity and war crimes);

3. Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (par. 4);

4. Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (par. 1);

5. Statute of the International Criminal Court (par. 6);

6. Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (par. 103);

7. Decree of the President of Azerbaijan On genocide of Azeris dated March 26, 1998.

III. Legal consequences of the Khojaly massacre at the international level.

The international law determines the following regarding genocide:

1. Persons who committed genocide must be tried and punished;
2. Not only perpetrators but also those who conspired or directly and publicly incited to commit genocide must be held responsible.
3. The principle of universal jurisdiction must be applied;
4. Acting in furtherance of an order must not exempt the perpetrator from responsibility;
5. Superiors must bear responsibility for failure to prevent the acts of genocide;
6. Statutory limitations must not be applicable to the crime of genocide;
7. With regard to genocide, the retroactive application of the law is allowed;
8. Perpetrators must be either tried and punished by the detaining state or extradited to the requesting one.

IV. Informing the international community about the fact that Khojaly tragedy, as an international crime, was a constituent part of the policy of genocide carried out by Armenia against the people of Azerbaijan.

This document named "The tragedy in Khojaly, being an international crime, is a constituent part of the genocidal policy carried out by Armenia against the people Azerbaijan", adopted by the Board of Experts of the Institute on Human Rights (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences) will be sent to the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, Russia and other countries, as well as the international organizations, including UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, General Directorate on Human Rights of the Council of Europe, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutes and Human Rights, international human rights NGO's, Azeri Diaspora.

Thus, the acts committed by Armenian side against the ethnic Azeri population of the Khojaly city are qualified in accordance with the international legal documents as genocide and a crime against humanity.

* * *

More than a million of people having undergone aggressive policy of Armenia live under hard conditions - they have found asylum in tent stations, houses-in-built, luggage wagons and other places unavailable to live.

State of Armenia paid no attention to the word of international world by showing full distrust towards UN Security Council's resolutions 822 adopted in 1993 in April on occupation

of territories of Azerbaijan Republic by Armenian army, 853 adopted in June, 874 adopted in October and 884 adopted in November.

Regular, fundamental and firm political line carried out by state of Azerbaijan, constructive attitude of Azerbaijan Republic for fair settlement of Karabakh problem is known well by world states. Major directions for settlement of problem in a peaceful manner and through talks were approved and confirmed by 53 states of the world in OSCE Lisbon Summit in December of 1993.

All we are residents of this planet and we together should conduct firm fight against those threatening our common house with death and blood. We deeply believe that states, parliaments, international organizations in the world will support restoration of equity for happy life of nations having entered the XXI century, for equity, for high humanist values. Supporting the settlement of Karabakh problem in a peaceful manner and through talks, we once again express our certainty that due to joint efforts of states, parliaments, international organizations in the world territorial integrity of Azerbaijan Republic will be ensured and refugees and IDPs will return to their native lands.

Scientific-Research Institute on Human Rights

KHOJALI GENOCIDE - THE TRAGEDY OF THE 20TH CENTURY

"The Khojali genocide with its inconceivable cruelty and inhuman punitive methods, was completely targeted against the people of Azerbaijan and represents a barbarian act in the history of humankind. At the same time, this genocide was a historical crime against humanity."

Heydar Aliyev

The Khojali genocide is one of the most terrible and tragic pages of Azerbaijan history. Azerbaijan's national leader Heydar Aliyev said in his speech addressed to the nation of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Khojali genocide: "This merciless and cruel genocide was the most dreadful mass terror act in the history of humankind."

It should be mentioned that Azerbaijan has endured ethnic cleansing and genocide by Armenian nationalist-chauvinists for 200 years. The people of Azerbaijan were deported from their historical lands and became refugees and internally displaced persons because of Armenian occupation. Azerbaijanis were also forced from their historical lands during the Soviet period. 150,000 Azerbaijanis were deported from Armenia and placed in the Kur-Araz plain from 1948-1953. 250,000 Azerbaijanis were forced from their historical territories in 1988 and Armenia became a mono-ethnic state. The Nagorny Karabakh events, which began in 1988 along with continuous efforts to implement the Armenian desire of building a state from sea to sea, led to the destruction of towns and villages, murder of thousands of innocent people, as well as the exile of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their native lands.

The Armenian government wanted to annex Nagorny Karabakh despite international legal norms and demonstrates their readiness to resort to any kind of crime and barbarism for the sake of its ideology. The Khojali genocide - the tragedy of the 20th century - was a result of this aggressive and criminal policy. This tragedy, which took place in the 20th century was one of the most serious crimes not only against the people of Azerbaijan, but humanity as a whole. The Khojali genocide is comparable to the genocides in Khatin, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Songmi.

What was Armenians' purpose in Khojali? On one hand that was the liquidation of the strategic hindrance in the form of Azerbaijani residents of the mountainous part of Nagorny Karabakh. On the other hand that was the razing of Khojali to the ground. Because Khojali was an inhabited place, which reflected the history and traditions of Azerbaijan since the ancient times. This distinct culture is classified as Khojali-Gadabay in the Azerbaijani history. Cromlechs, dolmens, Cyclops, tumuluses of Khojali, as well as different housing wares are the patterns of material culture that reflect the dynamics of social development. The destruction of all these material culture monuments and Khojali graveyard - one of the most ancient cemeteries in history - after the Armenian occupation is an obvious example of Armenian barbarism and aggression against the world culture.

Armenian military forces committed genocides in the town of Khojali with the population of 7 thousand people on February 26 1992. There were 3 thousand people in the town at the time of Armenian military forces' attack. As most part of the population had to leave town during 4 months blockade: 613 people were killed, 1000 peaceful people of different age became invalid during Khojali genocide. 106 women, 63 children, 70 old men were killed. 8 families were completely annihilated, 130 children lost one parents, while 25 both of them. 1275 peaceful residents were taken hostages; the fate of 150 of them is still unknown.

All these were committed by Armenian militaries with special mercilessness and inconceivable barbarism. 2nd battalion of 366th regiment under the command of Major Oganyan Seyran Mushegovich ("defense minister" of illegal regime in Nagorny Karabakh at present time), 3rd battalion under the command of Yevgeniy Nabokhin, staff chief of 1st battalion Chitchyan Valeriy and more than 50 officers and ensigns, serving in regiment took part in the attack. ("From the investigation materials concerning Khojaly occupation").

A part of town residents, attempted to flee, were killed by Armenians, waiting in the ambushes. According to the Russian remedial centre "Мемориал", 200 corpses had been brought from Khojaly to Agdam for 4 days, tens of humiliation facts has been discovered on them. 181 corpses (130 men and 51 women) were made forensic medical examination in Aghdam. According to the examination 151 persons dead in result of bullet wound, 20 - missile wound, 10 people were killed with blunt instrument. Remedial centre discovered fact of scalping of alive man.

Episodes of Khojaly genocide terrify people. Antiga, the resident of Khojaly, was burned alive because she did not say "these places are part of Great Armenia". Khojaly resident Sariya Talibova told: "heads of 4 meskhetis and 3 Azeris were cut off over Armenian grave. Then they extracted eyes of 2 Azeris".

Armenians outraged upon survivors. They scalped, cut people's head and other organs off, extracted eyes of children, chopped stomachs of pregnant women. Forbidden bullets of 5,45 caliber and chemical weapons were used in Khojaly during the attack. All these facts prove that Armenia committed genocide against civil people, violating Geneva convention protocol concerning war rules.

Khojaly genocide terrified journalist and publicists of Russia, Georgia, Great Britain, France, Germany, the USA etc.

Khojaly refugees write in their address to the UN, European Union, Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe: It is already more than 10 years as we, persons become refugees, appeal with heavy art and large hope to peaceful nations of the world, international organizations. We ask you not to remain indifferent about disaster, happened with us in result of Armenian aggression. We believe that authoritative international organizations like the UN, EU and OSCE, peaceful states will take measures against aggression and tyranny of Armenia.

International conventions, laws, passed in the world, criticize genocides like Khojaly tragedy and call them inadmissible. Azerbaijan nation has all legal base to bring suit against the Armenian republic in the International court of the UN, guiding by convention "Warning and punishment of genocide crime". The world must know this crime directed not only against Azerbaijan nation, but also whole civilized world, mankind. Persons like Seyran Ohanyan, Serj Sarkisyan, as well as Robert Kocharyan, holding high state posts at present, and others must answer before international court.

The crime should not remained without punishment. Armenian military-political aggression must be condemned by world community. International organizations, parliaments of the world states must give political-legal appraisal of Khojaly genocide - military crime, committed by the Armenian Republic in the Azerbaijan territories.

Institute of History named after A.Bakikhanov of ANAS

FROM THE REPORT OF "MEMORIAL" HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH CENTER

"Khojaly"

...Since autumn of 1991 Khojaly has been practically blocked by Armenian armed formations and after withdrawal of internal troops from Nagorny Karabakh, full blockade of Khojaly was imposed. Beginning from January 1992 electrical energy transfer to Khojaly was stopped. Part of inhabitants left blocked city, however, despite insistent requests of head of executive power of Khojaly city E.Mamedov, total evacuation of peaceful population was not organized.

On February 25 Armenian armed formations began assault of Khojaly.

Participants of assault

... Units of Artsakh National Liberation Army participated in the assault using armored equipment - armored troop carriers, combat infantry cars and tanks.

Course of assault

Artillery firing of Khojaly began about 11 p.m. on February 25. Barracks located in housing estate and outposts were destroyed first of all. Entering of infantry units into the city took place from 1 a.m. till 4 a.m. in the morning on February 26.

... The last resistance was broken by 7 a.m. in the morning.

.. As a result of firing of the city unknown number of peaceful inhabitants was killed on the territory of Khojaly during the assault.

The "free corridor" for population leaving

60 people fled from Khojaly during the city assault were questioned by "Memorial" observers in Aghdam and Baku questioned 60 people fled from Khojaly during the city assault. Only one man of all questioned people said that he knew about existence of "free corridor".

... These refugees proceeded along the "free corridor" situated on the territory adjoined to Aghdam district of Azerbaijan were fired, that resulted in death of many people.

Fate of the inhabitants who stayed in the city

After the occupation of the city by Armenian armed formations about 300 peaceful inhabitants including 86 Turks-Meskhets were in the city.

... According to information received from both sides over 700 captive inhabitants of Khojaly took as hostages in the city and on the way to Aghdam were passed to Azerbaijani side by March, 23 1992. Among them were mainly women and children.

Fate of property of Khojaly inhabitants

Inhabitants of Khojaly who could flee had no possibility to take with them even the most necessary part of their property. The inhabitants who were taken as hostages by members of Armenian armed formations also had no possibility to take the part of their property.

Observers from "Memorial" Human Rights Watch Center became witnesses of active unlimited marauding in the occupied city. The property left by Khojaly inhabitants got out from the city by inhabitants of Khankendi (Stepanakert) and neighboring settlements. The names of new owners were written on the gates of the most of houses.

Estimation of findings

Mass violence against peaceful population of Khojaly city took place during implementation of the military operation on the occupation of the city.

... The majority of Khodjali inhabitants were not informed about existence of the "free corridor".

. . . Mass murders of peaceful inhabitants in the zone of the "free corridor" and adjacent territory cannot be justified by any circumstances.

.. Servicemen of infantry guard's regiment No 366 belonged to Commonwealth of Independent States troops have participated in Khojaly assault.

. . . "Memorial" Human Rights Watch Center establishes that actions of Armenian armed forces of Nagorny Karabakh towards Khojaly peaceful inhabitants during the assault of Khojaly city roughly violate Geneva conventions as well as the following articles of Human Rights Declaration (adopted by UN General Assembly on December, 10 1948):

Article 2, declaring that "every person must have all rights and all freedoms, declared by this declaration without any distinction of.. .language, religion, national.. .origin, ... or any other position";

Article 3, admitting rights of every person to life, freedom and personal immunity;

Article 5, forbidding brutal, inhuman or humiliate treatment of person;

Article 9, forbidding arbitrary arrests, detention or expatriation;

Article 17, declaring right of every person to have property and forbidding to deprive arbitrary the person of his property.

Actions of armed formations roughly violated Declaration on protection of women and children in emergency and during armed conflicts (declared by UN General Assembly on December, 14

REGIMENT No 366

It is necessary to note the part in Khojaly tragedy of infantry guards regiment No 366 billeted in Khankendi.

This regiment repeatedly engaged in firing of Azerbaijani villages, Shusha and Khojaly cities. Evidence of deserters of this regiment points to these facts and allows us to imagine moral picture and mutual relations among the personnel of the regiment. Clear evidence of engaging of regiment No 366 in Khojaly events is rash withdrawal of this regiment from Khankendi that points to intention to conceal vestiges of this tragedy.

Moral degradation of the officers of regiment No 366 reached such a level that infantry guards regiment failed to implement itself withdrawal of troops allegedly because of interference of local residents.

Forces of landing division located in Ganja city was involved in implementation of this operation. However, before commandos arrived, 103 people of personnel of the regiment, who were mainly Armenians clearly admitting their guilty in the outrage refused to obey the order and remained in Karabakh. According to criminal agreement of the high command of the regiment and because of inactivity of other higher commanders who were responsible for troops withdrawal, part of arms of regiment including armored equipment was transferred to Armenians, factually, to commit the further crimes, to continue separatist actions against Azerbaijan. This is clear fact of participation of the regiment No 366 in implementation of Khojaly tragedy!

THE HISTORY WILL NOT FORGET

Milli Majlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan declared February 26 as the "Day of Khojaly genocide". Every year at 5 p.m. on February 26 people of Azerbaijan revere memory of Khojaly victims by minute of silence.

Khojaly inhabitants became refugees and took temporary refuge in 48 districts in Azerbaijan are waiting for solving of Nagorno Karabakh conflict, end of aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, restoration of territorial integrity of the republic. They appeal to the peoples of the world, states and international organizations to protect the truth and justice, condemn facts of terrorism, ethnic cleaning implemented in Khojaly.

Culprits of Khojaly tragedy, its organizers and executors must get deserved punishment. There is no and cannot be crime without punishment. XX century witnessed many bloody pages, which are the history of genocide and ethnic cleaning. Khojaly is one of the most terrible tragedies among them. Everybody who implicated in this terrible crime now has responsibility just before his conscience, but the day will come and they will answer for all before court of history.

History remembers everything.

**This material is prepared due to publication
"Khojaly Tragedy" issued by Azerbaijan-Great Britain Youth Society.**

**UNITED NATIONS
RESOLUTION 822 (1993)**

Security Council
Distr.
GENERAL
S/RES/S22(1993) April 1993

The Security Council

Recalling the statements of the President of the Security Council of 29 January 1993 (S/25199) and of 6 April 1993 (S/25539) concerning the Nagorny Karabakh conflict,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General dated 14 April 1993 (S/25600),

Expressing its serious concern at the deterioration of the relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan,

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities and, in particular, the latest invasion of the Kelbadjar district of the Republic of Azerbaijan by local Armenian forces,

Concerned that this situation endangers peace and security in the region,

Expressing grave concern at the displacement of a large number of civilians and the humanitarian emergency in the region, in particular in the Kelbadjar district,

Reaffirming the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region,

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing its support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and deeply concerned at the disruptive effect that the escalation in armed hostilities can have on that process,

1. Demands the immediate cessation of all hostilities and hostile acts with a view to establishing a durable cease-fire, as well as immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces from the Kelbadjar district and other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijan;

2. Urges the parties concerned immediately to resume negotiations for the resolution of the conflict within the framework of the peace process of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and refrain from any action that will obstruct a peaceful solution of the problem;

3. Calls for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in region, in particular in all areas affected by the conflict in order to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population and reaffirms that all parties are bound to comply with the principles and rules of international humanitarian law;

4. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as the Chairman of the Minsk Group of the Conference to assess the situation in the region, in particular in the Kelbadjar district of Azerbaijan and to submit a further report to the Council;

5. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3205th meeting on 30 April 1993

**UNITED NATIONS
RESOLUTION 853 (1993)
REGARDING THE ARMENIAN / AZERBAIJANI CONFLICT**

**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
TEXT:**

Reaffirming its resolution 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993.

Having considered report issued on 27 July 1993 by the Chairman of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (S/26184)

Expressing its serious concern at the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic and the tensions between them.

Welcoming acceptance by the parties concerned of the implement its resolution 822 (1993).

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities and, in particular, the seizure of the district of Agdam in the Azerbaijani Republic.

Concerned that this situation continues to endanger Peace and security in the region.

Expressing once again its grave concern at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Azerbaijani Republic and at the serious humanitarian emergency in the region.

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region.

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory.

1. Condemns the seizure of the district of Agdam and of all other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic;

2. Further condemns all hostile actions in the region, in particular attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas;

3. Demands the immediate cessation of all hostilities and the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces involved from the district of Agdam and all other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijani Republic;

4. Calls on the parties concerned to reach and maintain durable cease-fire arrangements;

5. Reiterates in the context of paragraphs 3 and 4 above, its earlier calls for the restoration of economic, transport and energy links in the region;

6. Endorses the continuing efforts by the Minks Group of the CSCE to achieve a peaceful solution lo the conflict, including efforts (o implement resolution 822 (I'W), and expresses its grave concern at the disruptive effect that the escalation of armed hostilities has had on these efforts;

7. Welcomes the preparations for a CSCE monitor mission with a timetable for its deployment, as well as consideration within the CSCB of the proposal for a CSCE presence in the region:

8. Urges the parties concerned to refrain from any action that will obstruct a peaceful solution to the conflict and to pursue negotiations within the Minsk Group of the CSCE, as well as thought direct contracts between them, towards a final settlement;

9. Urges the Government of the Republic of Armenia to continue to exert its influence to achieve compliance by the Armenians of the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic with its resolution 822 (1993) and the present resolution, and the acceptance by this party of the proposals of the Minsk Group of the CSCE;

10. Urges States to refrain from the supply of any weapons and munitions which might lead to an intensification of the conflict or the continued occupation of territory;

11. Calls once again for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in the region, in particular in all areas affected by the conflict in order to alleviate the increased suffering of the civilian population and reaffirms that all parties are to comply with the principles and of informational humanitarian law;

12. Requests the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population and to assist displaced persons to return to their homes;

13. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office of the CSCE as well as the Chairman of the Minsk Group to continue to report to the Council on the situation;

14. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

The Security Council expresses its serious concern at the deterioration of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic and at the tensions between them. The Council calls upon the Government of the Republic of Armenia to use its influence to achieve compliance by the Armenians of the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic with its resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993).

The Council also expresses its deep concern at the recent intensification of fighting in the area of Fizuli condemns the attack on the Fizuli region from any Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic, just as it has previously condemned the invasion and seizure of the districts of Kelbadjar and Agdam of the Azerbaijani Republic. The Council demands a stop to all attacks and an immediate cessation of the hostilities and bombardments, which endanger peace and security in the region, and an immediate complete and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from the area of Fizuli, and from the districts of Kelbadjar and Aqdam and other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic. The Council calls upon the Government of the Armenia to use its unique influence to this end.

The Council reaffirms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region and the inviolability of their borders, and expresses its grave concern at the effect these hostilities have had on the efforts of the Minsk Group of the

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Council stresses its full support of the CSCE peace process, and notes particularly the opportunity that the current round of Minsk Group talks have afforded the parties to the conflict to present their views directly. In this context, the Council calls upon all of the parties to respond promptly and within the agreed time-frame to the 13 August adjusted version of the Minsk Group's "Timetable of urgent steps to implement United Nations Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993)" and to refrain from any actions that would obstruct a peaceful solution. The Council welcomes the intention of the CSCE to send a mission to the region to report on all aspects of the situation.

In light of this most recent escalation of the conflict, the Council strongly reaffirms its call in resolution 853 (1993) for States to refrain from supplying any weapons and munitions which might lead to an intensification of the conflict or the continued occupation of territory of the Azerbaijani Republic. The Council calls upon the Government of the Republic of Armenia to ensure that the forces involved are not provided with the means to extend their military campaign still further.

The Council also renews its calls in resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993) for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in the region, in all areas affected by the conflict, in order to alleviate the continually increasing suffering of the civilian population. The Council reminds the parties that they are bound by and must adhere to the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.

The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter and will be ready to consider appropriate steps to ensure that all parties fully respect and comply with its resolutions.

July 29, 1993

**UNITED NATIONS
RESOLUTION 844 (1993)**

Security Council

Distr. GENERAL

S/RES/874 (1993) 14 October 1993

Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993, 853 (1993) of 29 July 1993 and 874 (1993) of 14 October 1993.

Reaffirming its full support for the peace progress being pursued within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and for the tireless efforts of the CSCE Minsk Group,

Taking note of the letter dated 9 November 1993 from the Chairman-in-Office of the Minsk Conference on Nagorny Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council and its enclosures (S/26718, annex),

Expressing its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijan Republic, and of the tensions between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic would endanger peace and security in the region,

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities as consequence of the violations of the cease-fire and excesses in the use of force in response to those violations, in particular the occupation of the Zangilan district and the city of Goradiz in the Azerbaijani Republic,

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region,

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing grave concern at the latest displacement of a large number of civilians and the humanitarian emergency in the Zangilan district and the city of Goradiz and on Azerbaijan's southern frontier,

1. Condemns the recent violations of the cease-fire established between the parties, which resulted in a resumption of hostilities, and particularly condemns the occupation of the Zangilan district and the city of Goradiz, attacks on civilians and bombardments of the territory of the Azerbaijani Republic;

2. Calls upon the Government of Armenia to use its influence to achieve compliance by the Armenians of the Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic with resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993) and 874 (1993), and to ensure that the forces involved are not provided with the means to extend their Military Campaign further;

3. Welcomes the Declaration of 4 November 1993 of the nine members of the CSCE Minsk Group (S/26718) and commends the proposals contained therein for unilateral cease-fire declarations;

4. Demands from the parties concerned the immediate cessation of armed hostilities and hostile acts, the unilateral withdrawal of occupying forces from the Zangilan district and the city of Goradiz, and the withdrawal of occupying forces from other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic in accordance with the "Adjusted timetable of urgent steps to implement

Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993)" (S/26522, appendix) as amended by the CSCE Minsk Group in Vienna of 2 to 8 November 1993;

5. Strongly urges the parties concerned to resume promptly and to make effective and permanent the cease-fire established as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the CSCE Minsk Group, and to continue to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict within the context CSCE Minsk process and the "Adjusted timetable" as amended by the CSCE Minsk Group meeting in Vienna of 2 to 8 November 1993;

6. Urges again all states in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and from interference or intervention, which should lead to the widening of the conflict and undermine peace and security in the region;

7. Requests the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population, including that in the Zangilan district and the city of Horadiz and on Azerbaijani southern frontier, and to assist refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in security and dignity;

8. Reiterates its request that the Secretary General, Chair-man-in-Office of the CSCE and the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference continue to report to the Council on the progress of the Minsk process and on all aspects of the situation on the ground, in particular on the implementation of its relevant resolutions, and on present and future cooperation between the CSCE and United Nations in this regard;

9. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

11 November 1993

**UNITED NATIONS
RESOLUTION 874 (1993)**

Security Council

Distr. GENERAL

S/RES/874 (1993) 14 October 1993

Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993 and 852 (1993) of 20 July 1993, and recalling the statement read by the President of the Council, on behalf of the Council, on 18 August 1993 (S/26326),

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Minsk Conference on Nagorny Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/26522),

Expressing its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic, and of the tensions between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic, would endanger peace and security in the region,

Taking note of the high-level meetings which took place in Moscow on 8 October 1993 and expressing the hope that they will contribute to the improvement of the situation and the peaceful settlement of the conflict,

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region,

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing once again its grave concern at the human suffering the conflict has caused and at the serious humanitarian emergency in the region and expressing in particular its grave concern at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Azerbaijani Republic,

1. Calls upon the parties concerned to make effective and permanent the cease-fire established as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the CSCE Minsk Group; S(RES) 874(1993)

2. Reiterates again its full support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the CSCE, and for the tireless efforts of the CSCE Minsk Group;

3. Welcomes and commends to the parties the "Adjusted timetable of urgent steps to implement Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993)" set out on 28 September 1993 at the meeting of the CSCE Minsk Group and submitted to the parties concerned by the Chairman of the Group with the full support of nine other members of the Group, and calls on the parties to accept it;

4. Expresses the conviction that all other pending questions arising from the conflict and not directly addressed in the "Adjusted timetable", should be settled expeditiously through peaceful negotiations in the context of the CSCE Minsk process;

5. Calls for the immediate implementation of the reciprocal and urgent steps provided for in the CSCE Minsk Group's "Adjusted timetable", including the withdrawal of forces from

recently occupied territories and the removal of all obstacles to communications and transportation;

6. Calls also for an early convening of the CSCE Minsk Conference for the purpose of arriving at a negotiated settlement to the conflict as provided for in the timetable, in conformity with the 24 March 1992 mandate of the CSCE Council of Ministers;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to respond favorably to an invitation to send a representative to attend the CSCE Minsk Conference and to provide all possible assistance for the substantive negotiations that will follow the opening of the Conference;

8. Supports the monitoring mission developed by the CSCE;

9. Calls on all parties to refrain from all violations of international humanitarian law and renews its call in resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993) for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in all areas affected by the conflict;

10. Urges all States in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and from interference or interventional which would lead to the widening of the conflict and undermine peace and security in the region;

11. Requests the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population and to assist refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in security and dignity;

12. Requests also the Secretary-General, the Chairman-in-Office to the CSCE and the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference to continue to report to the Council on the progress of the Minsk process and on all aspects of the situation on the ground, and on present and future cooperation between the CSCE and the United Nations in this regard;

13. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3292nd meeting on 14 October 1993

APPEAL TO THE ALL AZERBAIJANIS OF THE WORLD

Dear compatriots, countrymen!

The war has been waged on the land of Azerbaijan – the sacred Motherland of our ancestors, on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan already for 6 years. Aggressive armed forces of the Republic of Armenia, beguiling the mind of Armenian people by dreams about “Great Armenia”, with open and latent assistance of some countries occupied 12 districts of our country. The enemy destroys our villages and cities, commits inconceivable crimes and brutality on our lands, which have no precedent in the history of humanity. Khojaly genocide is irrefutable evidence of this.

The terrible tragedy of Khojaly city and its inhabitants took place on February 26 1992 is the most shocking event of the XXth century witness of which became the humanity. This brutality was implemented by Armenian fascists with assistance of infantry guards regiment No 366 of former Soviet Army. That day hangmen pitiless killed defenseless peaceful civilians – the elders, women, children and dumb babies. Armenian fascists scalped the heads of dead people, put out their eyes, cut off various parts of their bodies, buried the live people, and burnt out them. By such actions they showed that they deserve hatred of all people irrespective of their faith, nationality, race.

The tragedy took place in Khojaly on February 26 1992 is the genocide against our nation. 335 people of 5 thousand of peaceful population of the city became the shehids (martyrs), 6 families were killed completely, 421 people were wounded, 150 were missing and taken as hostages, 25 children became the orphan lost both parents, 130 children lost one of their parents. Khojaly city was plundered and burnt, 3 schools, a hospital, 3 aid posts, 3 clubs, 3 kindergartens and other buildings were entirely destroyed. As a result of Khojaly city destroying the damage worth multi-billions rubles was done to the state and personal property of the citizens.

The second anniversary of the tragedy in Khodjali will be commemorate on the state level this year, our people commemorates this date with sorrow. Milli Majlis (National Assembly) of the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted resolution on declaration of February 26 as “The Day of Khojaly genocide” that henceforth will commemorate every year.

By this appeal addressing to all Azerbaijanis of the world Milli Majlis of the Republic calls all our compatriots, countrymen united by one Motherland – Azerbaijan to commemorate February 26 as “The day of Khodjali genocide”. Milli Majlis is confident that Azerbaijanis of the world support this appeal, use all opportunities to inform the public of the countries where they live about those terrors that Armenian occupants implemented against our people during their aggressive war against Azerbaijan, and in that way they join to our struggle for liberation of our native lands from enemy.

Adopted by Milli Majlis
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
on February, 24 1994

**RESOLUTION OF MILLI MAJLIS (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY)
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

On the Day of Khojaly Genocide

Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed suggestion of the Milli Majlis's commission on relations with refugees and compatriots living abroad on Khojaly genocide implemented by Armenian aggressors, resolves:

Every year on February, 26 to commemorate Khojaly events of February, 26 1992 organized by Armenian aggressors and became the tragedy of the Azerbaijani people and bloody page in the history of humanity as the "Day of Khojaly genocide" and inform the international organizations about it.

With the purpose to inform of truth on Khojaly events to the peoples of the world and to commemorate the "Day of Khojaly genocide" on the international scale to appeal to the Azerbaijanis to the world.

Baku city, 24 February, 1994

**APPEAL OF KHOJALY INHABITANTS TO THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD,
TO THE STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CONNECTION
WITH FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE**

The world should know that the Azerbaijani people are commemorating Khojaly genocide already the fifth year.

By decision of Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Azerbaijan Republic February, 26 declared the day of Khojaly genocide.

That day in 1992 Armenian aggressors supported by imperialistic forces and infantry guards regiment No 366 of former Soviet Union billeted in Khankendi implemented once more unprecedented brutal act. They razed to the ground Khojaly city having ten thousands population, brutally killed hundreds of helpless innocent people. As a result of brutality of criminal Armenian military formations 485 people became shekhids (martyrs), 487 – invalids. About thousands of inhabitants of Khojaly - elders, children, women were taken as hostages and subjected to unthinkable tortures, insults and humiliation from the part of Armenians. 106 people who became shekhids were women, 33 of them – infants. Among invalids were 76 boys and girls who didn't reach mature age, 6 families were annihilated completely, 25 children lost both of their parents, 130 children lost one of their parents.

On the basis of facts it is established that 56 people were killed with particular brutality and fury. They were burnt alive, their heads were cut off, they were skinned, eyes of infants were put out, expectant mothers were thrust by bayonets. The dead bodies were subjected to profanation that couldn't be expressed by words.

Elaborate policy of ethnic cleaning that pursued against Azerbaijanis on Caucasus for last 150 years resulted in expatriation of them from their historic ethnic lands by Armenians who appropriated these territories, five years ago ended by their next brutality – Khojaly genocide that became the crime against not only the Azerbaijani people, but against humanity and mankind. We concern now that the most terrible massacre of the XXth century – Khojaly tragedy – took place before the eyes of civilized states and authoritative international organizations and this act was not condemned defined in the international arena.

When the crime is not punished, new tragedies is implemented. Slighting attitude of the states and nations of the world inspired of Armenian fascists to realize the myth about creation of multiethnic state of Great Armenia at the expense of historical Azerbaijani lands and blood of our nations. As a result of it there are no Azerbaijanis in Armenia, 20 percents of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan is occupied, more than one million innocent people became refugees on their motherland.

Khojaly inhabitants saved due to chance as a result of genocide of February, 26 got status of refugee and now live in tents in the districts and cities of Azerbaijan in unbearable conditions. However, we don't hope for next humanitarian assistance, new tent towns. We entirely supported efforts of our respected President H. Aliyev directed at the ending of war by peaceful means appeal to you and say: if humanity want to live in safety, and people – comfortably, Khojaly genocide should be condemned resolutely by the states and peoples of the world, culprits, organizers and executors of this historic crime should be punished, refugees should return to their native lands, aggressors should be curbed. We call you to defend the truth, justice, to express your protest to not allow our brittle peace. Let Khojaly genocide will be the past tragedy in the history of humanity.

February, 21 1997

Decree of President of Republic of Azerbaijan

About the declaring of minute of silence in memory of victims of genocide of Khojaly.

On February 26, 1992 the armed forces of Armenia committed against the Azerbaijan nation unprecedented genocide of Khojaly.

This action of mass and ruthless bloodshed as one of the bloody pages of purposeful reactionary politic of Armenian aggressors, whose aim is the state independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, was the crime not only against the Azerbaijan nation, but against whole humanity, and this event went down in history as black spot.

With the aim to revere victim's of Khojaly genocide memory I decree:

To declare on the territory of Republic of Azerbaijan the minute of silence to revere victim's of Khojaly genocide memory annually on February 26 at 17 o'clock.

*The President of Republic of Azerbaijan
Heydar Aliyev
Baku city, February 25, 1997*

DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE GENOCIDE OF THE AZERBAIJANI PEOPLE

The achievement of independence by the Azerbaijan Republic has made it possible to reconstruct an objective picture of the historical past of our people. Truths that were kept secret for long years and that were suppressed and banned are coming to light, and the reality behind facts that were once falsified is being revealed. The genocide that was repeatedly carried out against the Azerbaijani people, and which for a long time was not the subject of a proper political or legal assessment, is one of those unrevealed pages of history.

With the signing in 1813 and 1828 of the Gulistan and Turkmenchai Treaties, there began the dismemberment of the Azerbaijani nation and the division of our historical lands. The occupation of its lands marked the continuation of the national tragedy of the divided Azerbaijani people. As a result of this policy, within a very short time there took place a massive resettlement of Armenians on Azerbaijani lands. A policy of genocide was to become an essential element in that occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

Despite the fact that the Armenians who had settled on the territories of the Irevan, Nakhchivan and Karabakh khanates constituted a minority in comparison with the Azerbaijanis living there, they succeeded, under the protection of their patrons, in creating an administrative territorial unit in the form of the so-called "Armenian Region". In essence, as a result of this artificial territorial division the preconditions were created for a policy of expelling Azerbaijanis from their own lands and for destroying the Azerbaijani population. The propagandizing of the notion of a "Greater Armenia" began. In order to "justify" the efforts to establish this fictitious state on Azerbaijan land, large-scale programs were carried out aimed at inventing a false history of the Armenian people. The distortion of the history of Azerbaijan and of the Caucasus as a whole became an important component of those programs.

From 1905 to 1907, inspired by illusions of creating a "Greater Armenia", the Armenian invaders, without taking the trouble to hide their intentions, carried out a number of large-scale and bloody actions against the Azerbaijanis. The atrocities perpetrated by the Armenians, which began in Baku, were ultimately extended to cover all of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani villages located on the territory of present-day Armenia. Hundreds of communities were destroyed and wiped from the face of the earth, and thousands of Azerbaijanis were barbarously murdered. The organizers of these events, by preventing the disclosure of the truth of what had taken place and by blocking its proper political and legal examination, cultivated a negative image of the Azerbaijanis as a screen for their adventurist territorial claims.

Capitalizing for their own purposes on the situation that arose after the First World War and following the uprisings in Russia in February and October of 1917, the Armenians began to seek to turn their plans into reality under the banner of Bolshevism. Beginning in March 1918, the Baku commune, under the slogan of combating counter-revolutionary elements, set about putting into practice a criminal plan whose objective was the liquidation of the Azerbaijanis throughout Baku Province. The crimes committed by the Armenians in those days have remained indelibly imprinted on the memory of the Azerbaijani people. Thousands of peaceful Azerbaijanis were killed solely because of their national affiliation. The Armenians set fire to their houses, burning alive the men and women inside them. They destroyed national architectural treasures, schools, hospitals, mosques and other buildings, laying waste to a large part of Baku. The genocide of the Azerbaijanis was pursued with particular ferocity in the districts of Baku, Shamakhy and Guba and in Karabakh, Zangezur, Nakhchivan, Lenkoran and

other regions of Azerbaijan. On these lands the peaceful population was annihilated en masse, with villages put to the torch and national monuments of culture ruined and destroyed.

The March events of 1918 became the focus of attention following the proclamation of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. On 15 July 1918 the Council of Ministers, for the purpose of investigating this tragedy, adopted a decree establishing an extraordinary commission of inquiry. The Commission investigated the March tragedy, focusing primarily on the atrocities committed by the Armenians in Shamakhy as well as on their other heinous crimes in Irevan Province. A special service was established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the purpose of informing the public at large about what had actually happened. In 1919 and 1920 the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic observed 31 March as a national day of mourning. In essence, this was the first attempt at a political assessment of the policy of genocide perpetrated against the Azerbaijanis and of the more than one-century-old occupation of our lands. However, the demise of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic made it impossible to complete this work.

In 1920 the Armenians, taking advantage of the sovietization of the Transcaucasus for their own vile purposes, proclaimed Zangezur and a number of lands within Azerbaijan as territory of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. Subsequently, with a view to extending further the policy of deporting Azerbaijanis from those territories, new means began to be used. As one of them, the Armenians pushed through the adoption of a special decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of 23 December 1947 "On the resettlement of collective-farm workers and other members of the Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Araks Lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR" and succeeded in bringing about, as a State-endorsed measure, the deportation en masse of Azerbaijanis from their historical lands during the period from 1948 to 1953.

Beginning in the 1950s, Armenian nationalists, with the help of their patrons, initiated a flagrant campaign of intellectual aggression against the Azerbaijani people. In books, magazines and newspapers periodically circulated in the former Soviet State they argued that the most outstanding works of art of our national culture, our classical heritage and our architectural monuments were all the creation of the Armenian people. This was accompanied by a stepped-up effort to forge worldwide a negative perception of Azerbaijanis. By creating an image of the "unfortunate, hapless Armenian people", those engaged in this effort consciously falsified the events that had taken place in the region at the beginning of the century: the very people who had committed genocide against the Azerbaijanis were portrayed as the victims of genocide.

Our countrymen were subject to persecution and expelled in droves from the city of Irevan, where the majority of the population at the beginning of the century had been Azerbaijani, and from other regions of the Armenian SSR. The Armenians shamelessly flouted the rights of the Azerbaijanis, created obstacles to their receiving education in their native language, and conducted a policy of repression. The historical names of Azerbaijani villages were changed and a process, unprecedented in the history of toponymy, of substituting modern for ancient place names was implemented. With the aim of creating a basis for the education of Armenian youth in a spirit of chauvinism, this imaginary Armenian history was elevated to the level of State policy. Our younger generation, educated in the spirit of the great humanitarian ideals of Azerbaijani literature and culture, found themselves the target of persecution in the form of an extremist Armenian ideology.

As the ideological basis for political and military aggression, a policy of slanderous defamation was directed against the spiritual values, national honor and dignity of the Azerbaijani people. The Armenians used the Soviet press to distort historical facts, thereby misleading public opinion.

The leadership of the Azerbaijan Republic failed to come up with a timely and proper assessment of the anti-Azerbaijani propaganda campaign which was being waged by the

Armenians, using the possibilities afforded by the Soviet regime, and which, beginning in the mid-1980s, became more and more intensive.

Officials in the Republic also failed to deliver a correct political assessment of the expulsion, at the initial stage of the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that arose in 1988, of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their ancestral lands. The Armenians' unconstitutional decree on the inclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan within the Armenian SSR, and what amounted in effect to the removal of this region from Azerbaijani authority by means of the Moscow-installed Committee for Special Administration, was greeted by our people with indignation, and they found themselves confronted with the need to undertake serious political action. Despite the fact that the policy of seizing our land was resolutely condemned at meetings held at that time throughout the Republic, the Azerbaijani leadership did not abandon its position of passivity. It was in fact as a result of this failed response that troops were brought into Baku in January 1990 for the purpose of putting down a popular movement that was constantly growing in strength. In the events that followed, hundreds of Azerbaijanis were killed, wounded or maimed, and others were subjected to various forms of physical duress.

In February 1992 the Armenians perpetrated an unheard-of punitive crime against the population of the town of Khojaly. This bloody tragedy, which has entered our history as the Khojaly Genocide, ended with the annihilation of thousands of Azerbaijanis, with others taken prisoner and the city erased from the face of the earth.

As a result of the adventurist policy unleashed by the Armenian national-separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh, today more than a million of our citizens have been expelled by the Armenian aggressors from their places of birth and have been forced to live in tent settlements. Thousands of our fellow-citizens died or were made invalids at the time of the occupation by Armenian armed forces of 20 per cent of our territory.

All the tragedies that have befallen Azerbaijan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, accompanied by the seizure of our land, have been different stages of a conscious policy of genocide systematically applied by the Armenians against the Azerbaijani people. In the case of only one of these events - the March massacre of 1918 - has an attempt been made to assess what took place in political terms. The Azerbaijan Republic regards it as a historical imperative that these events of genocide should be assessed from a political perspective and that the decisions that the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was unable to fully implement should be brought to their logical conclusion.

In commemoration of these tragedies of genocide perpetrated against the Azerbaijani people, I decree:

1. That the date 31 March shall be proclaimed Day of Genocide of the Azerbaijanis;
2. That it shall be recommended to the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Azerbaijan Republic that it should consider holding a special session devoted to the events connected with the genocide of the Azerbaijanis.

Heydar Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Baku, March 26, 1998

APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN IN CONNECTION WITH 9TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

Dear compatriots!

Today we revere with the sense of sorrow the memory of victims of Khojali tragedy, went down in history of our people and humanity as one of the terrible mass act of terrorism. On February 26, 1992 Armenian armed formations using the most modern equipment with support and direct participation of infantry guards regiment No 366 of former Soviet Union razed to the ground Khojali city and committed massacre of helpless innocent peaceful people - children, women and elders. This cruel act of aggression became the unprecedented crime implemented not only against Khojali population, but also against the whole humanity. In the XXth century Armenians repeatedly carried out aggression and genocide against Azerbaijani people. But the most terrible of them was implemented in Khojali.

However, is to be noted that the defenders of Khojali showed themselves as heroes, they struggled in unequal battle till last drop and showed the example of true heroism and courage.

Turning back to the Khojali tragedy, we become the witness of the feebleness and weakness of those time leadership of Azerbaijan which permitted this tragedy by criminal negligence to their duties. The authorities of the republic that was responsible for providing defense of every citizen was absolutely inactive and indifferent to the fate of the people and paid its main attention to the struggle for power.

Unfortunately the world community remained indifferent to the this terrible tragedy, act of genocide, which took place before our contemporaries eyes, and didn't give it the moral and political evaluation.

There is the big task for the current leadership of Azerbaijan to create the objective view of the Khojali tragedy, Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the problem of Nagorni-Garabakh for the political circles and international community and show all details the character and scale of crimes, committed against our people, unmask the armenian nationalists, which pretend to be oppressed and long-suffering. On the one hand this is our holy duty for the memory of genocide victims, on the other hand this is necessary for not to give an opportunity for similar inhuman actions in the world.

Revering the memory of Khojali genocide's victims we think about the conscience and civic duty to them. The right way is that that we must live by the ideals for which the heroes of Khojali gave their life, defend the independent Azerbaijan state, secure the inviolability of its border and territorial integrity.

This day of national sorrow I bowed before the sacred memory of innocent victims of Khojali tragedy, expressed my condolences to their families and relatives, all our people. May our shehids (martyrs) rest in peace.

Heydar Aliyev
The President of Republic of Azerbaijan
Baku city, February 24, 2001

ACTION PLAN DRAWN ON 14TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

The action plan on the 14th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide was approved at the decree by Ramiz Mehdiyev, the head of the President's Administration, Trend reports.

The plan envisages laying of wreathes at the monument Motherland's Call in the Khatayi district, erected in the memory of the victims of the Khojaly genocide, and the monument in Naftalan, as well as paying a tribute to the Alley of Martyrs in Baku, holding news conferences for local and foreign journalists. Besides, the government plans to hold commemoration evenings, exhibitions, meetings with eyewitnesses, as well as demonstrate documental and feature films, dedicated to the struggle for national independence in the towns and regions, particularly, enterprises and education institutes.

The families of shahids (martyrs) in the towns and regions, which are densely populated by the residents of Khojaly, will receive aid with participation of officials, MPs and representatives of intelligentsia. On 24 February the first lesson at education institutes will be dedicated to the Khojaly genocide, while all country will honor the memory of the victims with a minute of silence on 26 February at 17.00.

The Azerbaijani embassies and representative offices in foreign countries will hold news conferences and commemoration ceremonies on the Khojaly genocide.

www.trend.az
30 January, 2006

APPEAL OF KHOJALY REFUGEES TO THE UNITED NATIONS, COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

We, the miraculously surviving eyewitnesses of the monstrous Khojaly genocide committed by Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in February 1992, once again and with a great hope, appeal to the United Nations, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the whole progressive humanity, to restate the necessity for the civilized international community to give a legal and political assessment to the Khojaly tragedy.

Supported by their foreign patrons, Armenians, who, in 1978 in Nagorno-Karabakh, erected a monument on the 150th anniversary of their immigration from Iran to Azerbaijan, have pursued consistent annexationist policy against Azerbaijan over the last two centuries, to realize their fantasies of “Great Armenia”, at the cost of the historical lands of Azerbaijan. In order to achieve this treacherous goal, they resorted to such inhumane actions as terror, massive massacre, deportation and genocide.

Numerous historical documents clearly prove that in the years 1905-1907, 1918-1920 and 1948-1953, millions of Azerbaijanis were subjected to the ethnic cleansing, genocide and massive annihilation in their historical and ethnic territories in the Caucasus, and were deported from their native lands.

The unsubstantiated territorial claims against Azerbaijan and the Armenian separatism emerged again in 1988 launching the Nagorno-Karabakh provocation having neither historical nor political nor ethnic grounds.

All 250,000 Azerbaijanis living in their historical and ethnic lands in Armenia were deported in 1988-1989, with hundreds of peaceful civilians being brutally killed. As a result, Armenia turned into a mono-ethnic republic that Armenians dreamed of for many years.

Unfortunately, the groundless Nagorno-Karabakh conflict begun in 1988, the Armenian reaction raging in the territories of Azerbaijan, and severe sufferings of the innocent Azerbaijani population, who fell victim to this reaction, were perceived by the leadership of the former USSR and the civilized world with an indifferent silence.

Inspired by the situation and taking advantage of that, Armenians started to commit bloody crimes one after another.

Twenty percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, including seven districts beyond the administrative territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, was occupied by Armenian armed forces, with over a million of Azerbaijanis forcedly ousted from their homes, and tens of thousands killed, injured and taken hostage.

Hundreds of populated areas, thousands of social and cultural buildings, houses, educational and healthcare centers, historical and cultural monuments, museums, mosques, sacred places of worship and cemeteries were razed to the ground or subjected to unprecedented Armenian vandalism.

The massive massacres committed by Armenian gunmen in the early 1990s of the 20th century in the Azerbaijani villages in Karabakh such as Kerkidjahan, Meshali, Gushchula, Garadaghly, Agdaban, the terrorist acts carried out in Baku and other cities of the country, and, finally, the Khojaly genocide are the historical crimes, which will remain as a black spot on the conscience of the “oppressed and long-suffering” Armenians for ever.

With a sense of bitter regret, we inform you that the list of catastrophes happened in human history such as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Songmi, which are regarded as the most monstrous tragedies of the 20th century, was supplemented by the Khojaly genocide committed on 26 February 1992.

On the night of February 25-26 1992, Armenian armed groups with the direct involvement of the regiment No 366 of the former Soviet army deployed at that time in the city of Khankendi (Stepanakert) of Nagorno-Karabakh, from 5 directions invaded of the city of Khojaly populated by almost 7 thousand Azerbaijanis (by the time of the attack, there were about 3 thousand people there).

Until that day, the city had been encircled by the Armenian armed groups for over four months, with its population facing serious difficulties in food supply and medical service. There was a large number of wounded and sick people, the old, women and children.

On that night, the rabid Armenian gunmen armed with heavy military weapon belonging to the regiment No 336, wiped the city of Khojaly off the face of the earth. They subjected the unarmed peaceful civilians to massive carnage, brutally killing children, women, and old and sick people.

The Khojaly genocide that Armenians committed in the end of the 20th century became one more historical crime against the civilized humanity. The goal of this monstrous action was to annihilate the whole population of the city.

It was purely by chance that some of Khojaly residents survived to bear witness before the court of history.

As a result of the Khojaly genocide, 613 peaceful civilians were killed, and 1275 taken hostage. Fate of 15 of them remains unknown.

Over thousand people, including 76 underage children, became disabled because of various bullet wounds.

Six families were completely annihilated, 25 children lost both parents, and 130 lost one of them.

Fifty-six people were killed with unprecedented brutality: they were burned alive, scalped, beheaded, parts of their bodies were cut off, their eyes were put out, and pregnant women were killed with a bayonet plunged into their stomach.

It is hard to even imagine that the brutality and violence having no analogues in history were committed by human beings in the end of the 20th century before the eyes of the whole world! But the world must know that the authors of this historical crime, which is against not only Azerbaijanis but also the whole civilized humanity, are the "oppressed and long-suffering" Armenians".

We, the residents of Khojaly who have been refugees over 15 years, with pain but also great hope in our hearts, appeal to all peace-loving nations of the world and international organizations.

We do not believe that such influential international organizations as UN, COE and OSCE, as well as the powerful peace-loving nations, are not capable to urge Armenia, the aggressive country, which ignores the international law and the values common to all mankind, to face up to the truth and justice, and oblige it to establish civilized relations with neighboring states.

Nonfulfillment of the 4 resolutions of the UN Security Council on unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands of Azerbaijan, first and foremost, causes a serious damage to the reputation of this organization.

We express our confidence that the global community will condemn the military aggression of the Armenia against Azerbaijan, and contribute to restoration of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, return of more than one million refugees to their homes, and fair and peaceful resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh) conflict.

**The Appeal was adopted at the general meeting
of Khojaly refugees held on February 19, 2007 in Baku**

TO THE PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN ON 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

Dear country-fellows,
Esteemed compatriots,

I address you on the 15th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide, a sorrowful and tragic page in the history of our nation, one of the cruelest and monstrous mass terrors against humanity. Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, the Khojaly city of Azerbaijan was savagely destroyed by the Armenian armed forces, the defenders and residents of Khojaly were massacred. Hundreds of peaceful residents, the children, women, elderly, whole families were annihilated, and their corpses were disfigured by unprecedented tortures. Such massacre committed in the eyes of world community at the end of XX century, was, for its cruelty and brutality, not only against the Azerbaijan people, but also in the whole, against the humanity.

Today, it is not secret for anybody that the Khojaly tragedy was a bloody page of the genocide and ethnic cleansing policy pursued along hundreds years by militant Armenian nationalists against the Turkic and Azerbaijan peoples. This policy conducted in separate periods for interests of numerous states - by all admitted and non-admitted means - in political, economic, military, terror and ideological ways was continued, our compatriots were oppressed, the historical Azerbaijan lands were occupied by Armenians and seized. In the end of 80s of last century, Armenia's territorial claims against Azerbaijan led to large-scale military conflict. As a result of this insidious policy, 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territories were occupied by Armenian armed forces, tens of thousands of people died and wounded, hundreds of thousands country-fellows were driven from their homelands and became refugees and IDPs.

By committing the Khojaly genocide, the Armenian nationalists followed artful political and tactical goals. They, in this way, wanted to break fighting will of our people, and oblige it to reconcile to the fact of lost of our historical lands. But the enemy failed, our people demonstrated a sample of high will and heroism in battles for sovereignty of our state and territorial integrity.

Khojaly tragedy also pointed out how dangerous and catastrophic is the internal power struggle for our state. At that time, both the official leadership of country and the political forces able to influence on the situation, showed absolute indifference to destiny of the people. The government made no step to give full and operative information on this terrible crime to the world community, while the opposition used this bloody tragedy to assume power on the wave of dissatisfied people.

Only after national leader Heydar Aliyev returned to power, the Khojaly tragedy was politically and legally assessed with impressive measures taken to bring the truth on the genocide to the world's countries' and international community's notice.

The Government of Azerbaijan works purposefully and consistently to raise the world community's awareness about the crimes committed by Armenian chauvinist and nationalists against Azerbaijanis, in particular, about the Khojaly genocide, and to have this tragedy recognized as the genocide. Unlike Armenians, we do not seek any political, financial, territorial and other gains. Our aim is to restore the historical justice and unmask perpetrators in order to bring them to the international justice. Therefore, the threat that Armenian nationalists' and chauvinists' ethnic separatism and ideology of hatred and terror against other nations pose the world must be disclosed. It is our civic and human duty to the spirits of the Khojaly hero shahids.

The Azerbaijani state and society are experiencing the period of construction and development. Azerbaijan achieved leading positions in the world in the terms of economic growth rates. Our country is the main stakeholder and initiator of the regional and international energy-communication projects. The state program on the socio-economic development of

regions and other social and infrastructure projects are being successfully realized. Our state's economic and military capacity and international prestige increases every day with our people's patriotism and national self-consciousness also strengthening. A number of international organizations, heads of influential states, their parliaments recognize Armenia as the aggressive state and insist on their giving up the occupied Azerbaijan's lands. Aggressive Armenia found itself left out of all regional projects and faced isolation. These are our principal arguments and basis of our success and strength to fulfill our tasks in the current situation, and find a solution to the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in line with international legal standards.

Today, along with the state's official bodies, all our citizens, compatriots, the public must work continuously and consistently to inform world's parliaments and international community about the truth and facts on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh the policy of genocide against Azerbaijanis. Along with being pleased with the work done, I would like to state that the measures must be more comprehensive, well-planned and coordinated. The newly formed association created by the Azerbaijan and Turkish Diaspora organizations, coordination of activity may be of great significance. In our fight, we rely on our strength, potential, international law and solidarity of world Azerbaijanis.

Esteemed compatriots! Dear Khojaly residents!

On these sorrowful days, I pay tribute to Khojaly shahids and heroes, and express my condolences to their relatives and all people of Azerbaijan. May Allah rest their souls in peace.

Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
City of Baku, 23 February 2007

MILLI MAJLIS ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

The Milli Majlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan at its 27 February session has issued a statement in connection with the 15th anniversary of the genocide committed by Armenian armed forces against residents of the city of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan on February 26, 1992.

The statement addressed to the United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Council of Europe, European Union, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Commonwealth of the Independent States, and other international organizations, as well as parliaments and governments of the world countries urges them to recognize and condemn the Khojaly genocide, take effective measures to prevent such crimes in the future, and assist in a peaceful resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the generally recognized norms and principles of the international law, in particular, the principle of territorial integrity of states, which is the most basic of them.

Demanding unconditional liberation of the occupied territories provided for in the United Nations Security Council resolutions No 822, 853, 874 and 884 adopted in 1993, the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan calls for taking the resolutions of the OSCE summits in Budapest, Lisbon and Istanbul, as well as the resolution No 1,416 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as basis for resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

The Azerbaijan's Parliament also calls on the Armenian side to take a constructive position in the peace process, withdraw its armed forces from the occupied territories and recognize territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

"Expressing the sovereign will of the people of Azerbaijan, the Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijan Republic states once again that the Republic of Azerbaijan will never agree with violation of sovereignty in its territory, and predatory occupation of its lands, and will use all possible means to restore its territorial integrity, and achieve international political and legal assessment of the Khojaly tragedy, and punishment of its ideologists, organizers and performers," the statement says.

TURKEY'S NGOS APPEAL TO GNAT TO RECOGNIZE KHOJALY TRAGEDY AS GENOCIDE

About 300 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of Turkey's Kars, Igdir and Ardahan provinces, as well as municipalities and representatives of governors appealed to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) on February 13 to recognize the Khojaly tragedy as genocide. The appeal was presented to the leadership of the Turkish parliament and leaders of the political parties represented in the country's parliament.

The offer to appeal to the parliament was made on February 9 by the heads of NGOs, municipality chiefs. The appeal informs on bloodshed, as well as massacre committed by Armenians in Khojali on February 25-26 in 1992.

According to the appeal, Armenians killed 613 innocent people, captured 1275 with more than 1000 wounded, and 150 missing. Armenia's military aggression resulted in occupation of twenty percent of Azerbaijani territories and driving of more than one million people from their homes. The UN Security Council has adopted 4 resolutions on unconditional withdrawal of Armenian military forces from occupied Azerbaijani territories.

Signatories of the appeal called on the GNAT to recognize the bloody massacre in Khojaly as the act of genocide and urged the world's parliaments to push for withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijan.

AzerTAJ
14 February, 2008

**PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY
IN THE MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE**

On 16th Anniversary of Khojaly genocide President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev visited the Monument to the victims of the genocide.

The Head of State Ilham Aliyev laid a wreath at the monument.

www.president.gov.az

26.02.2008.

REPORT BY AZERBAIJAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRESS SERVICE

Today, Azerbaijanis around the world commemorate a National Day of Mourning. 16 years ago 613 innocent Azerbaijani civilians, including 63 children, had been brutally murdered by Armenian forces during military aggression against Azerbaijan. Another 1,000 people were wounded and 1,275 taken hostage. To this day, 150 people from Khojaly remain missing. International terrorists, including ethnic Armenian Monte Melkonian, were directly involved in the Khojaly massacre.

Major media outlets covering the story in the following days described the massacre with horror:

The Sunday Times reported the atrocity with the headline, "Armenian Soldiers Massacre Hundreds of Fleeing Families" (March 1, 1992).

Newsweek magazine reported: "Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped" (March 16, 1992).

The New York Times also described beheadings and acts of scalping (March 3, 1992).

The Time magazine called the actions against Khojaly "grim and unconscionable," reporting that many of those killed had been mutilated (March 16, 1992).

The Washington Times wrote that video footage "backed accounts of the slaughter of women and children" (March 3, 1992).

Khojaly massacre is the grimmest part of the ethnic cleansings conducted by Armenia against hundreds of thousands of civilian Azerbaijanis in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and other surrounding Azerbaijani territories. As stated Armenian officials, the aim of the Khojaly massacre was to break the will of Azerbaijanis to defend their lands. They didn't reach their goal and Azerbaijanis, keeping high the memory of the Khojaly victims, will not tolerate continued occupation of their territories.

AzerTAj
26 February, 2008

**ADDRESS BY KHOJALY IDPS TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON 17TH ANNIVERSARY
OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE**

We, miraculously survived witnesses of the genocide committed by Armenian nationalists in the city of Khojaly located in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan on 26 February, 1992, once again call upon the United Nations, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as the whole progressive and civilized mankind to give a legal and political assessment to the Khojaly genocide.

In order to realize their mythical idea of "Great Armenia" at the expense of historical Azerbaijani lands, the Armenian nationalist and extremist circles, who in 1978 erected in Nagorno-Karabakh a monument marking the 150th anniversary of Armenians' moving to Azerbaijan from Iran, supported by their foreign patrons, over the past two centuries, have consecutively pursued aggressive policy against Azerbaijan through committing numerous crimes against humanity, including terrorist acts, massacres, mass deportations and genocide.

There are many documents testifying that subjected to a policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide in the Caucasus, Azerbaijanis were massively killed and deported from their historic lands in the years 1905-1907, 1918-1920, 1948-1953.

Armenia resumed its groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan in 1988, launching the Nagorno-Karabakh provocation, which had neither historical nor political nor ethnic basis.

Between 1988 and 1989, more than 25,000 Azerbaijanis, who had been living on their historical, ethnic lands in Armenia, were deported all to a man, with hundreds of them brutally killed within the motioned period. As a result, Armenia turned into a monoethnic country, making Armenians' long lasting dream come true.

It is been nearly 20 years since 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, including 7 regions beyond the administrative borders of Nagorno-Karabakh and fully populated by ethnic Azerbaijanis, were occupied by Armenian armed forces. Over 1 million Azerbaijanis were brutally ousted from their historic homes, thousands were killed and mutilated.

The fate of more than 4,500 Azerbaijani prisoners of war, hostages and missing people, who were subject to inhuman treatment in prison camps in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, remains unknown.

Hundreds of towns and villages, thousands of buildings, historical and cultural monuments, mosques and cemeteries have been subject to unprecedented vandalism.

The massive killings of Azerbaijanis in Karabakh villages of Karkidjahan, Meshali, Gushchular, Garadgly, Agdaban and others, in early 90s of the 20th century, bloody terrorist acts in Baku and other cities of the country, and finally, the Khojaly genocide, are historic crimes, which will always lie as a black spot on conscience of the "oppressed and long-suffering" Armenians.

It is with great regret that we bring to your notice that the Khojaly genocide committed in 1992 now ranks among such horrible and monstrous human tragedies of the 20th century as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Son My.

On the night of February 26 of that year the Armenian armed groups supported by former Soviet army's motorized rifle regiment No366, then deployed in the city of Khankendi (Stepanakert), attacked the Khojaly, which once was home to 7,000 Azerbaijanis (at the time of the attack there were around 3,000 people in the city), from five directions. By then Khojaly had already been blockaded for four months by the Armenian armed groups, with the city's residents suffering extremely lack of provision and medical care. There were many disabled, wounded, the old, women and children in the city.

On that horrific night the city of Khojaly was erased from the face of the earth, with its peaceful residents, including children, women, the old and wounded brutally killed and tortured. The Armenian nationalists committed another bloody, uncivilized historic crime of the 20th century - the Khojaly genocide.

The aim of this barbaric action was to completely slaughter the population of the city. However, part of Khojaly residents miraculously managed to survive as if to witness to history.

In the Khojaly genocide, 613 innocent people - 106 women, 63 children and 70 the old – were killed; 1275 taken hostage, with 155 of them still missing; while 487, of them 76 underage people, were left disabled.

As a result of this military-political crime 8 families were completely slaughtered, 25 children lost both, while 130 one of their parents. Fifty six of those killed were murdered with extreme brutality as some of them were burnt alive, others had their eyes put out and were scalped and beheaded; pregnant women were bayoneted in the stomach.

It is too hard to believe that this unprecedentedly monstrous and brutal act was committed by human beings before the eyes of the world in the late 20th century!

However, the world must be aware that the committer of this historic crime, the crime against not only Azerbaijanis, but also the whole mankind, is the aggressive Armenian nationalism which has been presenting itself to the world as “a long-suffering and oppressed nation”.

It is for 17 years that we, internally displaced residents of Khojaly, have been calling - with pain in our hearts, and, at the same time, with great hopes - upon all peace-loving nations of the world and international organizations. We believe that being the world's most influential international organizations the United Nations, Council of Europe and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and peace-loving countries will make Armenia, the aggressive country not respecting the international legal norms and human values, to live on the basis of principles of justice and fairness and build normal relations with neighboring countries!

The fact Armenia continues to reject four UN Security Council resolutions demanding withdrawal of its armed forces from occupied territories of Azerbaijan is, first and foremost, a serious blow to the organization's prestige.

We express confidence that the world community will condemn Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, and show just and unbiased position to ensure Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, return of over one million of refugees and IDPs to their homes, and a peaceful, negotiated resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Baku
17 February, 2009

KHOJALY IDPS CALL UPON UN, COE AND OSCE TO GIVE LEGAL AND POLITICAL ASSESSMENT TO KHOJALY GENOCIDE

Baku, 24 February (AzerTAc). Khojaly IDPs have issued a statement calling on the “United Nations, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as the whole progressive and civilized mankind to give a legal and political assessment to the Khojaly genocide”. The statement says “over the past two centuries, in order to realize their mythical idea of “Great Armenia” at the expense of historical Azerbaijani lands, Armenian nationalist and extremist circles have consecutively pursued an aggressive policy against Azerbaijan through committing numerous crimes against humanity, including terrorist acts, massacres, mass deportations and genocide.”

The statement puts the Khojaly genocide amongst “such horrible and monstrous human tragedies of the 20th century as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Son My.”

“On the night of February 26 of 1992 the Armenian armed groups supported by the former Soviet army’s motorized rifle regiment No366 attacked Khojaly from five directions to erase the city from the face of the earth...” the statement says.

“In the Khojaly genocide, 613 innocent people - 106 women, 63 children and 70 the old – were killed; 1275 taken hostage, with 155 of them still missing; while 487, of them 76 underage people, were left disabled. Fifty six of those killed were murdered with extreme brutality as some of them were burnt alive, others had their eyes put out and were scalped and beheaded; pregnant women were bayoneted in the stomach” the statement says.

“The fact Armenia continues to reject four UN Security Council resolutions demanding withdrawal of its armed forces from occupied territories of Azerbaijan is, first and foremost, a serious blow to the organization’s prestige”

“We express confidence that the world community will condemn Armenia’s military aggression against Azerbaijan, and show just and unbiased position to ensure Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity, return of over one million of refugees and IDPs to their homes, and a peaceful, negotiated resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh” the document concludes.

AzerTAc
24 February, 2009

**PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY
IN THE MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF KHOJALY TRAGEDY**

On 17th Anniversary of Khojaly genocide President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev visited the Monument to the victims of the tragedy.

The Head of State laid a wreath at the monument.

www.president.gov.az

26.02.2009.

PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDS KHOJALY GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

Baku, February 26 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today attended a commemorative ceremony on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The Head of State laid a wreath at the monument to victims of the Khojaly massacre, paying respect to them.

The ceremony was also attended by Prime Minister Artur Rasizadeh, Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov, Head of the Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev, other state and government officials, Milli Majlis deputies, ministers, heads of committees and companies, leaders of religious confessions as well as Khojaly massacre survivors.

On the night between February 25 and 26, 1992, the Armenian military units supported by the former Soviet regiment no.366 deployed in Khankendi assaulted the city of Khojali and subjected the civilians to massacre. Up to 613 dwellers of the ruined Khojali city were murdered. The death toll included 106 women and 83 children. 56 men were slaughtered with extreme brutality. 1275 people were taken hostages and 155 people are still missing.

AzerTAc
26 February, 2009

AZERBAIJAN EMBASSY TO TURKMENISTAN MARKS 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

Azerbaijan embassy in Ashgabat has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of Khojaly genocide. The ceremony started with the performance of Azerbaijan's anthem which followed with the observance of a minute of silence.

Ambassador Elkhan Huseynov spoke of the tragedy's details, saying "on this day in 1992 the Armenian invaders attacked Khojaly, killing hundreds of civilians, with most bodies brutally mutilated." He expressed regret over the fact "the international community has not yet given a legal assessment to the genocide".

Other speakers echoed the Ambassador's remarks, calling the world community and international organizations to express unbiased position on the Khojaly genocide and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Azerbaijan Ombudswoman's statement on the 17th anniversary of Khojaly genocide was read out during the event.

The participants also viewed a photo stand featuring terrible moments of the tragedy, and saw relevant documentaries.

The embassy distributed Heydar Aliyev Foundation-made books and CDs about the Khojaly genocide among the participants of the commemorative event.

AzerTAc
26 February, 2009

ROK'S YONHAP: AZERBAIJAN DENOUNCES ARMENIANS ON ANNIVERSARY OF 'KHOJALY TRAGEDY'

Yonhap headline: "Azerbaijan Denounces Armenians on Anniversary of Khojaly Tragedy"

SEOUL, Feb. 26 (Yonhap) - Marking the 17th anniversary of the so-called Khodjaly tragedy" on Thursday, the embassy of Azerbaijan in Seoul issued a statement condemning Armenian nationalists for their mass killing of Azerbaijani people in 1992. A series of commemorative events devoted to the anniversary were held in Azerbaijan and other parts of the world this week, according to the embassy. "On Feb. 26, 1992, Armenian armed groups supported by military personnel completely ruined the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly, killing 613 Azerbaijani people, including 106 women and 83 children. As a result of the genocide, 1275 innocent people were also taken as hostages, with the fate of over 150 still remaining unknown," the embassy said in the statement. "The Khojaly tragedy became a follow-up and bloody page of the policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide pursued by the Armenian nationalists and their patrons against Azerbaijani people over almost two hundred years... Such severe crimes against humanity should not be repeated in the future," it noted. The statement asserted that the organizers of the Khojaly genocide must face justice, referring to the Azerbaijani government's ongoing move to petition the International Criminal Court in the Hague to punish the executors.

Seoul, South Korea
[WNC: Yonhap](#), February 26, 2009

KHOJALY VICTIMS REMEMBERED IN ST. PETERSBURG

St. Petersburg, 27 February (AzerTAc). The 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide was commemorated in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The event started with drawing exhibition called “Khojaly in children’s eyes”.

The exhibition was followed by a documentary developed by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

Speakers, including chairman of Azerbaijanis’ national-cultural autonomy in St. Petersburg and representative of the Baku State University called the Khojaly genocide ‘the most terrible tragedy of 20th century.’

Azerbaijan’s Consul General Gudsi Osmanov presented a website of the “Justice for Khojaly” campaign (www.justiceforkhojaly.org) initiated by chief Coordinator on Intercultural Dialogue of OIC Youth Forum Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva.

Honorable guest of the event, academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and author of the book “Bloody Maelstrom of Karabakh” Yuri Pompeyev said the Khojaly genocide was a planned massacre of Armenians.

The commemorative event was demonstrated on one of St. Petersburg’s influential channels REN-TV.

A newspaper “Vecherny Peterburg” published an article covering the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

AzerTAc
27 February, 2009

THE BOOK "KHOJALY GENOCIDE IN THE MEMORY OF COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS" CAME OUT

The book "Khojaly genocide in the memory of postal and communications workers" came out. The book "Khojaly genocide in memory of communications" was published by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies.

The book reflects calamity and sorrow of communications workers who performed their duties to the last drop during Armenian armed forces attacks to Khojaly district with the help of Soviet military units on February in 1992 and unarmed people, sick elderly people, escape of kids in the darkness trying to cross frozen rivers and running to the mountaneous covered with snow and forests and painful days of Khojaly people.

The book includes fragments of nationwide Heydar Aliyev speeches in connection with Khojaly tragedy reflecting terrible tragedy, address of the President Ilham Aliyev to the people, a number of official documents, realities about history of Karabakh, rich and detailed information, reasons of the conflict, news of influential organizations of foreign countries and mass media about Khojaly Genocide. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies, academician Ali Abbasov is advisor of the book "Khojaly genocide in the memory of communications workers". The editor of the book is Mushviq Amirov, journalist Jamaledin Dosteli is the compiler of the book. Sensitive extracts like " Eight-day martyr life", " He felt the terrible tragedy beforehand", " That night -last night" draw attention of readers.

"Rabitə dünyası". -2009.-27 fevral.-N7.-S.21

KHOJALY COMMEMORATED IN VIENNA

Baku, 27 February (AzerTAc). The Azerbaijan Academic Union in Austria organized the action dedicated to the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly massacre. The event took place at the Stefan Square of Vienne and the adjacent highly-attended streets of the Austrian capital. A lot of books, booklets and other documentation related to the Khojaly genocide and Nagorno Karabakh conflict available in different languages were presented to the residents of Vienna. The Khojaly massacre video and photos as well as the www.justiceforkhojaly.org web site triggered by Leyla Aliyeva, coordinator of inter-cultural dialogue for the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation, were screened at the booth, which was erected at the center of the Stefan Square.

During the action, allowed by the Vienna City Municipality and Police office, Azerbaijani students raised the banners, posters and spread booklets and leaflets to draw attention to Khojaly massacre and occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by Armenia.

AzerTAc
27 February, 2009

MEMORY OF KHOJALY VICTIMS REVERED IN CHINA

Baku, 27 February (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s embassy to Beijing arranged a commemorative ceremony to mark 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

Diplomats of various countries, journalists, members of Azerbaijani community in China were among the participants.

Ambassador Yashar Aliyev raised awareness of participants about history and details of Armenians` vandalism acts against Azerbaijanis, including the Khojaly genocide.

He said "on this night 17 years ago, 613 innocent people - 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly – were killed; 1275 were taken hostage, with 155 of them still missing; while 487, of them, 76 underage people, were left disabled."

"As a result of this military-political crime 8 families were completely slaughtered, 25 children lost both, while 130 one of their parents. Fifty six of those killed were murdered with extreme brutality as some of them were burnt alive, others had their eyes put out and were scalped and beheaded; pregnant women were bayoneted in the stomach."

During the event, Heydar Aliyev foundation made-documentary on the genocide was demonstrated. The participants also saw a presentation of the website of the "Justice for Khojaly" campaign (www.justiceforkhojaly.org) initiated by chief Coordinator on Intercultural Dialogue of OIC Youth Forum Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva.

AzerTAc
27 February, 2009

AZERBAIJAN'S EMBASSY IN EGYPT ORGANIZES COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS TO MARK 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE

Baku, February 27 (AzerTAc). The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Egypt with support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation has organized a number of ceremonies in the country's Cairo and Alexandria cities to mark the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

A public protest on the massacre held on February 25 in Alexandria brought together representatives of the Azerbaijani community in the country, "Motherland" student organization, officials of Azerbaijan's Culture and Tourism Ministry.

The "Justice for Khojaly" campaign and its website were presented during the event. The participants were also handed over editions on the genocide prepared by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

On February 26, Azerbaijan's Embassy in Egypt gave a press- conference on the tragedy.

Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Egypt Faig Bagirov read out the Embassy's statement on the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

During the event, the "Justice for Khojaly" campaign and its website were presented.

The "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign was initiated by General Coordinator of the OIC Youth Foundation on Intercultural Dialogue Ms. Leyla Aliyeva.

AzerTAc
27 February, 2009

ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE COMMEMORATED IN MOROCCO

Rabat, February 28 (AzerTAc) Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Morocco organized Thursday a ceremony to commemorate the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide. The event was attended by members of the Morocco-Azerbaijan Friendship Society and Morocco-Azerbaijan Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group, journalists, several ambassadors and others.

Azerbaijan`s ambassador to Morocco Sabir Agabayov briefed the participants on atrocities committed by Armenians against the Azerbaijani people.

He also spoke of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation`s efforts towards making the world community known about the Khojaly genocide.

The event`s participants saw a documentary featuring the massacre. They were also handed over books on the tragedy prepared by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

A statement on the 17th anniversary of the genocide prepared by the Embassy was forwarded to Morocco`s Foreign Ministry, parliament, all embassies accredited to the country, as well as media outlets.

AzerTAc
28 February, 2009

U.S. CONGRESSMAN MAKES STATEMENT ON 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY TRAGEDY

Washington, 28 February (AzerTAc) Member of the Azerbaijan Caucus in U.S Congress Ed Whitfield made Thursday a statement on the 17th anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy.

Speaking on the tragedy's history, Whitfield said "on February 26, 1992, the small town of Khojaly, Azerbaijan was violently shaken by invading Armenian troops during the Armenian-Azerbaijan war. Armenian forces surrounded the town and opened fire on the innocent inhabitants. During this bloody incursion, nearly 2,000 civilians--mostly women, children and the elderly--were brutally killed, wounded or taken hostage by the Armenian military forces as they seized the town. This resulted in the largest massacre of modern times in the Caucasus and Caspian Basin."

He noted "according to Human Rights Watch and other international observers, the massacre was committed by the ethnic Armenian armed forces, reportedly with the help of the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment. This crime led to the death of 613 civilians, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly men; 1275 persons were taken hostage, and the fate of more than 150 remains unknown."

Whitfield cited an article on the massacre published in U.S.-based Newsweek Magazine: "Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on 25-26 February. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped."

He pointed out on November 29, 1993, Newsweek quoted a senior U.S. Government official as saying, "what we see now is a systematic destruction of every village in their (the Armenians) way. It's vandalism."

"Tragically, during this war, Khojaly was simply the first example of this savage cruelty. In fact, the level of brutality and the unprecedented atrocities committed at Khojaly set a pattern of destruction and ethnic cleansing that Armenian troops would adhere to for the remainder of the war," he underscored.

Whitfield noted "altogether, the occupied areas represent roughly 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan. And, altogether roughly one million Azerbaijanis were evicted from their homes over the course of the Armenian-Azerbaijan war."

In recognition of this horrific day, an international humanitarian awareness campaign, "Justice for Khojaly," was initiated by Ms. Leyla Aliyeva, and provides much needed information on the massacre through its website for interested parties. In the wake of the 17th anniversary of this massacre, I encourage all of us to familiarize ourselves with this dreadful past so it is not repeated in the future. I also stand with all Azerbaijani-Americans as they recognize and commemorate this solemn day," the Congressman concluded.

AzerTAc
28 February, 2009

EUROPEAN COURT CONSIDERING ARMENIAN PRESIDENT'S ROLE IN MASSACRE

The European Court of Human Rights is considering an application to investigate the massacre in the Azerbaijani village of Khojaly.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has asked the Turkey-based Organization for Fighting Against Baseless Armenian Allegations (ASIMDER) for documents which prove that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan ordered Armenian armed forces to commit a massacre in Khojaly, Azerbaijan, Hurriyyet quoted ASIMDER chairman Goksel Gulbey as saying.

Gulbey said that the European Court had replied to ASIMDER's application for Sargsyan to be tried for the Khojaly massacre.

"The European Court of Human Rights said they had they put our application into operation and asked us to send documents about the application to the court by 8 January 2010," Gulbey said.

The chairman of ASIMDER was pleased with the response from the ECHR and said, "The court asks us for documents about Sargsyan. As an addition to the documents we already have, we asked Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Kars to provide us more documents if they have them. When the documents arrive, we will prepare our application in the shortest time and will submit it to the court."

He said that Sargsyan should be held accountable for the massacre in Khojaly in Azerbaijan.

"We believe that the European Court of Human Rights will make a fair decision. Sargsyan was the commander of the Armenian armed forces which committed the massacre in Khojaly in 1992. He ordered Armenian armed forces to commit a massacre and he also took part in it. The blood of the victims of the Khojaly massacre has not yet dried and 1.2 million Azerbaijani citizens had to flee their homeland as displaced persons in that period. Sargsyan should be tried for all this by the ECHR," Gulbey said.

[APA](#)
05 October, 2009

US AZERBAIJANIS SEND LETTER ON KHOJALI MASSACRE TO US PRESIDENT

The letter asks the addresses for a formal remembrance and helping in seeking support for one of biggest massacres of the century.

Hundreds of American Azerbaijanis and US citizens have sent a letter to US President Barack Obama, Vice-president Joe Biden, US Congressmen and other senior officials to remind about the Khojaly massacre. Azerbaijani Diaspora in US started a new campaign – Khojaly Mssacre 18th anniversary.

The letter asks the addresses for a formal remembrance and helping in seeking support for one of biggest massacres of the century.

Reminding about the history of the Massacre, the authors are pointing out that, on the night of February 25-26, 1992, Armenian forces surrounded and attacked the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, brutally massacring its fleeing residents.

“As Newsweek reported at the time, “many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped” 613 people, including 106 women and 83 children, were tortured to their deaths in freezing temperatures, with hundreds more missing. Over 1,000 people received permanent health damage, 1,275 people were taken hostage, 8 families were fully destroyed. A total of 25 children lost both of their parents and 130 children lost one of them. According to the Human Rights Watch, Khojaly Massacre was “the largest massacre to date in the conflict” over Nagorno-Karabakh” – the letters reminds.

Also, the letter knows that, for 17 years since the Khojaly massacre, a war crime which preceded Srebrenica Massacre, no proper international attention or independent legal assessment was given to this human tragedy.

“Repeated denials of the Armenian side often about the fact of massacre are undermined by the words of an incumbent president of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, who commanded Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh at the time: “before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype].” (Thomas De Waal. Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War, NYU Press, 2004). Many suspected perpetrators may still remain inside Armenia or Armenian-controlled parts of Azerbaijan, but the ongoing occupation of Azerbaijani territories despite 4 UN Security Council resolutions (#822, 853, 874, 884) seriously impedes both investigation of past war crimes and the efforts of international community to bring a lasting peace to the region” – letters said.

Among those who sent the letter to US Administration are a number of prominent Americans including well-known in Baku American journalist Thomas Goltz.

APA
30 January, 2010

ISLAMIC CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES KHOJALY MASSACRE

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Islamic Conference has adopted a resolution backing the campaign Justice for Khojaly.

The assembly has just ended its sixth session in the Ugandan capital, Kampala.

The organization unites the parliaments of 51 OIC member-states and holds sessions every two years.

A resolution (SSCPE/4-2010/DR/RES.26) "On cooperation between the OIC youth forum and OIC parliamentary assembly" defining the Khojaly tragedy as a crime against humanity was adopted on the last day of the session at the initiative of the OIC youth forum. The resolution notes that the events in Khojaly are "massacres committed by Armenian armed formations against Azerbaijani civilians".

The resolution includes a paragraph, urging the parliaments of 51 countries to recognize this tragedy as a crime against humanity and to support the campaign at the national and international levels.

The session also involved representatives of the leading international organizations including the Black Sea Economic Cooperation parliamentary assembly in which Armenia is involved.

Commenting on the importance of the resolution, the secretary general of the OIC youth forum Elshad Iskenderov said.

"This is the first time that an international parliamentary delegation has recognized the Khojaly tragedy as a 'crime against humanity'. As the OIC Parliamentary Assembly incorporates one-quarter of the world's parliamentarians, the use of this term, which is of great political and legal importance, marks a new stage in the international recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as an integral part of the policy of genocide, committed by Armenian nationalists against the Azerbaijani people as well as punishing those responsible for genocide."

The idea to adopt the resolution was initiated by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's daughter, Leyla Aliyeva, during her meeting with the national coordinators of the Justice for Khojaly Campaign in autumn last year in Baku. The OIC youth forum worked with several OIC parliaments and primarily the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan and its secretariat on the resolution.

Leyla Aliyeva initiated the international Justice for Khojaly campaign on 8 May 2008, the anniversary of the Armenian occupation of the town of Shusha in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of the massacre at Khojaly. During the night of 25-26 February 1992, 613 Azerbaijani civilians were killed in an attack by Armenian forces, backed by an ex-Soviet regiment, on the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh. Most of the victims perished as they fled the town.

www.1news.az

01 February, 2010

51 COUNTRY PARLIAMENTARIANS RECOGNIZE KHOJALY TRAGEDY AS CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

Parliamentary Union of Islamic Conference has adopted a special resolution in support of the "Justice for Khojaly" campaign, Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said.

According to the *Islamic Conference Youth Forum*, the resolution was adopted at the 6th session of the Union, held in the Ugandan capital of Kampala.

The session, attended by the heads of parliaments from 51 countries, has adopted a resolution on "Cooperation between the OIC Youth Forum and the Parliamentary Union of Islamic Conference."

The Khojaly tragedy is recognized as a "mass genocide of civilians by Armenian armed forces and crime against humanity" in the resolution, submitted within the campaign Justice for Khojaly, initiated by the coordinator of the *Islamic Conference Youth Forum* Leyla Aliyeva.

The resolution, adopted by the Parliamentary Union of Islamic Conference, also calls for the recognition of the genocide and for international and national support of the campaign.

According to Elshad Iskenderov, general secretary of the *Islamic Conference Youth Forum*, the resolution is the first document which recognizes the Khojaly tragedy as "a crime against humanity."

Considering that OIC brings a quarter of the parliaments of the world together, and is the largest inter-parliamentary structure, the adoption of the resolution on Khojaly is an important step in revealing Armenian nationalists' genocide policy against the Azerbaijani people and will help hold the perpetrators of this crime criminally responsible, he said.

Armenian troops committed genocide in Khojali on Feb. 26, 1992. The tragedy began early morning. Within hours, over 613 unarmed Azerbaijani citizens were killed and among them were 106 women and 83 children. About 1,000 people were disabled by shots; eight families were fully destroyed. A total of 25 children lost both of their parents and 130 children lost one of them. About 1,275 people were taken prisoner and around 150 people went missing. Eight families were completely killed.

The "Justice for Khojaly" international information and agitation campaign has been announced upon the initiative of ICYF-DC (Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation) for Intercultural Dialogue General Coordinator Leyla Aliyeva and started on May 8 in 2008.

www.trend.az

01.02.2010

OIC PARLIAMENTARY UNION ADOPTS RESOLUTION SUPPORTING "JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY" CAMPAIGN

Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Member States adopted a special resolution supporting "Justice for Khojaly" campaign at the 6th conference held in the Ugandan capital of Kampala on Sunday, AzerTAj state news agency reported.

"The Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Conference supports the "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign, launched on the initiative of the OIC Youth Forum General Coordinator Leyla Aliyeva and aiming to deliver to the international community the historical facts about the massacre carried out by Armenian forces against civilians in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly" - the resolution says.

Armenian troops committed genocide in Khojali on Feb. 26, 1992. The tragedy began early morning. Within hours, over 613 unarmed Azerbaijani citizens were killed. Among them were 106 women and 83 children. About 1,000 people were disabled by shots; 8 families were fully destroyed. A total of 25 children lost both of their parents and 130 children lost one of them. About 1,275 people were taken prisoner. Around 150 people went missing. Eight families were completely killed.

www.trend.az

01.02.2010

**286 PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AGAINST AZERBAIJANIS
PUT ON THE WANTED LIST**

286 people have been put on the wanted list in the result of crimes committed by Armenian servicemen.

286 people have been put on the wanted list in the result of the terror act, torture, taking hostages and other crimes committed by Armenian servicemen, said military prosecutor Khanlar Veliyev during the session of the 63 collegiums by results of 2009.

He reminded the participants about the tragedies of Khojaly, Garadaghli, Meshali, Baganis-Ayrim. He said all these crimes fall under article 103 (genocide) of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan.

The military prosecutor added that the Military Prosecutor's office considered 1625 appeals of the citizens on the committed crimes in 2009.

www.1news.az
01 February, 2010

PLAN OF EVENTS ON 18TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE IN AZERBAIJAN APPROVED

Head of Azerbaijan's Presidential Administration approves plan of events on 18th anniversary of Khojaly genocide.

Ramiz Mehdiyev, Head of Azerbaijan's Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev issued an order to approve the plan of events on the 18th anniversary of Khojaly genocide, Presidential Administration told.

The plan of events includes visit of the monuments erected in memory of genocide victims in Khajaly Khatai district, Naftalan, release of the appeal of Khojaly residents to the states, peoples of the world and international organizations, press conferences, Azerbaijani embassies in commemorative events, representations, Diaspora organizations abroad, coverage of the materials on Khojaly genocide by foreign mass media.

According to the document, various events will be arranged in organizations, exhibition halls, universities and secondary schools, documentary and feature films about the struggle for national freedom will be demonstrated.

With participation of the heads of state structures, parliamentarians and intellectuals aids will be rendered to the martyrs' families in the cities and regions temporarily settled by Khojaly residents.

The information about Khojaly genocide will be updated on the internet, TV and radios, mass media of the country will present materials on Khojaly genocide.

The victims of Khojaly genocide will be commemorated for a minute of silence at 17.00 in the country on February 26. The first lessons in the educational institutions will be devoted to this tragedy.

APA
09 February, 2010

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO UNITED NATIONS SENT A LETTER TO SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION

Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Agshin Mehdiyev sent a letter to Secretary General of the organization Ban Ki-moon. The letter runs: “As a result of continued confrontation between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the fifth part of the Azerbaijan territory was occupied, and by the estimations, one of each eight Azerbaijanis became an internally displaced person, or refugee. During this conflict, the enemy has committed heaviest international crimes, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide”.

The Permanent Representative further writes: “In February 1992, the Azerbaijani townsmen of Khojaly were subjected to unprecedented cruelty. During this massacre which became known as the Khojaly genocide, thousand Azerbaijanis have been killed or taken prisoner, the city has been wiped out. In the night from 25 to 26 February, 1992, the Armenian armed forces with assistance of 366th motor-rifle regiment of the former USSR, staff of which consisted mainly of Armenians, have attacked to Khojaly. Inhabitants of Khojaly who remained in the city on this tragic night, have tried to leave the houses after the beginning of storm of city, hoping to go to the near areas inhabited by Azerbaijanis. However, it was not possible. Aggressors have destroyed Khojaly and with special cruelty have killed its peaceful population. As a result, 613 inhabitants have been killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 old. 1000 people have been wounded and 1275 were taken hostages. Destiny of 150 inhabitants of Khojaly is not known up to now.

... Law enforcement bodies of Azerbaijan have sufficient information on the happenings, and besides, responsibility of Armenia is confirmed by documents of numerous independent sources and eyewitnesses of this tragedy.

The western mass media have informed on massacre of the innocent people of Khojaly as a result of a gun-fire, and other severe acts”.

The letter further says: “The genocide in Khojaly and other grave crimes made during the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, involve the state responsibility of Armenia and the individual criminal liability of those who participated in implementation of these acts, and their helpers and accomplices.

...Impunity suppression has essentially great value not only to bring to account the culprits for grave crimes, but also to ensure peace, establishment of truth, reconciliation and protection of the rights of victims.”

Ambassador Mehdiyev expresses in advance gratitude to the addressee for distribution of this letter as a document of UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council.

AzerTAc
24 February, 2010

PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDS COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY IN MEMORY OF KHOJALY VICTIMS

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today attended a commemorative ceremony in memory of victims of the Khojaly genocide.

Today marks 18 years since the Khojaly massacre, one of the bloodiest crimes in the human history, when the Armenian Armed Forces with the help of the 366th regiment, which consisted mainly of Armenians and was located in Khankendi, razed the ancient Azerbaijani town of Khojaly to the ground.

The atrocities committed by Armenians on that bloody night will never be forgotten as it was not just genocide of the Azerbaijani people it was a crime against humanity.

This mass slaughter committed by the Armenian aggressors against the Azerbaijani people, has led to death of 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 old men. 487 people have been wounded, 1275 civilians taken hostage, and 150 people are missing up to know.

The evil deeds committed in Khojaly can be compared with nothing. As a result of this act of genocide, 8 families have been completely annihilated, the civilians were exterminated with unprecedented cruelty, and the prisoners were subjected to ruthless tortures.

However, the then authorities of Azerbaijan failed to find courage to stand by their people even at such a difficult moment. They did nothing to make the reasons and consequences of the massacre known to the world community.

And it was national leader Heydar Aliyev's coming to power, at the urgent request of the Azerbaijani people, which ensured first political and legal assessment for the Khojaly tragedy.

Azerbaijan has been taking purposeful measures to ensure that the world states and leading international organizations know the truth about the Khojaly massacre, and that it received due legal assessment on the international level.

Every year on this day, Azerbaijanis across the world remember victims of the Khojaly genocide with large-scaled commemorative events which include holding rallies and meetings, organizing photo exhibitions, demonstrating feature and documentary films and spreading Heydar Aliyev Foundation-made materials. Also on this day the world's leading newspapers and TV and radio channels feature commemorative stories and programs in memory of victims of the massacre.

In February, 2009 the Organization of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum's General Coordinator on Intercultural Dialogue Leyla Aliyeva initiated "Justice for Khojaly" campaign, which has been a big success and saw large number of volunteers join it across the world.

The people of Azerbaijan strongly believe that their country, which is today the South Caucasus' major economic power, which enjoys strong international profile and which ensured its military power, will by any means liberate its occupied territories and revenge for its martyrs.

Since early hours of Friday, February 26, thousands of Baku residents have been visiting a memorial to Khojaly victims in the Khatai district.

President Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the memorial.

Prime Minister Artur Rasizade, Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov, Head of the Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev and President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, UNESCO and ISESCO Goodwill Ambassador, MP Mehriban Aliyeva also paid tribute to Khojaly victims by laying flowers at the memorial.

The commemorative ceremony was attended by state and government officials, MPs, ministers, heads of committees and companies, leaders of religious confessions as well as Khojaly massacre survivors.

AzerTAc
26 February, 2010

ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALI GENOCIDE.

The night from 25 to 26 February 1992 went down in the history of the Azerbaijani people as the Khojaly tragedy. Contrary to all norms of international law, the Armenian armed forces aided by the 366th infantry regiment of the former Soviet army stationed in Khankandi attacked the sleeping city and committed an act of genocide against the Azerbaijanis.

In the course of that military aggression, Khojaly was destroyed by a massive fire of heavy military equipment. A merciless massacre was committed against its civilian population. In a matter of a few hours 613 of our compatriots, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly, were brutally killed. As a result of this carnage, eight families were completely destroyed, 25 children lost both parents and 130 lost one, 487 civilians were seriously injured and 1,275 taken hostage. The whereabouts of 150 hostages are still unknown.

Having perpetrated the bloody Khojaly massacre, Armenia went beyond Nagorno-Karabakh and unleashed a large-scale aggression against Azerbaijan. The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh has claimed the lives of 20,000 of our citizens; more than 50,000 people have been injured and disabled, while 20 per cent of our country has been occupied. Our people found themselves face to face with an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

Despite the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Security Council, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and several international organizations on the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and a search for an objective solution to the problem within the framework of the territorial integrity of our country, the talks held within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group have not yielded any result.

The truth about the Khojaly genocide, which is part of the policy of ethnic cleansing being consistently implemented by Armenian chauvinist circles against the Azerbaijanis in the 19-20th centuries, must be communicated to the world and foreign parliaments. This heinous war crime against the Azerbaijani people and humanity in general must receive a political and legal assessment on an international scale.

On the eve of the 20th anniversary of the tragedy, filled with deep sorrow in revering the memories of our compatriots killed in the Khojaly genocide and governed by Clause 32 of Article 109 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I hereby resolve as follows:

1. To task the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan with preparing an action plan to mark the 20th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide and ensuring its implementation.

Ilham Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Baku city, 17 January 2012

**APPEAL OF KHOJALY INHABITANTS TO THE WORLD COUNTRIES, THE
UNITED NATIONS, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE
(6 FEBRUARY 2012)**

Appeal of Khojaly inhabitants to the world countries, the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide

We, the miraculously surviving eyewitnesses of the massacre committed by the Armenian nationalists in the town of Khojaly in the Nagorno-Karabakh region on 26 February, 1992, once again appeal to the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as the world countries on the 20th anniversary of the tragedy, and call on the whole progressive mankind, people who feel love in their hearts not to remain indifferent to this crime of genocide against humanity.

Supported by their foreign patrons, Armenian extremist and nationalist circles have pursued a consistent annexationist policy against Azerbaijan over the last two centuries to realize their fantasies of "Great Armenia" at the cost of the historical lands of Azerbaijan. In order to achieve this treacherous goal, they have regularly resorted to such crimes as inhumane terrorist acts and massacre, deportation and genocide.

Numerous historical documents clearly prove that in the years 1905-1907, 1918-1920 and 1948-1953, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis were subjected to ethnic cleansing, genocide and massive annihilation in their historical and ethnic territories in the Caucasus, and were deported from their native lands.

All 250,000 Azerbaijanis living in their historical and ethnic lands in Armenia were deported in 1988-1989, with hundreds of peaceful civilians, including the old, women and children being brutally killed. As a result, Armenia turned into a mono-ethnic state that Armenians dreamed of for many years. In 1988, the unsubstantiated territorial claims against Azerbaijan emerged again, with the encouragement of the Armenian separatism in Nagorno-Karabakh, which had neither historical nor political grounds, resulting in bloody ethnic conflicts and mass fatalities in the region.

Twenty percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, including seven districts beyond the administrative territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, which were fully populated by Azerbaijanis until 1990, still remains under the occupation of the Armenian armed forces. The conflict saw the cruel expulsion of over a million of Azerbaijanis from their native homes, with tens of thousands of civilians killed or injured. Although nearly 1,400 Azerbaijanis have been released from the Armenian captivity so far, the fate of over 4,000 Azerbaijani citizens, being humiliated and tortured in prison camps in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, still remains unknown.

Hundreds of cities and towns, thousands of social and cultural buildings, educational and healthcare facilities, historical and cultural monuments, museums, mosques, sacred places of worship and cemeteries were razed to the ground or subjected to unprecedented Armenian vandalism. In the early 1990s of the 20th century, Armenian gunmen massacred peaceful civilians in the Azerbaijani districts and villages in Karabakh, including Kerkijahan, Meshali, Gushchular, Garadaghly and Agdaban, and carried out a large number of terrorist acts in Baku and other cities of the country. On the night of February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed groups with the direct involvement of the regiment No 366 of the former Soviet army deployed at that time in the city of Khankendi in Nagorno-Karabakh, from 5 directions invaded the town of Khojaly populated by almost 7,000 Azerbaijanis (by the time of the attack there were about 3,000 people in the town).

Until that day, the city had been encircled for over four months, with its population facing serious difficulties in food supply and medical service. There was a large number of wounded and sick people, the old, women and children in the town.

On that night, the town of Khojaly was wiped off the face of the earth, with unarmed peaceful civilians subjected to massive carnage, and children, women and old and sick people brutally killed. The Armenian nationalists committed the Khojaly genocide, another historical crime against the civilized humanity at the end of the 20th century. The goal of this monstrous act was to annihilate the whole population of the town. It was purely by chance that many Khojaly residents survived to bear witness before the court of history.

As a result of the Khojaly genocide, 613 peaceful civilians were killed, over 1,000 peaceful civilians became disabled after receiving gunshot wounds, and 1,275 people were taken hostage. The fate of 150 of them remains unknown. Of those massacred, 106 were women, 63 were children and 70 were old people. Of those disabled, 76 were under-age boys and girls.

This military-political crime saw the complete annihilation of 8 families, with 25 children losing both parents, and 130 children losing one of their parents.

Fifty-six people were killed with unprecedented brutality: they were burned alive, scalped, beheaded, parts of their bodies were cut off, their eyes were put out, and pregnant women were bayoneted into their stomach.

It is hard to even imagine that the brutality and violence having no analogues in history were committed by human beings in the end of the 20th century before the eyes of the whole world! But the world must know that the perpetrators of this historical crime, which is against not only Azerbaijanis but also the whole civilized humanity, are the Armenian nationalists who present themselves to the world as “an oppressed and long-suffering nation”.

With a sense of bitter regret, we inform you that the list of catastrophes happened in human history such as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Songmi, which are regarded as the most monstrous tragedies of the 20th century, is now supplemented by the Khojaly genocide.

We, the residents of Khojaly who have been refugees for 20 years, with pain but also great hope in our hearts, appeal to all peace-loving people and nations of the world. We hope that such influential international organizations as the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the powerful peace-loving nations, will urge Armenia, the aggressive country, which ignores the international law and the values common to all mankind, to face up to the truth and justice, and oblige it to establish civilized relations with neighboring states!

Non-fulfillment of the 4 resolutions of the UN Security Council on unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands of Azerbaijan, first and foremost, causes a serious damage to the reputation of this organization, and means that Armenia dictates its own will to the international community.

By supporting fair position of the Azerbaijani state in settlement of the conflict as well as peacemaking efforts of the leading countries and international organizations, we reiterate that Armenia's aggressive political course, which contradicts basic principles of the international law, poses a serious threat to peace and security not only in the region, but in the globe. The international community must not be indifferent to this inevitable reality.

Unfortunately, supporting aggressors and taking a double-standard approach to current political processes are a bitter reality of nowadays. We resolutely condemn the French Senate's recent adoption of a law criminalizing the denial of the so-called Armenian genocide, and consider it a wrong move, which contradicts human rights and democracy. We call on some states and politicians, who supported this move, not to submit to biased political ambitions, and urge them to focus on the Khojaly genocide, the bloodiest page in our recent history, instead of distorting the truths of the remote past. We call on every person to stand for justice for the future of our troubled world.

We express our confidence that the right voice of the Azerbaijani people, including we – the Khojaly residents – will finally be heard by the global community and it will resolutely condemn Armenia's military aggression and groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan and give an objective legal and political assessment to the Khojaly genocide.

**The Appeal was adopted at the general meeting
of Khojaly IDPs held in Ashagy Aghjakend village, Goranboy region**

**The Republic of Azerbaijan
6 February, 2012**

ADDRESS TO WORLD NATIONS, HEADS OF STATE, PARLIAMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (21 FEBRUARY 2012)

In the name of God!

For 20 years, while expressing the desire and sentiments of millions of citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan, we have been persistently addressing representatives of the international community irrespective of their religious, linguistic, racial or ethnic background, as well as world leaders, heads of state, parliaments and heads of international organizations responsible for the fate of our planet. We are convinced that there is no people or religion in the world that would deny universal moral values, encourage such inhuman acts as violence, murder and aggression or justify heinous crimes.

Mankind has always treated crimes against humanity with disgust and condemned the murderers who have lost human face. Double standards are totally unacceptable for mankind. However, the Khojaly tragedy, one of the world's most gruesome crimes we have been telling the world about for 20 years now, has yet to be fully renounced at the international level and its culprits have yet to be brought to book. It is no compliment to mankind that it has been staying indifferent to the fact that Armenian thugs attacked more than 10,000 unarmed and defenseless civilians in the town of Khojaly on 26 February 1992, slaughtered 613 of them without sparing even the elderly, children or pregnant women, took 1,275 people prisoner and subjected them to unseen torture, perpetrated degrading acts on corpses and committed other atrocities. Regrettable and surprising as it might seem, most countries and international organizations have thus far remained tightlipped over this unprecedented crime.

It is a bitter reality that perpetrators of these and other heinous crimes haven't been brought to account to this day. Armenian extremists have been flouting the decisions of all international organizations, including UN resolutions. Despite that, they have not faced any international sanctions. Moreover, they have occupied 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territory, driven a million Azerbaijanis out of their homes, committed acts of vandalism on occupied Azerbaijani lands, desecrated our cultural monuments, mosques and cemeteries, unleashed material and moral terror against and appropriated our historical documents and assets. The crime of genocide committed in Khojaly was the culminating point of these atrocities. There are eye-witnesses, historical proofs and visual evidence of this bloody crime of the present time – the Khojaly genocide.

Unfortunately, there are people in the present-day world who seem to be less concerned about real crimes of genocide than the acts portrayed as such that have no historical evidence. We are very concerned about the international trend to recognize fake genocides and view actual perpetrators of genocide as its "victims". Despite the futility of the appeals we have been making for years to provide a legal and political assessment to the Khojaly massacre experienced by the people of Azerbaijan in recent history, in 1992, we are still hopeful that the world will not remain indifferent to the voice of Azerbaijani people who have been subjected to the crime of genocide. We do hope that our fair cause will prevail and historical justice will be done. We are hopeful that Azerbaijan's efforts to disseminate truth about the genocide committed in Khojaly will expose the true colors of Armenian occupiers who are prepared to descend even to plagiarism in their campaign of false propaganda.

We, religious leaders, wish all nations around the world peace, love and prosperity. We consider it important to remind everyone of our holy duty to God to strive for the restoration of justice. Today, our fellow countrymen want mankind to take a fair stance with the grace of God. If mankind does not heed to this plea for justice, it may itself become victim of injustice and hideousness tomorrow. So we are urging world leaders, parliaments, religious leaders, public and religious organizations around the world again to give a principled legal assessment to the aggression and atrocities of Armenian extremists against the people of Azerbaijan and to recognize the Khojaly massacre as a crime of genocide.

May God assist all of us in committing good deeds, differentiating the good from the evil and being fair.

Sheikh-ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Pashazadeh
Chairman of the Office of Caucasus Muslims

Aleksandr Ischein
Bishop of the Baku and Azerbaijan Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church

Semen Ikhiilov
Head of the Community of Mountain Jews in Azerbaijan

Vladimir Fekete
Ordinary of the Roman Catholic Church in Azerbaijan

**MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE
PEOPLE OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE
(23 FEBRUARY 2012)**

Message to the people of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide

It has been 20 years since the Khojaly genocide, one of the most terrible and bloodiest tragedies in the 20th century. On the night of 25-26 February 1992, the Armenian armed forces, with participation of the Khankendi-based 366th motorized infantry regiment

It has been 20 years since the Khojaly genocide, one of the most terrible and bloodiest tragedies in the 20th century. On the night of 25-26 February 1992, the Armenian armed forces, with participation of the Khankendi-based 366th motorized infantry regiment, attacked and ruined, in one night, the town of Khojaly, which had been encircled during months. In this bloody act, they brutally slaughtered civilians, murdering 613 people, abusing corpses, taking 1275 hostages. Of them, the fate of 150 remains unknown. Of the killed, 63 are children, 106 are women and 70 are elders. The military invasion completely wiped out 8 families.

For the past two centuries Armenian nationalists have repeatedly committed such outrages on humanity as terror, mass atrocities, deportation and ethnic purge in order to realize the mythic idea of “the Great Armenia” at the expense of historical Azerbaijani lands. The Khojaly genocide, which happened in the late 20th century before the eyes of the world and was marked by cruelty and brutality, was the bloodiest page of this aggressive policy. The political and legal responsibility for this grave crime directly rests with the then and present leadership of Armenia, separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh. The government of Azerbaijan has carried out systematic and purposeful work for nearly 20 years in order to raise the world community’s awareness about the Khojaly tragedy perpetrated by Armenian fascists, and have the genocide recognized internationally. During recent years, numerous civil society institutions, youth organizations and Diaspora structures, which represent our compatriots, have done the effective work together with the governmental bodies in this field as part of the Justice for Khojaly campaign. The true face of the Armenian propaganda machine based on lies and falsifications is being exposed and the international public opinion begins to comprehend the truth on Khojaly. The Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation recognized this fact as the “mass crime against humanity” and called on the member countries to give the relevant political and legal assessment to this tragedy. The parliaments of Pakistan and Mexico adopted resolutions recognizing this massacre as an act of genocide.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is playing an important role in the world security system and in the fight against international terrorism. We consider any racial discrimination, ethnic and religious hatred a crime against the whole humanity regardless of where it takes place. Our state will continue efforts towards ensuring objective assessment of the Khojaly genocide, the occupation of Azerbaijan’s lands by Armenia, restoration of historical and legal justice, and carry out an uncompromising struggle against such phenomena with all political and legal means.

Although by committing the Khojaly genocide the enemy aimed to crush the Azerbaijani people, prevent them from their struggle for sovereignty and territorial integrity and annex our lands, this appalling tragedy made our people only stronger and mobilized our heroic sons and daughters for a resolute and organized struggle for the holy motherland and national statehood. On this nationwide day of mourning, I once again honor the memory of the innocent victims of the Khojaly genocide. May Allah rest the souls of all our martyrs in peace! I want to assure you that sooner or later the perpetrators of the Khojaly genocide will be brought to justice and get the punishment they deserve, and the blood of our martyrs will be avenged.

**Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Baku, 23 February, 2012**

**NATIONWIDE MARCH HELD IN BAKU ON THE OCCASION OF 20TH
ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE
PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
PARTICIPATES IN THE MARCH
(26 FEBRUARY, 2012)**

A nationwide march was held in Baku on February 26 on the occasion of one of the most heinous and bloodiest tragedies of the 20th century – the Khojaly genocide. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev participated in the march.

The nationwide march, which began from the Azadlyg square in the capital, brought together over 60 thousand people. They gathered to pay tribute to victims of the Khojaly tragedy and draw the attention of the world community to this crime against humanity committed by Armenian aggressors. From the Azadlyg square, participants of the march with President Ilham Aliyev in the front row proceeded to the monument to the Khojaly genocide victims mounted in the Khatai district of Baku. Young people who stood along the avenues and streets the tremendous march proceeded had in their hands portraits of innocents victims of the bloody massacre – children, women and elders killed with extreme cruelty – photos depicting abominable scenes of events, which happened 20 years ago, banners demanding to bring to account and punish perpetrators of the tragic events, give an objective political and legal assessment to the massacre at an international level, placards with names and surnames of victims of genocide, saying “The world must recognize the Khojaly genocide”, “Justice for Khojaly”, “Do not forget Khojaly” “No to Armenian fascism!”. Participants of the march had in their hands similar placards as well.

There was sorrow on the faces of people and it is a testimony to the fact that horrors of the bloody atrocity against civilians of Khojaly have not been obliterated from their memory for the past 20 years. The name of this Azerbaijani town ruined in one night now is called along with Hatyn, Lidice and Song My.

In general, this nationwide march can be considered the climax of the large-scale work carried out by Azerbaijan so that the world could know better about the truth on Khojaly and fully realize that indifference to barbarism committed in late 20th century before the eyes of the civilized humanity, impunity of those guilty of the death of hundreds of civilians may lead to repetition of such tragedies in any place on the planet.

The march also became the demonstration of unity of the people of Azerbaijan, their respect to the memory of shahids, determination to do everything in order to liberate occupied lands of Azerbaijan and restore territorial integrity of the country.

A ceremonial guard of honor was lined up at the monument to the Khojaly genocide victims. President Ilham Aliyev laid a wreath at the monument to the Khojaly genocide victims and paid respect to the tragedy victims.

Flowers at the monument were laid by Prime Minister Artur Rasizade, Speaker of the Milli Majlis Ogtay Asadov, Head of the Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev, First Lady of Azerbaijan Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva, Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva. Flowers at the monument were also placed by state and government officials, members of the Milli Majlis, ministers, heads of committees and companies, representatives of the diplomatic corps, heads of religious confessions as well as residents of Khojaly who escaped the bloody massacre. Participants of the nationwide march revered with sorrow the memory of victims of the genocide. They chanted slogans “Justice for Khojaly”, “Do not forget Khojaly”, “Khojaly – genocide of the century”.

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The atrocity committed by Armenians on the night of February 25-26, 1992 in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh will go down forever in history of Azerbaijan with bloody letters. That night, Armenian armed groups with the assistance of the Khankendi-based 366th motorized infantry regiment of the former Soviet army attacked this ancient Azerbaijani town and committed merciless massacre against civilians. Khojaly was weakened by the months-long blockade, and few defenders of the town failed to repulse the attack of heavily-armed Armenian militants. The bloody statistics of the Khojaly genocide is as follows: of three thousand people who were in the town at the moment of assault 613 were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders; 487 people were severely wounded, including 76 children; 1275 persons were taken hostage and subjected to outrageous torture; the fate of 150 people still remains unknown. Eight families were totally exterminated. Even impartial figures are horrifying. These people were mercilessly murdered, tortured and disabled solely because of their ethnic background, only for being Azerbaijanis.

Armenians' punitive action was deliberately planned and its only objective was to partially or completely wipe out peaceful people because of their nationality. These actions are defined as "genocide" under international law, which must be recognized by the world community. As President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev says in his message to the people of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the tragedy's 20th anniversary, the Khojaly genocide, which happened in late 20th century before the eyes of the world and was marked by cruelty and brutality, was the bloodiest page of the aggressive policy of Armenian nationalists.

"The political and legal responsibility for this grave crime directly rests with the then and present leadership of Armenia, separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh," the Head of State says in his message. The government of Azerbaijan has been taking all necessary measures to make the truth about the Khojaly tragedy known to the world and have it recognized as an act of genocide against the Azerbaijani people.

Purposeful activity in this regard started with national leader Heydar Aliyev's returning to political power in Azerbaijan. At the national leader's initiative the political and legal assessment was given to the Khojaly tragedy, February 26 was declared the Day of the Khojaly genocide. Initiated in 2009 by Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, general coordinator for intercultural dialogue of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum Leyla Aliyeva, the "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign, boosted the awareness-increasing activity even more. Thanks to the work carried out as part of this campaign the terrible evidences of the 20 year-old tragedy have been brought to the attention of wide international community, millions of people in all corners of the world became aware of the true face of Armenian nationalists, who stop at nothing including the murder of children for realization of their ridiculous ideas. The Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation recognized Armenians' atrocities as the "mass crime against humanity" and called on the member countries to give the relevant political and legal assessment to this tragedy. The parliaments of Pakistan and Mexico adopted resolutions recognizing this massacre as an act of genocide.

Supported by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, events in commemoration of victims of the Khojaly genocide have been held in 100 countries across the world this year. Participants of these events are given the Foundation-made material, including booklets, photo albums and books on history of Karabakh and on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The events feature documentary films on Armenians' violence, and also include exhibitions of children's drawings. The commemorative events in fraternal Turkey, the UK and several other European states, and in many Muslim countries caused wide public response. President Ilham Aliyev says in his message: "By committing the Khojaly genocide the enemy aimed to scare the Azerbaijani people, prevent them from their struggle for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to annex our lands. However, this appalling tragedy made our people only stronger and mobilized our heroic sons and daughters for a resolute and organized struggle for the holy motherland and national statehood."

The Head of State expressed confidence that “sooner or later the perpetrators of the Khojaly genocide will be brought to justice and get the punishment they deserve, the blood of our shahids will be avenged”.

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All day long on February 26 people have been streaming towards the monument to the Khojaly genocide. Hundreds of thousands of people visited the memorial, placed flowers at its foot and prayed for the peace of the souls of shahids. All of them expressed hope that Azerbaijan's right voice would be heard, Armenians' crimes would be condemned internationally, the perpetrators of the Khojaly massacre would get a fair punishment. They also expressed confidence that the Azerbaijani people would soon liberate all occupied lands and restore the country's territorial integrity.

<http://www.azertag.com/en/node/921783>

AZERBAIJANI OMBUDSPERSON ISSUES STATEMENT ON 21ST ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (19 FEBRUARY, 2013)

Azerbaijan's Commissioner on Human Rights Elmira Suleymanova has issued a statement on the 21st anniversary of Khojaly Genocide. The statement says that the crime committed in Khojaly by the Armenian armed forces together with the 366th motor-rifling regiment of former Soviet troops in Khankandi 21

Azerbaijan's Commissioner on Human Rights Elmira Suleymanova has issued a statement on the 21st anniversary of Khojaly Genocide.

The statement says that the crime committed in Khojaly by the Armenian armed forces together with the 366th motor-rifling regiment of former Soviet troops in Khankandi 21 years ago on the night from 25 to 26 February was one of the unprecedented events not only in the history of Nagorno-Karabakh war but also of the world wars due to its horrible results. "During Khojaly genocide committed by Armenian aggressors against the Azerbaijani people, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 old people were killed within some hours. Some 487 people were injured, 1275 civilians were taken captive. The fate of 150 of persons who have gone missing is still unknown. As a result of this act of genocide some families were completely exterminated, civilians were killed with unbelievable cruelty, the corpses were mutilated and the captives were subjected to severe torture."

The statement says: "The sheer fact that these deeds were elaborated in advance and aimed at total or partial extermination of people on the ground of their national origin confirm that these acts constitute a genocide under international and domestic law. Occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven regions are integral part of the Azerbaijani territory, and the UN Resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884, UNGA Resolution titled "Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" dated March 14, 2008. Resolutions 1416 and 1669 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) confirm the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian military forces and that the Nagorno-Karabakh is now run by separatists, which proves the abovementioned facts once again."

According to the statement, the genocide policy has been witnessed by world community for years. "However, according to the universal norms of international law, inviolability of borders should be respected; violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty is unacceptable. "The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and other relevant international legal acts provide a legal framework for recognizing Khojaly tragedy as genocide."

The Statement is addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, United Nations Security Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission, Council of Europe, OSCE, International Ombudsman Institute, European Ombudsman Institute and Asian Ombudsman Association, International Peace Bureau, International Peace Federation, ombudspersons of foreign countries, embassies of Azerbaijan abroad, as well as the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, and Azerbaijani diaspora organizations.

<http://www.azertag.gov.az/en/node/1057996>

AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENT SIGNS ORDER ON EXECUTION OF ‘JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY’ CAMPAIGN (13 FEBRUARY 2014)

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has signed an order on the execution of the 'Justice for Khojaly' campaign.

Under the presidential order, one million manats will be allocated to the Ministry of Youth and Sport from the President's Reserve Fund for 2014 for the execution of the campaign.

<http://en.trend.az/news/politics/2241771.html>

**HEAD OF AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION APPROVES PLAN
OF EVENTS ON 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE
(1 FEBRUARY 2015)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration has signed an order approving a plan of events on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of Khojaly Genocide.

Under the plan, ceremonies shall be arranged to put wreaths at memorials to Khojaly Genocide victims in Khatai district in Baku, Goranboy district and Aghjakand settlement. Azerbaijan`s embassies, missions and diaspora organizations in foreign countries shall organize commemorative events and take measures towards spreading truth about Khojaly Genocide through the mass media, including television, radio and Internet. According to the plan, commemorative events shall also be held by religious confessions and organizations, in government bodies, theatres, concert and exhibition halls, higher educational institutions and secondary schools across the country.

The plan will also see the provision of aid to shahid families in the cities and districts where Khojaly residents live (Baku, Sumgayit, Ganja, Mingachevir, Shaki, Goranboy, Barda, Sabirabad, Goychay, Zagatala, Oguz and Balakan) with participation of heads of government bodies, MPs and intellectuals. A nationwide minute of silence for victims of Khojaly Genocide shall be observed and national flags shall be lowered across the country at 17.00 on February 26, according to the plan of events.

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**STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF
THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE
KHOJALY GENOCIDE (19 FEBRUARY 2015)**

It has already passed 23 years since Khojaly genocide that is as an integral part of the occupant and genocide policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan which was resulted at the severe violation of international legal norms and principles as well as human rights and freedoms. This tragedy is a terrible evidence of long-lasting ethnic cleansing and genocide policy of Armenian chauvinists and their supporters against Azerbaijan.

At the night from the 25th to 26th February of 1992, the crime committed in Khojaly city by Armenian armed forces together with the 366th moto-artillery regiment of the former Soviet army dislocated in Khankandi must be recognized as genocide from the international law perspective. A lot of heavy military equipment of this regiment also consisting of officers of Armenian origin entered the city and totally destroyed and burned down the houses and social infrastructure. The perpetrators annihilated with a special cruelty the people who were forced to leave the city in horror.

Under the international law, genocide is considered to be one of the gravest crimes. The elements of the crime of genocide are determined in number legal documents. The UN General Assembly Resolution 96 (I) of 11 December 1946 states that genocide, violating the right of people to life, damages human dignity, and deprives the mankind of the material and spiritual values created by human beings. Such acts are contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and universal values.

The international legal definition of the crime of genocide was determined in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the Resolution 260(III) of the UN General Assembly of 9 December 1948. The commitment of criminal acts, planned in advance and aimed at mass annihilation of people on the ground of their nationality during the Khojaly genocide constitutes this crime as genocide. During the aggression against Azerbaijan all elements of the crime of genocide stated in the abovementioned Convention were applied. Under international law, the genocide offenders should be prosecuted and punished. However, unfortunately, though the commitment of such terrible acts of genocide against the Azerbaijani civilians, these facts, including Khojaly genocide have been not yet legally assessed, the planners, organizers and the committers of this crime were not prosecuted and punished, no relevant measure has been taken yet.

Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven regions occupied by Armenia are integral part of Azerbaijan. This is re-affirmed once again by the UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884 from 1993, UNGA Resolution on "Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" dated on March 14, 2008, Resolution 1416 from 2005 and Recommendation 1669 from 2009 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe confirming the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian military forces, and governing of Nagorno-Karabakh by separatists. As a consequence, over one million people became refugees and IDPs, whose rights and freedoms were severely violated.

Armenia, being accepted as a member to the Council of Europe, has undertaken several international obligations according to the Opinion No. 221 of the Parliamentary Assembly, including the obligations to pursue efforts to settle the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh by peaceful means only and to settle international and local disputes by peaceful means and according to the principles of international law, resolutely rejecting any threatened use of force against its neighbors. Nonetheless, continuation of the occupation still creates obstacles to the peace as well as sustainable development in the region and the ceasefire is being regularly violated.

The European Parliament Resolution of 23 October, 2013 on Nagorno-Karabakh also re-affirms the support of just position of our State by the international community and the fact of occupation. For the first time this document denotes the importance of the resolution of this conflict in comply with UN Security Council above shown resolutions of 1993 that requires immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of all occupant forces out of the territories of Azerbaijan. Regrettably, no measure has been taken in this direction as well and the historical territories of our country still remain under occupation.

Our National Leader Heydar Aliyev unveiled the essence of the Khojaly massacre, and in February 1994 the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave legal and political recognition to this tragedy. The country President, Ilham Aliyev underlined resolutely the necessity of this conflict resolution only in the frame of territorial integrity of the country as well as emphasizes the necessity of withdrawal of occupant forces from the Azerbaijani territories.

“The Action Plan of Events on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of Khojaly Genocide” was approved, according to which press conferences, commemorations, enlightening the relevant information through foreign mass media and TV channels and devoting special relevant lessons at education institutions were considered.

In her speeches at the esteemed international events, the Azerbaijani Ombudsman attaches great importance to the delivery and promotion of truths. In March of 2014, during the 25th session of UN Human Rights Council dedicated to the 65th anniversary of the Convention on Genocide held in Geneva, the Statement of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman on the prevention of genocide was deposited among the official documents of organization, placed in the web page and was distributed to the participants in 250 copies.

Recently, in terms of international law, there is a certain revival regarding the promotion and recognition of our just position all over the world and massacre committed in Khojaly is acknowledged. Legislative bodies of the US States, namely, California, Massachusetts, Texas, New-Jersey, Maine, New Mexico, Arkansas, Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida and Mississippi had also passed the related resolutions and demanded bringing the offenders of Khojaly genocide to the criminal responsibility. Also, West Virginia State’s House of Representatives passed a resolution on the Khojaly tragedy. This Resolution commemorates that the Khojaly tragedy is a part of the military aggression carried out by the Armenian military troops in Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan since 1988.

Already, the Parliaments of Canada, Mexico, Columbia, Peru, Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, the Czech Republic and Jordan also recognized the Khojaly genocide.

Embassies, diplomatic missions, Diaspora organizations and communities of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in different countries, hold numerous events devoted to Khojaly genocide.

American political analyst Raul Lowery Contreras in his article published at online newspaper “The Hill” wrote about this bloody event as such: “Twenty-three years ago, Armenian soldiers supported by Russian troops attacked an army-less newly independent Azerbaijan and seized a large portion of the country. Armenia expelled almost 1 million Azeris from their homes in the conquered territory while committing a massacre of an entire Azeri community in the town of Khojaly. Eyewitness American and European journalists described the bloody scene of massacre littered with disfigured bodies of men, women and children in dispatches published at the time. One word is applicable in this case: genocide.”

The Organization of Islamic Conference was the first international organization that recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as genocide. The aim of the campaign “Justice for Khojaly” organized by the Youth Forum of OIC and carried out in over 40 countries of the world, is also to aware the international community about this bloody event.

Offenders of genocide should be punished. Pursuant to the Articles 5 and 6 of the Genocide Convention states that “the Contracting Parties undertake to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide. Persons charged with genocide shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

The Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity of 26 November 1968, states that no statutory limitation shall apply to the crime of genocide, irrespective of the date of its commission, which allows to bring the persons guilty of genocide to the criminal responsibility.

Without double standards and in comply with the norms and principles of international law, the special international commission should investigate this crime, also, the corresponding international organizations should recognize this crime as an act of genocide as well as should impose sanctions on the perpetrators of this crime. I call the international organizations to condemn this genocide and to increase efforts to punish the offenders of this crime as soon as possible demonstrating the impartiality.

We do once again declare Armenia should fulfill the provisions of international legal documents on this conflict, liberate the Azerbaijani captives and hostages, also the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the violated rights of refugees and IDPs should be restored as well as they must return to their homes and the criminals killed innocent people and committed genocide should be prosecuted and punished before the trial very soon.

Elmira Suleymanova
Commissioner for Human Rights
(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

19. 02. 2015

The Statement is addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, United Nations Security Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission, Council of Europe, Council of Europe, OSCE, International Ombudsman Institute, European Ombudsman Institute and Asian Ombudsman Association, International Peace Bureau, International Peace Federation, ombudspersons of foreign countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan abroad, as well as the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, and organizations of the Azerbaijani Diaspora.

<http://www.ombudsman.gov.az/view.php?lang=en&menu=95&id=1735>

**PLAN OF EVENTS ON 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE
APPROVED (3 FEBRUARY 2016)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration has issued an order approving the plan of events on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The plan envisages laying wreaths at the Khojaly memorials in Khatai district in Baku, in Goranboy region and Agjakand village, holding press conferences, commemorative ceremonies at embassies, missions and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, ensuring media coverage of these events both within the country and abroad.

Under the plan, religious confessions and organizations operating in the country will hold commemorative ceremonies for victims of the Khojaly genocide.

On February 26, first lessons at schools will be dedicated to the Khojaly tragedy and a minute`s silence will be held 17.00 throughout the country to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly genocide.

National flags of Azerbaijan will be lowered in the country that day as a sign of mourning.

AZERTAC

AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENT SIGNS ORDER ON 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (24 JANUARY 2017)

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has signed an order on the 25th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The Presidential Administration is due to prepare a plan of events on the 25th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide and ensure its implementation.

On February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces, together with the 366th infantry regiment of Soviet troops, stationed in Khankendi, committed an act of genocide against the population of the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. As many as 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 old people were killed as a result of the massacre. Eight families were totally exterminated, 130 children lost one parent and 25 children lost both. A total of 487 civilians became disabled as a result of the onslaught. Some 1,275 innocent residents were taken hostage, while the fate of 150 people still remains unknown.

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AZERBAIJAN APPROVES PLAN OF EVENTS ON 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE (27 JANUARY 2017)

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration has issued an order approving the plan of events on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The plan of events has been signed in order for the execution the presidential order dated 24 January 2017 in this respect, APA reported.

The plan of events include laying wreaths at the Khojaly memorials in Khatai district in Baku, Goranboy district, and the Aghjakand village, paying tribute to the Alley of Martyrs, Khojaly IDPs' message to the international community, commemorative ceremonies at embassies, missions and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, and ensuring media coverage of these events both within the country and abroad.

Under the plan, religious confessions and organizations operating in the country will hold commemorative ceremonies for victims of the Khojaly genocide.

State officials, MPs, and intellectuals will hold meetings in cities and districts temporarily inhabited by Khojaly IDPs.

On February 26, first lessons at schools will be dedicated to the Khojaly tragedy and a minute's silence will be held 5.00pm throughout the country to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly genocide. National flags of Azerbaijan will be lowered in the country that day as a sign of mourning.

On February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces, together with the 366th infantry regiment of Soviet troops, stationed in Khankendi, committed an act of genocide against the population of the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. As many as 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 old people were killed as a result of the massacre. Eight families were totally exterminated, 130 children lost one parent and 25 children lost both. A total of 487 civilians became disabled as a result of the onslaught. Some 1,275 innocent residents were taken hostage, while the fate of 150 people still remains unknown.

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**THE STATEMENT
OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY
GENOCIDE (1 FEBRUARY 2017)**

Twenty five years have already passed since the Khojaly genocide as an integral part of the Armenian aggressive and genocide policy against Azerbaijan resulted in severe and gross violation of international legal norms and principles, as well as of human rights and freedoms, that entered in the world history as a bloody tragedy. It is another evidence of long-lasting ethnic cleansing and genocide policy of the Armenian nationalists and their supporters against the Azerbaijani people.

At the night from the 25th to 26th February of 1992, the crime committed in Khojaly city by Armenian armed forces together with the 366th moto-artillery regiment of the former Soviet army dislocated in Khankendi must be recognized as genocide from the international law perspective. A lot of heavy military equipment of this regiment entered the city, the perpetrators annihilated with a special cruelty the people who were forced to leave the city in horror and razed the city, totally destroyed and burned down the houses and social infrastructure.

During the Khojaly genocide, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 older people were killed; hundreds of people were severely injured; 1275 people were taken hostages. 8 families were totally exterminated, 25 children lost both, whereas 130 children lost one parent; captives and hostages were subjected to merciless torture. Human rights of those people, especially the fundamental right to life, were grossly violated.

As a result of ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia who expanded the scope of military aggression against Azerbaijan by perpetrating this tragedy and occupied Lachin, Kalbajar, Aghdam, Jabrail, Fuzuli, Gubadli, Zangilan rayons beyond the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is integral part of Azerbaijan, 20,000 our citizens were killed, 20 percent of country territories were occupied.

This massive killing of human beings, committed by the Armenian invaders, unambiguously, is an act of genocide due to its unimaginable cruelty and tortures. Hence, under international law, genocide is considered to be one of the gravest crimes and the elements of this crime are determined in a number of legal documents. The UN General Assembly Resolution 96 (I) dated 11 December 1946, states that genocide, violating the right of people to life, damages human dignity, and deprives the mankind of the material and spiritual values created by human beings, is contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations, as well as to universal values and the world community condemns it.

The international legal definition of the crime of genocide was determined in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the Resolution 260 (III) of the UN General Assembly of 9 December 1948. The commitment of criminal acts, planned in advance and aimed at mass annihilation of people on the ground of their nationality in Khojaly constitutes this crime as genocide. During the aggression against Azerbaijan, all elements of the crime of genocide stated in the mentioned Convention were applied. However, unfortunately, though the commitment of such terrible acts of genocide against the Azerbaijani civilians, all these facts, including Khojaly genocide has not yet get its legal-political assessment, the planners, organizers and the committers of this crimes were not prosecuted and punished, no action has been taken.

Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven regions are an integral part of Azerbaijan. This is re-affirmed once again by the international law, as well as by the UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884 from 1993, UNGA Resolution on "Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" dated on 14 March, 2008, Resolution 1416 from 2005 and Recommendation 1669 from 2009 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe confirming the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian military forces, and governing of Nagorno-Karabakh by separatist regime. As a consequence, over one million of the Azerbaijani people became refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), whose fundamental rights and freedoms were severely violated.

Armenia, being accepted as a member to the Council of Europe, has undertaken several international obligations according to the Opinion No. 221 of the Parliamentary Assembly, such as to pursue efforts to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by only peaceful means; according to the principles of international law to settle international and local disputes also by peaceful means by resolutely rejecting any use of force and threatening against its neighbours. However, those obligations have not been fulfilled; the Armenian side regularly violates the ceasefire regime and creates obstacles to the peace in the region demonstrating unconstructive position.

Since 2 April 2016, the group of Armenian armed forces abruptly started intensive shootings from the occupied Azerbaijani territories, as well as from the territory of the Republic of Armenia on the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, numerous dwellings, schools and other social objects along the frontline, also the positions of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces troops on the line of contact, by heavy artillery and big caliber weapons. As a result, civilians, including women and children were killed and severely injured. Thus, international legal documents, including the provisions of the Geneva Conventions were grossly violated as a result of these provocations. This was observed by the representatives of international organizations and international journalists visiting our country.

The European Parliament Resolution of 23 October, 2013 on Nagorno-Karabakh also re-affirms the support of just position of our State by the international community and the fact of occupation. This document denotes once again the importance of the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in conformity with the UN Security Council relevant Resolutions of 1993 that requires immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of all occupant forces out of the territories of Azerbaijan. Regrettably, no relevant actions have been taken yet and the historical territories of Azerbaijan are still under the occupation.

Recently in the 9th paragraph of Resolution adopted following the presentation of the Head of Ukrainian delegation, the Head of Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media Vladimir Aryev on "Attacks on journalists and freedom of media in Europe" delivered in plenary session of PACE, the fact that Nagorno-Karabakh belongs to Azerbaijan has been once more confirmed. The document stresses the separatist essence of regimes keeping under control such areas and calls these areas completely opaque zones where lawlessness reigns.

Our National Leader Heydar Aliyev unveiled the essence of Khojaly genocide and in February, 1994, the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave legal and political recognition to this crime.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev underlines resolutely the necessity of this conflict resolution only in the frame of territorial integrity of the country, as well as emphasizes the necessity of withdrawal of occupant forces from the Azerbaijani territories and prosecution of perpetrators of the genocide.

According to the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the 25th Anniversary of Khojaly Genocide, plan of actions was approved and actions are being implemented.

"Justice for Khojaly" international campaign initiated by Leyla Aliyeva, the Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, is one of the purposeful measures taken for dissemination in the world of the true information about the Khojaly genocide and recognition of this tragedy as an act of genocide committed against the people of Azerbaijan. Thus, relevant decisions are being made on this genocide act in several countries.

Within last years, the genocide policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan is condemned all over the world; bloody crime committed in Khojaly is getting recognized in compliance with the norms of international law.

To the point, the Parliaments of Mexico, Columbia, Peru, Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, the Czech Republic, Sudan, Jordan and Honduras, Guatemala and Panama, Slovenia and Djibouti already recognized the crime in Khojaly as genocide from the perspective of the international legal norms.

In addition, twenty one States of the USA namely, the State of Massachusetts, Texas, New-Jersey, Maine, New Mexico, Arkansas, Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, Mississippi, West Virginia, Indiana, Utah, Nebraska, Hawaii, Montana and Arizona have already also passed the related Resolutions.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) was the first international organization that recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as genocide. So, the aim of the Campaign “Justice for Khojaly” organized by the Youth Forum of OIC, which carried out in over 40 countries of the world, is also to make the international community aware about this bloody event.

However, it makes indignant and regretful that legal-political assessment has not yet been given to the Khojaly genocide at the international level.

Moreover, activists of the both countries made a common decision and created Armenian-Azerbaijan Peace Platform. The platform aims at peaceful resolution of Armenian Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in accordance with international law principles.

In the days of the 25th anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy paying tribute to the memory of martyrs I declare that this crime shall be investigated by the special international commission and recognized as an act of genocide and sanctions shall be imposed on the perpetrators of this crime in compliance with the norms and principles of international law and without double standards. I urge the respected international organizations to condemn this act of genocide and to increase efforts for just punishment of the offenders of this crime as soon as possible.

We do once again declare that the Armenian side should fulfil the decisions following from the international legal documents on this conflict, restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, liberate the Azerbaijani captives and hostages, also restore the violated rights of refugees and IDPs who shall be returned to their homes. The criminals who killed innocent people and committed genocide should be soon prosecuted and punished before the tribunal.

Elmira Suleymanova
The Commissioner for Human Rights
(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

01.02.2017

The Statement is addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, United Nations Security Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNESCO, Organization of Islamic Cooperation European Commission, Council of Europe, OSCE, International and European Ombudsman Institutes, Asian Ombudsman Association, International Peace Bureau, ombudsmen of different countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan abroad, as well as the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, and organizations of the Azerbaijani Diaspora

**PLAN OF EVENTS ON 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF KHOJALY GENOCIDE
APPROVED (12 FEBRUARY 2018)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev has issued an order approving the plan of events on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The plan envisages laying wreaths at the Khojaly memorials in Khatai district in Baku, in Goranboy region and Agjakand village, holding press conferences, commemorative ceremonies at embassies, missions and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, ensuring media coverage of these events both within the country and abroad.

Under the plan, religious confessions and organizations operating in the country will hold commemorative ceremonies for victims of the Khojaly genocide.

On February 26, first lessons at schools will be dedicated to the Khojaly tragedy and a minute's silence will be held at 17.00 throughout the country to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly genocide.

National flags of Azerbaijan will be lowered in the country that day as a sign of mourning.

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**THE STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
(OMBUDSMAN) OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE 26TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY GENOCIDE (14 FEBRUARY 2018)**

The crime committed in Khojaly city by Armenian armed forces together with the 366th moto-artillery regiment of the former Soviet army dislocated in Khankendi at the night from the 25th to 26th February of 1992, must be recognized as genocide from the international law perspective. A lot of heavy military equipment suddenly entered the city, the criminals annihilated with a special cruelty the people who were forced to leave the city, totally destroyed and burned down the houses and social infrastructure.

During the Khojaly genocide, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly were killed; hundreds of people were severely injured; 1275 persons were taken hostages. 8 families were totally exterminated, 25 children lost both, whereas 130 children lost one parent; captives and hostages were subjected to merciless torture. Fundamental human rights of those people, first of all, the right to life, were grossly violated.

This tragedy once more confirmed ethnic cleansing, genocide and deportation policy of Armenian nationalists and their supporters against the Azerbaijani people, lasting for a long time, the purpose of which was to banish our compatriots from their historical native lands and establish "Great Armenia" state on those territories. Among these tragedies it is necessary to emphasize the genocide committed against the Azerbaijanis on March 31, 1918, distinguished for its serious consequences in the world history and the 100th anniversary of which we commemorate this year.

As a result of ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia that expanded the scope of military aggression against Azerbaijan by committing the Khojaly genocide and occupied Nagorno-Karabakh which is an integral part of Azerbaijan and adjacent seven rayons, 20,000 our citizens were killed, 20 percent of country territories were occupied, more than one million our compatriots became refugees and IDPs, their rights were severely violated. It should be noted that during the occupation, besides Khojaly, the massacres in Karkijahan, Malibayli, Gushchular, Garadagli, Agdaban villages and other settlements in Azerbaijan were committed.

Our National Leader Heydar Aliyev had a special urge on the Khojaly genocide in 1994, and in February of the same year the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave legal and political recognition to the Khojaly genocide.

Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven regions are an integral part of Azerbaijan. This is re-affirmed once again by the international law, as well as by the UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884 from 1993, UNGA Resolution on "Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" dated on 14 March, 2008, Resolution 1416 from 2005 and Recommendation 1690 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as well as European Parliament's Resolution on Nagorno-Karabakh from October 23, 2013.

However, the Armenian side regularly violates the ceasefire regime and creates obstacles to the peace in the region demonstrating unconstructive position as always.

The genocide policy of Armenia against the civilian population is still continuing up to now that results in the killing of civilians, including children.

The Azerbaijani side strives for a peaceful settlement of this aggression continuing for about 30 years and for restoration of peace. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly stated the necessity of resolution of the conflict within the territorial integrity of our country in accordance with the norms and principles of international law, withdrawal of occupying forces from the Azerbaijani lands and his just position from the tribunes of influential international organizations, including the UN General Assembly.

As previous years, for bringing of this genocide to the attention of the world community the Plan of Actions on commemorating the 26th anniversary of the Khojaly Genocide was affirmed by the relevant Decree and is being implemented.

“Justice for Khojaly” international campaign carried out in many countries and cities at the initiative of Leyla Aliyeva, the Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, plays an important role in the recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as a genocide act, and the genocide committed by the Armenians against the Azerbaijanis is condemned in many countries.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) was the first international organization that recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as a genocide.

The Parliaments of Mexico, Columbia, Peru, Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, the Czech Republic, Sudan, Jordan and Honduras, Guatemala and Panama, Slovenia, Djibouti and Paraguay already recognized the crime in Khojaly basing on the international legal norms.

In addition, twenty two States of the USA namely, the State of Massachusetts, Texas, New-Jersey, Maine, New Mexico, Arkansas, Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, Mississippi, West Virginia, Indiana, Utah, Nebraska, Hawaii, Montana, Arizona, Idaho and Nevada have also passed the related Resolutions.

This massive killing of human beings, committed by the Armenian invaders in Khojaly is an act of genocide and one of the most severe crimes. Hence, the UN General Assembly Resolution 96 (I) dated 11 December 1946, states that genocide, violating the right of people to life, damages human dignity, and deprives the mankind of the material and spiritual values created by human beings, is contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations, as well as to universal values and the world community condemns it.

The international legal definition of the crime of genocide was determined in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the Resolution 260 (III) of the UN General Assembly of 9 December 1948. The commitment of criminal acts, planned in advance and aimed at mass annihilation of people on the ground of their nationality in Khojaly constitutes this crime as genocide. During the aggression against Azerbaijan, all elements of the crime of genocide stated in the mentioned Convention were applied. However, unfortunately, the genocide acts against the Azerbaijani civilians throughout the history, including Khojaly genocide has not yet get its international legal-political assessment, organizers and the committers of this crimes have not been prosecuted and punished, no action has been taken in this regard.

Paying tribute to the memory of martyrs and those who died during that tragedy and guiding with the above mentioned, as well as norms and principles of international law, I declare that this crime shall be investigated, by the special international commission, recognized as an act of genocide by competent international organizations and sanctions shall be imposed on the perpetrators of this crime in compliance with the norms and principles of international law and without double standards. I urge to all states and international organizations to recognize this act of genocide in the name of justice and to consolidate and increase efforts for just punishment of its perpetrators.

The Khojaly genocide committed 26 years ago should be legally and politically assessed at the international level, the Armenian side should fulfill the decisions following from the international legal documents on this conflict, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the violated rights of refugees and IDPs should be restored, the Azerbaijani captives and hostages should be liberated, and they should return to their homes. Also the criminals who killed innocent civilians and committed genocide should be prosecuted before the tribunal and punished.

Elmira Suleymanova
The Commissioner for Human Rights
(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

14.02.2018

The Statement is addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, United Nations Security Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF, European Union, Council of Europe, OSCE, International and European Ombudsman Institutes, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Ombudsman Association of members States of this Organization, European Network of Ombudsmen for Children, International Peace Bureau,

ombudsmen of different countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan abroad, as well as the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan and organizations of the Azerbaijani Diaspora.

President Ilham Aliyev attended ceremony to commemorate Khojaly genocide victims (26 February 2018)

On the night of February 25-26 1992, Armenian occupants committed one of the bloodiest crimes in the history of mankind in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly.

Thousands of Baku residents arrived at the Khojaly memorial on February 26 to pay tribute to victims of the genocide on its 26th anniversary.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and his wife Mehriban Aliyeva attended the commemorative ceremony.

A guard of honor was arranged near the memorial.

President Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the monument.

First Vice President Mehriban Aliyeva, Prime Minister Artur Rasizade, Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov, head of the Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev, put flowers at the monument.

The commemorative ceremony was attended by state and government officials, MPs, ministers, heads of committees and companies, leaders of religious confessions, as well as Khojaly genocide survivors.

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**President Ilham Aliyev signs order on 27th anniversary of Khojaly genocide
(February 5, 2019)**

President Ilham Aliyev has signed an order on the 27th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

Under the order, the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration will develop a plan of events on the 27th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide and ensure its implementation.

On February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces committed an act of genocide against the population of the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. As a result of the genocide, 613 people were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly, 487 people became disabled, and 1275 residents were taken hostage.

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**Plan of events on 27th anniversary of Khojaly genocide approved
(February 11, 2019)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration Ramiz Mehdiyev has issued an order approving the plan of events on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The plan envisages laying wreaths at the Khojaly memorials in Khatai district in Baku, in Goranboy region and Agjakand village, holding press conferences, commemorative ceremonies at embassies, missions and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, ensuring media coverage of these events both within the country and abroad.

Under the plan, religious confessions and organizations operating in the country will hold commemorative ceremonies for victims of the Khojaly genocide.

On February 26, first lessons at schools will be dedicated to the Khojaly tragedy and a minute's silence will be held at 17.00 throughout the country to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly genocide.

National flags of Azerbaijan will be lowered in the country that day as a sign of mourning.

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**The Statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of
Azerbaijan on the 27th anniversary of the Khojaly Genocide
(February 18, 2019)**

Twenty seven years pass from the Khojaly Genocide, an integral part of the long-lasting aggression and ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan, resulted in mass and gross violation of international norms and principles, human rights and freedoms, engraved into the world history as a bloody tragedy. This massacre is another horrible evidence of the genocide policy of the Armenian nationalists and their supporters against the Azerbaijani people.

Thus the crime committed in Khojaly city of Azerbaijan at the night from the 25th to the 26th of February jointly by the Armenian armed forces and the 366 Motorized Rifle regiment of the former Soviet army dislocated in Khankendi city should be assessed as genocide from the international law perspective. A great number of heavy military equipment of this regiment were suddenly deployed to the city, the perpetrators annihilated mercilessly the civilian population that were forced to leave the city in horror, residency objects and social infrastructure were razed and burned down.

During the Khojaly Genocide committed 27 years ago, surrounded by the Armenian armed forces, 613 citizens, including 106 women, 63 children, 70 elderly were killed because of their national origin; hundreds of civilians were severely injured; 1275 people were taken hostages. 8 families were totally exterminated, 130 children lost one, whereas 25 children lost both parents, at the same time numerous captives and hostages were subjected to merciless torture. Thus, first of all, the right to life and other fundamental rights of these people were grossly violated.

This tragedy proved once again the deliberately ethnic cleansing and genocide policies continued for a long-lasting period time by the Armenian terrorists and their supporters against the Azerbaijani people, with the purpose to drive our nationals out of their historical lands and to create "Great Armenia" also by seizure of ancient Azerbaijani territories.

This massive killing of human beings in Khojaly by the Armenian aggressors is a fact of genocide and one of the gravest crimes against humanity. Thus, the UN General Assembly Resolution 96(I) states, genocide is a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups, shocks the conscience of mankind and is contrary to the moral law, the spirit and aims of the UN, and the world community condemns it.

The international legal definition of the crime of genocide is contained in the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the Resolution 260 (III) of the UN General Assembly of 9 December 1948. The commitment of criminal acts, planned in advance and aimed at mass murder of people on the ground of their nationality in Khojaly classifies this crime as genocide. During the aggression against Azerbaijan, all the elements of the crime of genocide stated in the mentioned Convention were applied. However, such terrible acts of genocide against the Azerbaijani civilians, all these facts, including Khojaly Genocide has not yet received legal and political assessment, the planners, organizers and perpetrators of these crimes were not prosecuted and punished, no action has been taken for this purpose.

As a result of ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia that expanded the scope of military aggression against Azerbaijan by committing the Khojaly Genocide and occupied Nagorno-Karabakh which is an integral part of Azerbaijan and adjacent seven rayons, 20,000 of our citizens were killed, 20 percent of country territories were occupied, more than one million people became refugees and IDPs, their rights were severely and massively violated. Within the invasion, besides Khojaly, the Armenian nationalists and terrorists also committed massacres in Karkijahan, Malibayli, Gushchular, Garadagli, Agdaban villages and other settlements in Azerbaijan.

Our National Leader Heydar Aliyev had a special urge on the Khojaly Genocide in 1994, and in February of the same year Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave legal and political assessment to this event.

The occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven rayons are proved to be the integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the international law, as well as UN Security Council Resolutions 822,

853, 874, 884 from 1993, UN General Assembly Resolution on “Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan” dated on 14 March, 2008, Resolution 1416 from 2005 and Recommendation 1690 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as well as European Parliament's Resolution on Nagorno-Karabakh from October 23, 2013.

However, the Armenian side regularly violates the ceasefire regime and creates obstacles to the peace in the region demonstrating unconstructive position as always. The genocide policy of Armenia against our civilian population is still continuing up to now that results in the killing of civilians, including children.

The Azerbaijani side strives for putting an end to this aggression continuing for about 30 years and for peaceful settlement of the conflict. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly stated the necessity of resolution of the conflict within the territorial integrity of our country in accordance with the norms and principles of international law, withdrawal of occupying forces from the Azerbaijani lands, returning of IDPs to their homes, from the tribunes of influential international organizations, including the UN General Assembly. It has been reflected in the relevant decisions of international organizations, including the Resolution of European Parliament adopted on December 12, 2018, stressing upon the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

The Order on the 27th anniversary of Khojaly Genocide dated February 5, 2019 was signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and implementation of relevant measures was considered. As previous years, this year, the relevant Order on Plan of Actions on the commemoration of the 27th anniversary of the Khojaly Genocide was approved with the purpose of directing the focus of the world community to this tragedy and is being implemented.

“Justice for Khojaly” International Awareness Campaign carried out with the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in many countries and cities plays an important role in the recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as an act of genocide in the world.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the first international organization that recognized Armenia as an aggressor and Khojaly tragedy as genocide.

The Parliaments of Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, the Czech Republic, Sudan, Jordan, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Slovenia, Djibouti and Paraguay already recognized the massacre in Khojaly according to the international legal norms.

In addition, legislative bodies of 22 States of the USA, including Massachusetts, Texas, New-Jersey, Maine, New Mexico, Arkansas, Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, Mississippi, West Virginia, Indiana, Utah, Nebraska, Hawaii, Montana, Arizona, Idaho and Nevada have adopted relevant Resolutions.

However, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has not yet been resolved in framework of the norms and principles of international law, territorial integrity and sovereignty of our country within the internationally recognized borders, despite four Resolutions of the UN Security Council and the decisions of the OIC, OSCE, Non-Aligned Movement and relevant decisions of other international organizations.

On the eve of the 27th anniversary of the Khojaly Genocide, commemorating the blessed memory of those killed in the tragedy, our martyrs with deepest sorrow, guiding the above mentioned, as well as norms and principles of international law, I resolutely declare that this crime shall be investigated by the special international commission and recognized as an act of genocide by competent international organizations, necessary punitive measures shall be imposed on the perpetrators of this crime. Once again I urge all the states and international organizations to recognize this act of genocide in the name of justice, to consolidate and increase efforts for punishment of its perpetrators.

Impunity of persons committed such kind of acts is contrary to the targeted universal priorities, UN Principles and Sustainable Development Goals.

The Khojaly Genocide should be legally and politically assessed by the international organizations, the Armenian side should fulfill the requirements set out in the international legal documents on this conflict, the calls to peace and justice, restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the violated rights of refugees and IDPs, liberate the captives and hostages, they shall be returned to their homes, also the criminals who killed innocent, civilian people should be soon prosecuted and punished before the tribunal.

Elmira Suleymanova

The Commissioner for Human Rights

(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

18.02.2019

The Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, to the heads of UNICEF, UNESCO, European Union, Council of Europe, OSCE, to International and European Ombudsman Institutes, Asian Ombudsman Association, OIC and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, European Network of Ombudsmen for Children, International Peace Bureau, ombudsmen of different countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan and foreign embassies in our republic, the Azerbaijani Diaspora organizations.

**Nationwide march to commemorate 27th anniversary of Khojaly genocide held in Baku.
President Ilham Aliyev joined the march
(February 26, 2019)**

A nationwide march has been held in Baku to commemorate the 27th anniversary of Khojaly genocide, one of the bloodiest crimes in the history of mankind. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, first lady Mehriban Aliyeva and family members attended the march.

The nationwide march, which began from the Azadlyg Square in Khatai district, involves ten thousands of people. They gathered to pay tribute to victims of Khojaly tragedy and draw the world community's attention to this crime against humanity, which was committed by the Armenian fascists.

With President Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva in the front row, the marchers started moving in the direction of the Khojaly memorial in Khatai district.

Thousands of young people gathered along the avenues and streets that the marchers are moving. They hold portraits of innocent victims of the bloody event – slaughtered children, women and elders – photos depicting abominable scenes of slaughter, placards demanding to bring to account and punish perpetrators of the tragedy and to recognize this genocide at an international level, as well as placards with names and surnames of victims. “The world must recognize Khojaly genocide”, “Justice for Khojaly”, “Do not forget Khojaly”, “No to Armenian fascism”, “Khojaly genocide -27” and other slogans are displayed on large monitors along the streets, and on placards on building walls and balconies.

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A ceremonial guard of honor was lined up around the memorial.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the memorial and paid tribute to Khojaly victims.

First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva, Prime Minister Novruz Mammadov, Speaker of the Milli Majlis Ogtay Asadov, Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva, Arzu Aliyeva laid flowers at the monument.

State and government officials, members of the Milli Majlis, ministers, heads of committees and companies, representatives of the diplomatic corps, heads of religious confessions, as well as Khojaly genocide survivors also placed flowers at the memorial.

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A Russian delegation also attended the nationwide march.

President Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva met with the Russian delegation and talked to them.

President Ilham Aliyev then was interviewed by the Russian Rossiya-24 TV channel.

X X X

The name of Khojaly, which was wiped off the face of the earth in just one night, is now mentioned along with Katyn, Lidice and Songmy.

This nationwide march is a climax of large-scale work carried out by Azerbaijan in order to make the truth about Khojaly genocide known to the world and convince the international community that if the perpetrators of this genocide remain unpunished, this may lead to a repetition of such tragedies in any place across the globe. The march showed the Azerbaijani people's unity, their respect for martyrs as well as their eagerness to do their utmost to liberate the occupied territories and restore the country's territorial integrity.

The atrocity committed by Armenians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh on the night of 25-26 February 1992 went down in the history of Azerbaijan as a bloody page. That night helped by the

Soviet Union's Khankandi-based 366th motor rifle regiment, the Armenian armed forces massacred innocent people in this ancient Azerbaijani town.

The statistics of Khojaly genocide are as follows: of 3,000 people who were in the town at the moment of the attack 613 were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders; 487 people were severely wounded, including 76 children; 1,275 people were captured and subjected to unprecedented torture; the fate of 197 people still remains unknown. Eight families were totally annihilated. All these people were slaughtered, tortured and disabled solely because of their ethnic background, only for being Azerbaijanis.

This genocidal act by the Armenians was deliberately planned and its only objective was to partially or completely wipe out civilians because of their nationality. These actions are defined as genocide under international law, which must be recognized by the world community.

The real essence of this genocide, which was committed in front of the eyes of the world, was uncovered only after national leader Heydar Aliyev's coming to political power. On initiative of the national leader Khojaly genocide was given a political and legal assessment, and February 26 was declared "Day of Khojaly Genocide". Launched by Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva in 2008, "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign boosted the awareness-raising efforts even more. The campaign has contributed to increasing the international community's awareness of the truth about this genocide, exposing the Armenian nationalists who resort to any violence, including the murder of children, in order to reach their ridiculous and heinous plans. As a result of systematic work, what happened in Khojaly was recognized as a genocidal act by the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as well as the parliaments of Mexico, Pakistan, Czech Republic, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Sudan, Guatemala and Djibouti. The parliaments of Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Jordan, Slovenia and Scotland, as well as executive and legislative bodies of 22 American states recognized Khojaly events as a massacre.

As in previous years the Heydar Aliyev Foundation continued to support the organization of Khojaly commemorative events across the world. This included commemorative rallies in Turkey, USA, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Georgia and the Netherlands, commemorative events, conferences, exhibitions and contests in a number of other countries.

AZERTAC

**Plan of events on 28th anniversary of Khojaly genocide approved
(February 12, 2020)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration Samir Nuriyev has issued an order approving the plan of events on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The plan envisages laying wreaths at the Khojaly memorials in Khatai district in Baku, in Goranboy region and Agjakand village, holding press conferences, commemorative ceremonies at embassies, missions and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, ensuring media coverage of these events both within the country and abroad.

Under the plan, religious confessions and organizations operating in the country will hold commemorative ceremonies for victims of the Khojaly genocide.

On February 26, first lessons at schools will be dedicated to the Khojaly tragedy and a minute's silence will be held at 17.00 throughout the country to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly genocide.

National flags of Azerbaijan will be lowered in the country that day as a sign of mourning.

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Statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the 28th anniversary of Khojaly Genocide (February 19, 2020)

On the night from February 25 to 26, 1992, as a continuation of Armenia's long-lasting aggression and ethnic cleansing policy against Azerbaijan, the Armenian armed forces occupied Khojaly with the assistance of the 366th motorized regiment of the former USSR and committed an act of genocide against civil population. 28 years have passed since the Khojaly tragedy.

During this genocide, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly, were murdered with special cruelty and 487 people got various injuries because of their ethnic belonging – being an Azerbaijani. At the same time, eight families were completely annihilated, 130 children lost one of their parents, and 25 children lost both parents, 1275 were subjected to tortures being captured and taken hostage, the fate of 150 of them, including 68 women and 26 children, is still unknown.

In addition, more than 170 million USD was inflicted on the Azerbaijani state and its citizens in connection with the occupation of Khojaly.

In February 1994, at the initiative of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev, Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave a political-legal assessment of Khojaly Genocide; February 26 is announced as the "Day of Khojaly Genocide".

According to the UN General Assembly Resolution 96 (I) of December 11, 1946 and Resolution 260 (III) of December 9, 1948, "On the Prevention and Punishment of Crime of Genocide" this mass killing of human beings committed by the Armenian aggressors in Khojaly is a genocide.

Genocide in Khojaly is not the first systematic crime committed against Azerbaijanis, but is the gravest crime of genocide committed by Armenia against the peaceful Azerbaijani population during the occupation war against Azerbaijan. Previously, alongside with the occupation of Baganis Ayrim village of Gazakh district of Azerbaijan bordering Armenia, Imarat Gharvand, Tugh, Selaketin, Akhullu, Khojavand, Jamilli, Nebiler, Mesheli, Hasanabad, Karkijahan, Gaybali, Malibeyli, Upper and Lower Gushchular villages of Nagorno-Karabakh where Azerbaijanis lived, the civil Azerbaijanis were killed in a deliberate way with special brutality. Besides, more than 80 civilians in Garadagly village and 67 civilians in Agdaban village, including children, women and the elderly, were tortured and brutally killed, dozens of people were taken hostage, became missing, and villages burned and exterminated.

The war, crimes against humanity and Khojaly Genocide committed on the background of military aggression against Azerbaijan by Armenia are serious violation of human rights and international humanitarian law, especially of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven districts are once again proved to be the integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the international law, as well as UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884 from 1993, UN General Assembly Resolution on "Situation on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" dated on 14 March, 2008, Resolution 1416 from 2005 and Recommendation 1690 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as well as European Parliament's Resolution on Nagorno-Karabakh from October 23, 2013, the European Parliament Resolution of December 12, 2018.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly declared his commitment to the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the frames territorial integrity of our country, as well as that there was not given just political and legal assessment of crimes against our people.

The international awareness campaign “Justice for Khojaly”, initiated by the Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Leyla Aliyeva, is also an important contribution to the systematic work on the global recognition of Khojaly Genocide.

The relevant documents of the parliaments of Mexico, Pakistan, the Czech Republic, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Sudan, Guatemala and Djibouti have confirmed that mass killing committed in Khojaly was an act of genocide. Parliaments of Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Jordan, Slovenia, Scotland and Paraguay, as well as the executive and legislative bodies of 22 states of the United States have strongly condemned the Khojaly tragedy recognizing it as a massacre, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as a genocide.

Committing of acts of crime during Khojaly tragedy deliberately with the intent to completely or partially annihilate people for their national belonging once again proves their being an act of genocide under international and domestic law.

According to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, perpetrators of genocide must be punished in accordance with the law.

In order to achieve the principles announced 75 years ago during the adoption of the UN Charter and the Sustainable Development Goals, which aim at developing the world by 2030, the provisions of the conventions adopted by this international influential organization, as well as the resolutions of the Security Council must be enforced unconditionally, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should be restored, more than one million refugees and internally displaced persons should return to their homeland, captives and hostages should be released, and the justice should be provided to Khojaly.

Sabina Aliyeva

The Commissioner for Human Rights

(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

February 19, 2020

This Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, European Union, European Council, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, different ombudsmen and national human rights institutions, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.

**President Ilham Aliyev attended ceremony to commemorate Khojaly genocide victims
(February 26, 2020)**

On the night of February 25-26 1992, Armenian occupants committed one of the bloodiest crimes in the history of mankind in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly.

The statistics of Khojaly genocide are as follows: of 3,000 people who were in the town at the moment of the attack 613 were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders; 487 people were severely wounded, including 76 children; 1,275 people were captured and subjected to unprecedented torture; the fate of 197 people still remains unknown. Eight families were totally annihilated. All these people were slaughtered, tortured and disabled solely because of their ethnic background, only for being Azerbaijanis.

Thousands of Baku residents arrived at the Khojaly memorial in Khatai district on February 26 to pay tribute to victims of the genocide on its 28th anniversary.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and his first lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended the commemorative ceremony.

A guard of honor was arranged near the memorial.

President Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the monument.

First lady Mehriban Aliyeva, and state and government officials put flowers at the monument.

AZERTAC

Baku issues official statement on Khojaly genocide (February 26, 2020)

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry has issued a statement on the Khojaly genocide, perpetrated by Armenians in Khojaly.

Report informs, citing the press service of the Ministry, that the statement reads:

February 26, 2020, marks the 28th anniversary of the massacre committed by the Armenian armed forces in Khojaly during Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan.

As a result of Armenia's ongoing aggression against Azerbaijan, about one-fifth of the Azerbaijani territories, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding regions, have been occupied and more than one million ethnic Azerbaijanis living in these areas, as well as in Armenia, have been subjected to ethnic cleansing.

During this aggression, numerous military offenses, crimes against humanity, and genocide were committed against the civilian population of Azerbaijan, and the Republic of Armenia as the aggressor bears the responsibility for them.

In the course of the war, the capture of Khojaly town was particularly tragic. Before the conflict, 7,000 people lived in this town of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. From October 1991, the city was surrounded by the armed forces of Armenia. Over the night of the 25 to February 26, 1992, following the massive artillery bombardment of Khojaly, the armed forces of Armenia, with the help of the infantry guards regiment No. 366 of the former USSR, implemented the seizure of Khojaly. Invaders destroyed Khojaly and, with particular brutality, implemented carnage over its peaceful population.

As a result of the Khojaly genocide, 5379 inhabitants of the city were forcefully expelled, 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 elderly brutally murdered. Eight families were terminated completely, 487 were injured, 1275 were captured and taken hostage (the fate of 150 of them, including 68 women and 26 children, remains unknown to date). The occupation of Khojaly caused a USD 170 million in damage to the Government of Azerbaijan and individual nationals.

The overall assessment of the causes and consequences of the war unleashed by the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan and all existing facts of the tragic events in Khojaly make it absolutely clear that the crimes committed in that town of Azerbaijan were not an isolated or sporadic act, but a part of Armenia's widespread and systematic policy and practice of atrocities. The intentional slaughter of the civilians in Khojaly was directed at their mass extermination only because they were Azerbaijanis.

The Khojaly massacre and other war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed by Armenia in the course of the ongoing aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The investigation conducted by the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan has fully proved the involvement of many military service members and other persons in the perpetration of the Khojaly genocide. The investigation made decisions on their accusation according to the articles of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan on genocide, torture, the deportation of the population, violation of international humanitarian law during the armed conflict, and other criminal offenses.

As a result of the investigation into the Khojaly genocide episode, around 7,500 investigative actions were conducted regarding more than 4,500 persons, including over 1,800 witnesses and 2699 victims, more than 800 different examinations and other investigations were carried out.

A year after the Khojaly genocide, in 1993, the UN Security Council adopted 4 (822, 853, 874, 884) resolutions, condemning the occupation of Azerbaijani territories. The documents reiterated the

respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and inadmissibility of occupation of territories. Thus, in response to the territorial claims and actions of Armenia, the Security Council confirmed that Nagorno-Karabakh was an integral part of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. This position is reflected in the decisions and resolutions of numerous international organizations.

In its judgment of April 22, 2010, the European Court of Human Rights arrived at an important conclusion with respect to the crime committed in Khojaly, qualifying the behavior of those carrying out the incursion as "acts of particular gravity which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity."

The national legislative bodies of 16 States, as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, adopted resolutions and declarations on condemning in strongest terms the massacre of the civilian population in Khojaly and recognizing the tragedy of Khojaly as an act of genocide and crime against humanity.

The report "War crimes committed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the responsibility of Armenia", prepared at the request of the Government of Azerbaijan by the eminent international lawyer Malcolm Shaw was published as the UN General Assembly and the Security Council document on February 7 2020. The report, which contains the basic facts, historical background, the general framework of international humanitarian law and an analysis of the responsibility of Armenia, examines the war crimes committed by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, including the Khojaly massacre, which constitutes a crime against humanity and genocide.

In total disregard of the position of the international community, demands of the UN Security Council Resolutions on an immediate, unconditional and full withdrawal of occupying forces from the seized lands of Azerbaijan, Armenia continues flagrant violation of international law. It continues to undertake efforts aimed at further consolidating the current status quo of the occupation, strengthening its military build-up in the seized territories, changing their demographic, cultural and physical character and preventing the hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani forcibly displaced persons from returning to their homes and properties in those areas.

Alongside the Republic of Armenia's responsibility as a State for internationally wrongful acts, under the customary and treaty norms of international criminal law, certain acts perpetrated in the context of an armed conflict, including those in the town of Khojaly, are viewed as international criminal offences and responsibility for them is borne on an individual basis by those who participated in the said acts, their accomplices and accessories.

Official Yerevan denies its responsibility for the occupation of Azerbaijani territories and military presence in these territories. They even claim that the Khojaly massacre was allegedly committed by Azerbaijanis against their citizens, in this regard referring to an interview with the former President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ayaz Mutalibov, to Russian media. Mutalibov has repeatedly stated that these references to him are lies and slander; the Khojaly execution was committed by the Armenians.

It is well known that some representatives of Armenia's previous leadership, and many other high-ranking political and military officials of that country and leaders of the separatist regime established by Armenia in the occupied territory of Azerbaijan, personally participated in seizing Azerbaijani lands and in the reprisals against Azerbaijani civilians and militaries, including in Khojaly.

In his cynical admission of culpability, Armenia's then-Defense Minister and ex-President, Serzh Sargsyan, was quoted by the British journalist Thomas de Waal, as saying, "before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that ... the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]" (Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York and London, New York University Press, 2003), p. 172).

It is incontrovertible today that no official or political status cloaks the person concerned with immunity for the most serious international crimes, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and ethnic cleansing.

Alongside the ongoing prosecution of persons charged with committing various crimes against their people in Armenia, the trial over the atrocities committed by them against the Azerbaijani people is also crucial for the establishment of international justice. It can contribute to the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict by peaceful means. The Republic of Azerbaijan is confident that the

consistent measures which are taken at the national level, as well as the existing international legal framework, will serve to bring to justice those responsible for the grave offenses committed against the civilian population of Azerbaijan during the conflict.

report.az

Azerbaijani Ombudsperson releases statement on 29th anniversary of Khojaly genocide (February 22, 2021)

Azerbaijani Commissioner for Human Rights (ombudsperson) Sabina Aliyeva has issued a statement on the 29th anniversary of Khojaly genocide.

The statement reads:

“This year we mark the 29th anniversary of Khojaly genocide. On the night from February 25 to 26, 1992, the units of the Armenian armed forces, Armenian terrorist groups in Nagorno-Karabakh and personnel of the 366th motorized infantry regiment of the former Soviet army deployed in Khankandi town of Azerbaijan committed an act of genocide in Khojaly town of Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. This heinous crime against humanity was organized by the then political leadership of the Republic of Armenia.

On this day 29 years ago, the town of Khojaly was besieged and attacked by heavy artillery with its civilian residents brutally murdered. People were not allowed to escape from the burning town; civilians were ambushed on the roads and in the woods and mercilessly slaughtered. This crime amounts to the most serious and severe violation of norms and principles of international law, as well as fundamental human rights. As a result of this horrific crime against humanity, 613 peaceful civilians of Azerbaijan, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 elderly people were murdered. At the same time, 487 civilians were seriously injured, and 1275 people were taken hostage. The fate of 150 hostages, including 68 women and 26 children, is still unknown. 56 people were killed with special cruelty, people's skulls were skinned, various parts of bodies were cut off, their eyes were taken out, and pregnant women's bellies were pierced with bayonets. Eight families were totally exterminated, 130 children lost one, whereas 25 children lost both parents.

The Khojaly tragedy is another horrible consequence of the policy of illegal occupation, ethnic cleansing and genocide perpetrated by the Armenian nationalists and their supporters against the Azerbaijani people. Other manifestation of this policy pursued by Armenia was ethnic cleansing committed against Azerbaijanis in early 1990s in Baganis Ayrım village of Gazakh district and İmarat Gharvand, Tugh, Selaketin, Khojavand, Karkijahan, Jamilli, Meshali, Akhullu, Nabilar, Hasanabad, Gaybali, Malibayli, Yukhari and Ashaghi Gushchular villages in Nagorno-Karabakh. In addition, during the occupation of Garadaghli village of Khojavand district and Aghdaban village of Kalbajar district, many civilians, including children, women, and the elderly, were tortured to death, dozens of civilians were taken hostage and went missing.

As a result of these heinous crimes against humanity committed by Armenia, the requirements of existing international documents in the field of protection of human rights and freedoms, especially of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms have been grossly violated.

According to the UN General Assembly Resolution 96 (I) of 11 December 1946 and Genocide Convention adopted by Resolution 260 (III) of 9 December 1948, the mass extermination of civilians in Khojaly on the basis of their ethnicity and committed with deliberate intent must be interpreted as genocide.

The Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave its political and legal assessment to the Khojaly genocide in 1994, at the initiative of national leader Heydar Aliyev, after his return to power. Thus, the date of February 26 was declared “Day of the Khojaly Genocide” and the truth about the genocide was conveyed to the world countries and international community.

The international campaign “Justice for Khojaly!” initiated by the Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva has played a special role in conveying the truth about the genocide to the world community, spreading the word on Armenian atrocities throughout the world.

The relevant documents adopted by the Parliaments of Mexico, Pakistan, the Czech Republic, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Sudan, Guatemala and Djibouti have recognized mass killing committed in Khojaly as an act of genocide. Parliaments of Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Jordan, Slovenia, Scotland and Paraguay, as well as the executive and legislative bodies of 22 states of the United States of America have strongly condemned the Khojaly tragedy qualifying it as a massacre. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as genocide.

Completely undermining the peace process and blocking any prospect for negotiated settlement as well as openly declaring its intention to occupy new Azerbaijani territories, Armenia violated the ceasefire in July and later in September 2020, attacking positions of the Azerbaijani Army and civilian settlements with the use of internationally prohibited weapons, including cluster munitions. As a result, 94 Azerbaijani civilians, including 12 children were killed and 414 civilians, including 50 children got wounded. More than 3410 houses, 120 multi-apartment residential buildings and 512 objects of public infrastructure, including numerous schools, hospitals, kindergartens were destroyed as a result of these attacks.

The counter-offensive operation launched on 27 September 2020 by the Azerbaijani army in order to stop the Armenian aggression, protect the lives of civilian population and put an end to long-lasting occupation, resulted in liberation of our lands that were under occupation for almost 30 years. Thus, in accordance with the relevant trilateral Statement of 10 November 2020, signed by leaders of Azerbaijan, Russian Federation and Armenia, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis have been given the long-awaited opportunity to return to their ancestral lands and to restore their fundamental human rights.

The Khojaly genocide, which occurred in front of the eyes of the world at the end of the XX century, is a crime committed not only against Azerbaijani people, but also against the whole humanity. Unfortunately, despite the fact that 29 years have passed since this tragedy, the act of genocide in Khojaly has not yet received its due political and legal assessment on the part of international community and its perpetrators are still not brought to justice. Indifference and double standards applied to this heinous crime against humanity has bolstered in aggressor the sense of impunity that encouraged it to continue with the criminal policies of ethnic cleansing and illegal foreign occupation. Lack of adequate reaction by the world community to the Khojaly genocide is not only immoral but also unacceptable because it sets the ground for the repetition of this sort of crimes in the future.

I therefore call on the international organizations and individual states to recognize Khojaly massacre as an act of genocide and a crime against humanity so that its perpetrators could be brought to justice.”

This Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, different ombudsmen and national human rights institutions, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.

AZERTAC

**First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva: Tragedies like Khojaly genocide cannot be forgotten
(February 26, 2021)**

First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mehriban Aliyeva has made a post on her official Instagram page on the 29th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

AZERTAC presents the post:

“Tragedies like Khojaly genocide cannot be forgotten. There can be no excuses for the brutal murder of innocent people! We will always protect the truth about those terrible events from any attempts to distort it. I respectfully commemorate the blessed memory of the victims of Khojaly genocide and ask the Almighty God to rest the souls of all our martyrs.”

AZERTAC

President Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva visited Khojaly genocide memorial (February 26, 2021)

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva have visited the Khojaly memorial in Khatai district, Baku on the 29th anniversary of the bloody tragedy which went down in the history of mankind in the 20th century as the Khojaly genocide.

President Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the memorial and paid tribute to Khojaly victims.

First lady Mehriban Aliyeva put flowers at the monument and paid tribute to the tragedy victims.

X X X

The atrocity committed by Armenians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh on the night of 25-26 February 1992 went down in the history of Azerbaijan as a bloody page.

The statistics of Khojaly genocide are as follows: of 3,000 people who were in the town at the moment of the attack 613 were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders; 487 people were severely wounded, including 76 children; 1,275 people were captured and subjected to unprecedented torture; the fate of 197 people still remains unknown. Eight families were totally annihilated. All these people were slaughtered, tortured and disabled solely because of their ethnic background, only for being Azerbaijanis.

This genocidal act by the Armenians was deliberately planned and its only objective was to partially or completely wipe out civilians because of their nationality. These actions are defined as genocide under international law, which must be recognized by the world community.

The real essence of this genocide, which was committed in front of the eyes of the world, was uncovered only after national leader Heydar Aliyev's coming to political power. On initiative of the national leader Khojaly genocide was given a political and legal assessment, and February 26 was declared "Day of Khojaly Genocide". Launched by Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva in 2008, "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign boosted the awareness-raising efforts even more. The campaign has contributed to increasing the international community's awareness of the truth about this genocide, exposing the Armenian nationalists who resort to any violence, including the murder of children, in order to reach their ridiculous and heinous plans. As a result of systematic work, what happened in Khojaly was recognized as a genocidal act by the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as well as the parliaments of Mexico, Pakistan, Czech Republic, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Sudan, Guatemala and Djibouti. The parliaments of Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Jordan, Slovenia and Scotland, as well as executive and legislative bodies of 22 American states recognized Khojaly events as a massacre.

AZERTAC

Heads of religious confessions in Azerbaijan appeal to international community on Khojaly genocide (February 22, 2022)

Heads of religious confessions in Azerbaijan have made an appeal to international community on the Khojaly genocide.

Citing the press service of the Caucasian Muslims Office, AZERTAC presents the appeal.

“We, the leaders of religious denominations in Azerbaijan, address the World Community on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide, one of the bloodiest tragedies of the XX century and one of the gravest war crimes against Humanity.

The Khojaly genocide is one of the worst war crimes committed by Armenian military against the Azerbaijani civilian population during Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan. A few days before that massacre, on February 17, 1992, Armenian armed forces massacred local Azerbaijani population in Garadagli village of Khojavend region of Azerbaijan, then extended their crimes with unprecedented brutality, and committed genocide in Khojaly with the involvement of the 366th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the former Soviet Army. As a result of the ongoing massacres with the use of heavy military equipment, the city of Khojaly was completely destroyed, 613 Azerbaijanis, including 63 children, 106 women, and 70 elderly people, were brutally killed because of their ethnic identity. With unimaginable cruelty, 8 families were completely annihilated, 25 children lost both parents, and 130 children lost one of their parents. Frenzied soldiery skinned people's heads, cut off parts of their bodies, gouged out the eyes of babies, rip open bellies of pregnant women, buried or burned people alive, and laid mined under some of the dead bodies. Even the civilian population, who tried to escape barefoot in the frosty weather, was not spared, they were persecuted and killed on the roads and in the forests by Armenian military with extreme cruelty. As a result of this inhuman crime, 487 peaceful civilians were seriously injured, 1275 people were taken hostage and subjected to horrific tortures, the corpses were subjected to inhuman affront and outrage. The destiny of 150 hostages, including 68 women and 26 children, is still unknown.

We reiterate to the world community that as a result of Armenia's baseless territorial claims and aggressive policy, 20% of the internationally recognized territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan were occupied for nearly 30 years, the ethnic cleansing, physical and moral terror were carried out against the Azerbaijani people. Humans were expelled from their ancestral lands in Armenia and the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and became refugees and internally displaced persons, their human rights were grossly violated, hundreds of cities and villages, the ancient and rich cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people were destroyed and looted.

Starting from the summer of 2020, Armenia launched another military provocation against Azerbaijan and tried to expand the occupied territories using heavy artillery against various regions of Azerbaijan, peaceful population, and civilian infrastructure under the motto "a new war for new lands." Continuing its war crimes and acts of vandalism, the aggressive Armenian regime launched fire using heavy artillery, banned ballistic missiles, phosphorous and cluster bombs on our settlements situating on both the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and far from the zone of military operations, including large cities as Ganja, Barda, Tartar, Mingachevir, and Gabala. In the sacred Patriotic War, which began in response to the next military provocations of Armenia, Azerbaijan liberated its ancestral lands from the 30-years-long occupation, regained its territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and restored the historic justice, in accordance with the International law, UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884.

We bring to the attention of the world community that Armenia, along with its policy of occupation, ethnic cleansing and genocide, has committed during the 30 years of occupation spiritual aggression and genocide against the religious, cultural and historical heritage of Azerbaijan. Muslim and other religious temples in those areas, including Russian Orthodox churches, cultural and historical monuments, and cemeteries, were subjected to Armenian vandalism for many years; Ancient Albanian Christian churches were attempted to be Armenianized. Armenia, which completely destroyed 65 of the 67 mosques in the region, turned mosques into barns, even insulted them by keeping there animals forbidden in Islam, did not hesitate to insult the dignity of the entire Islamic world. Erstwhile developed,

large and prosperous Azerbaijani cities of Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil and others, hundreds of villages and settlements were destroyed by Armenia, the existed infrastructure was completely destroyed. At present, foreign guests visiting the country on an observation mission call these places the “Caucasian Hiroshima”, the “City of Spirits”. In the occupied territories, an unprecedented policy of "burnt lands" was applied.

Despite the end of the war and the aggression, innocent people are still being killed in the liberated lands, because Armenia aggressors planted hundreds of thousands of mines both during the 30-year occupation and when leaving Azerbaijan. In blatant disregard for international law and humanitarian principles, Armenia avoids providing mine maps or presents false maps that do not correspond to reality. After the war, Armenian religious leaders issue revanchist statements, calling on their people not to peace that is so necessary for the region, but to a new war. Appealing to the international institutions and religious organizations, political and religious circles of Armenia are spreading false and defamatory information about the alleged destruction of Christian monuments in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan, trying to hide the real truth in order to divert attention from Armenian vandalism in Karabakh.

We, the leaders of religious denominations, declare that the religion-state relations in Azerbaijan, where we operate, are being regulated at a high level, and all the religions enjoy equal rights provided by the state. According to the orders of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and the personal participation and patronage of First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva, the revival and reconstruction process of Karabakh has been started, including the restoration of the rich cultural and historical heritage destroyed by Armenia, and the restoration and protection of the Muslim and Christian temples have begun as well.

We invite international and religious organizations and religious figures to Azerbaijan to get acquainted here with the real situation in the liberated territories, as well as the exemplary environment of tolerance and multiculturalism in the country. We hope that the relevant international organizations and specialized institutions, by seeing with their own eyes the acts of vandalism committed by Armenia against the historical, cultural and religious monuments of Azerbaijan in the liberated territories, will properly assess these inhumane acts and present the objective reality to the international community.

We regret to note, that behind the lack of timeous legal and political assessment of mass violence, extremism and terrorist crimes in the world there are double standards of some policymakers, religious figures, states and organizations, as well as dangerous tendencies such as religious and racial discrimination. It is our human duty to the souls of the martyrs to inform the world community about Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and its consequences, the truth about Armenian vandalism committed in the occupied territories in all its scale and horror, especially achieve the recognition of the Khojaly massacre as a genocide. Reiterating to this end, we call on the world's religious leaders, the parliaments, the UN and other international organizations for a fair and objective legal and political assessment of the Khojaly genocide in the same way it was given to the Holocaust, Khatyn, Srebrenica and other crimes against Humanity.

The religious denominations in Azerbaijan declare their support for the end of any military aggression, calls for war and hatred, religious and ethnic intolerance, revanchism in our region, for the establishment of good neighborhood, peace and tranquility between states and peoples. Once again, we call on the World's Religious Leaders, International Organizations, the Parliaments and the World Community to mobilize for these high aims and especially call on the Armenian Apostolic Church to promote human values, ideals of peace and reconciliation.”

Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh,

Chairman of the Caucasian Muslims Board

Archmandrite Aleksi,

Secretary of Baku and Azerbaijan Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church

Milikh Yevdayev,

Head of the community of Mountain Jews in Azerbaijan

Robert Mobili,

Chairman of the Albanian-Udi Christian religious community in Azerbaijan

Aleksandr Sharovski,

Head of the community of European Jews in Azerbaijan

AZERTAC

Azerbaijani Ombudsman issues statement on 30th anniversary of Khojaly genocide (February 22, 2022)

Azerbaijani Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) Sabina Aliyeva has issued a statement on the 30th Anniversary of Khojaly Genocide.

The statement reads: "30 years have passed since the Khojaly genocide, which entered into history as one of the most horrific tragedies of the 20th century and a grave crime against humanity.

Throughout history, as a result of Armenia's ethnic cleansing and genocide policies against Azerbaijanis, hundreds of thousands of civilians have been massacred and expelled from their native lands.

Enjoying the prevailed environment of impunity, Armenian armed groups committed massacres in settlements of Azerbaijan and the most horrific one occurred in Khojaly.

On the night from February 25 to 26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces, Armenia-backed terrorist groups and the 366th motorized infantry regiment of the Former Soviet Army deployed in Khankandi town committed an act of genocide against the civilian population in Khojaly.

This genocidal act resulted in brutal killing of 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly, whereas 1275 people were taken hostage and subjected to torture. The fate of 150 hostages, including 68 women and 26 children, is still unknown. 487 people were severely injured during this genocidal act. Moreover, 8 families were totally exterminated, 130 children lost one and other 25 children lost both parents.

A number of world's leading news agencies, "The Times", "The Guardian", "Reuters" and "BBC" reported about the brutal scenes of the criminal acts committed against humanity in Khojaly.

The Memorial Human Rights Center and Human Rights Watch also provided information about this horrific crime, which was committed against the civilian population in Khojaly, in their reports.

According to the UNGA Resolution 96 (I) of 11 December 1946 and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) adopted by Resolution 260 (III) of 9 December 1948, the mass extermination of civilians in Khojaly on the grounds of their ethnicity and with deliberate intent must be interpreted as genocide.

As a result of Armenian policies of ethnic cleansing and genocide against Azerbaijanis, the requirements of several international binding documents, especially of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the Genocide Convention, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have been grossly violated.

Armenia targeted densely populated cities and villages located kilometers away from the combat zone with ballistic missiles and cluster bombs during the Second Karabakh War as well, by continuing its genocidal policy. These attacks resulted in the deaths of about 100 civilians, including 12 children, and injuring of more than 400 people, including 50 children. Armenia's indiscriminate attacks on civilian objects destroyed more than 3,410 houses, 120 multi-apartment residential buildings and 512 civilian infrastructure, including numerous schools, hospitals and kindergartens.

The Azerbaijani military liberated our native lands, which were under the occupation of Armenia for about 30 years, as a result of its counter-offensive operations with the aim to stop the military aggression against our State and to protect the lives of civilians. Consequently, this laid the ground for the restoration of the violated rights of our compatriots.

At the initiative of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev, in 1994, the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave its political and legal assessment to the Khojaly genocide, the date of February 26 was declared the "Day of the Khojaly Genocide", and the truth about the genocide was conveyed to the international community.

The international campaign "Justice for Khojaly!", implemented on the initiative of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, played an exceptional role to promote the truth about Karabakh, especially the Khojaly genocide in the world.

At present, the legislative bodies of 17 countries, as well as 24 States of the USA have adopted resolutions and decisions condemning the massacre of civilians in Khojaly. Also, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) recognized Armenia as an aggressor and the Khojaly tragedy as genocide.

It should be particularly noted that the fate of nearly 4,000 Azerbaijanis taken captive or hostage and went missing, including those missing in Khojaly, is still unknown since Armenia began its unlawful territorial claims against Azerbaijan.

The world community must take effective and drastic measures against Armenia that grossly violates the norms of international humanitarian law, and put pressure on the responsible state to provide information about the fate of Azerbaijani citizens taken prisoner, hostage and went missing.

The Khojaly genocide is one of the most horrific crimes of genocide committed in the history of humanity in the 20th century due to its scale, brutality and inhuman treatment.

Unfortunately, although 30 years have passed since the commission of the act of genocide in Khojaly, applying double standards, the international community has not yet established due political and legal assessment of this brutal act, and its perpetrators have not yet been brought to justice.

The world community and relevant international organizations must adequately respond to the brutal act committed in Khojaly, recognize it as a genocide and bring its instigators and perpetrators to justice.”

This Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, different ombudsmen and national human rights institutions, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.

AZERTAC

Nationwide march to commemorate 30th anniversary of Khojaly genocide was held in Baku President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva joined the march (February 26, 2022)

A nationwide march has been held in Baku on the 30th anniversary of the bloody tragedy, that went down in the history of mankind in the 20th century as the Khojaly genocide.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended the march.

The marchers arrived at Khatai district, the site where the Khojaly memorial is erected.

President Ilham Aliyev put a wreath at the memorial and paid tribute to Khojaly victims.

First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva, Prime Minister Ali Asadov, Speaker of the Milli Majlis Sahiba Gafarova, Head of the Presidential Administration Samir Nuriyev laid flowers at the monument.

State and government officials, members of the Milli Majlis, ministers, heads of committees, agencies and companies, heads of religious confessions, also joined the march.

Participants in the nationwide march put flowers at the memorial.

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The atrocity committed by Armenians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh on the night of 25-26 February 1992 went down in the history of Azerbaijan as a bloody page. That night helped by the Soviet Union's Khankandi-based 366th motor rifle regiment, the Armenian armed forces massacred innocent people in this ancient Azerbaijani town.

The statistics of Khojaly genocide are as follows: of 3,000 people who were in the town at the moment of the attack 613 were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders; 487 people were severely wounded, including 76 children; 1,275 people were captured and subjected to unprecedented torture; the fate of 197 people still remains unknown. Eight families were totally annihilated. All these people were slaughtered, tortured and disabled solely because of their ethnic background, only for being Azerbaijanis.

This genocidal act by the Armenians was deliberately planned and its only objective was to partially or completely wipe out civilians because of their nationality. These actions are defined as genocide under international law, which must be recognized by the world community.

The real essence of this genocide, which was committed in front of the eyes of the world, was uncovered only after national leader Heydar Aliyev's coming to political power. On initiative of the national leader Khojaly genocide was given a political and legal assessment, and February 26 was declared "Day of Khojaly Genocide". Launched by Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva in 2008, "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign boosted the awareness-raising efforts even more. The campaign has contributed to increasing the international community's awareness of the truth about this genocide, exposing the Armenian nationalists who resort to any violence, including the murder of children, in order to reach their ridiculous and heinous plans. As a result of systematic work, what happened in Khojaly was recognized as a genocidal act by the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as well as the parliaments of Mexico, Pakistan, Czech Republic, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Sudan, Guatemala and Djibouti. The parliaments of Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Jordan, Slovenia and Scotland, as well as executive and legislative bodies of 24 American states recognized Khojaly events as a massacre.

As in previous years the Heydar Aliyev Foundation continued to support the organization of Khojaly commemorative events across the world. This included commemorative rallies in Turkey, USA, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Georgia and the Netherlands, commemorative events, conferences, exhibitions and contests in a number of other countries.

Statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy (February 23, 2023)

The Khojaly genocide, which left a mark in history as one of the biggest tragedies of the last century, is one of the bloodiest pages of the policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide regularly carried out by Armenian nationalists against Azerbaijanis.

On the night of February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces launched an armed attack with the support of the 366th motorized rifle regiment of the Soviet army stationed in the city of Khankendi with the aim of mass killing of the peaceful population of the city of Khojaly. This city with a population of seven thousand people was razed to the ground, its inhabitants were subjected to genocide.

The main goal of the Armenian chauvinists in committing this genocide was also to wipe out Khojaly, a city with historical and cultural monuments belonging to the ancient times of Azerbaijan, in addition to brutal killing the population.

Neglecting the norms and principles of international law, including international humanitarian law, the most merciless killing methods were used against the civilian population, especially the older people, women, and children. As a result, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 older people were killed with special cruelty, 8 families were completely wiped out, 25 children lost both parents, 132 children lost one of their parents, 487 people were seriously injured, 1275 people were taken hostage, and the fate of 150 of them is unknown. During the genocide, 56 people were killed with unprecedented cruelty, people were burned alive and subjected to terrible torture.

The rights and freedoms enshrined in the existing international documents in the field of protection of human rights and freedoms, including the right to life, have been grossly and massively violated as a result of the Khojaly genocide based on ethnic cleansing and hatred and other war crimes committed by the aggressor Armenia on our lands.

As a result of the Khojaly genocide, the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child were seriously violated.

For the first time, at the initiative of National Leader Heydar Aliyev the country's Parliament gave a political and legal assessment to the Khojaly Genocide, February 26 was declared "Khojaly Genocide Day", and actions were launched for bringing the committed crime to the attention of the international community and the culprits to justice.

International campaign "Justice for Khojaly" conducted by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation for bringing the truth about Khojaly to the attention of international community plays a very important role in the recognition of the Khojaly genocide by the world community, and giving legal and political assessment to it. As a result of this action, the legislative bodies of 17 countries, as well as 24 states of the United States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization of Turkic States, have adopted numerous resolutions and decisions condemning the massacre of civilians in Khojaly and evaluating it as an act of genocide and a crime against humanity.

At present, Azerbaijan continues to take all necessary steps in order to convey the information to the world community about the terrorist policy continuously implemented by Armenia, especially the mines buried in our lands liberated from occupation as a result of which civilians have been killed or seriously injured.

In order to restore justice and prevent the recurrence of such acts of genocide against humanity, the world countries and international organizations should give international political and legal assessment to the Khojaly genocide and other war crimes committed by Armenia, the perpetrators of the committed genocide must be held accountable before the international court and decisive measures must be taken in this direction.

Sabina Aliyeva

**The Commissioner for Human Rights
(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

23 February 2023

This Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, UNICEF, UNESCO, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Association of Ombudsmen and National Human Rights Institutions of Turkic States, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, ombudsmen and national human rights institutions of different countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry issues statement on 31st anniversary of Khojaly genocide (February 24, 2023)

Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a statement on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

AZERTAC presents the statement: "February 26, 2023 marks the 31st anniversary of the horrible genocide committed by the armed forces of Armenia in Khojaly.

During the decades-long aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, one of the gravest crimes committed against the civilian population and one of the most tragic pages of Azerbaijan's history was the genocide against the population of Khojaly town, where more than 7,000 people lived before the conflict.

Within the framework of Armenia's occupation policy, as a part of premeditated plan, before the Khojaly genocide, Azerbaijanis were killed with special cruelty and massacres were committed against them in settlements such as Baghanis Ayrim, Meshali, Karkijahan, Malibeyli and Garadaghi.

From October 1991, town of Khojaly was completely surrounded by Armenia's armed forces. Over the night of 25-26 February 1992, following massive artillery bombardment, Armenia's armed forces with the help of the former USSR's 366th Motorized Rifle Regiment, mostly comprised of Armenians, occupied Khojaly.

As a result of the occupation, 5,379 inhabitants of the town were forcefully expelled. 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 elderly citizens, were brutally murdered. 1,275 were captured and taken hostage and were tortured, and 487 were injured. The fate of 150 of those captured, including 68 women and 26 children still remains unknown. The actions of the Armenian armed forces tore families apart. 8 families were completely wiped out. 130 children lost 1 parent and 25 children lost both parents.

The Khojaly genocide, the indiscriminate killing of the civilian population, was part of the policy of ethnic hatred, racial discrimination and systematic violence carried out by Armenia against Azerbaijan for many years at the state level.

The Khojaly genocide and other crimes committed by Armenia during its aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, constitute serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. These include violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and others.

So far, the national legislative bodies of 18 countries, as well as 24 States of the USA, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization of Turkic States have adopted a number of resolutions and decisions condemning the massacre of civilians in Khojaly and characterizing it as a crime against humanity and an act of genocide.

In its judgment of 22 April 2010, the European Court of Human Rights arrived at an important conclusion with respect to the crimes committed in Khojaly, denouncing the behavior of those carrying out the atrocities as "acts of particular gravity which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity".

Under international law, states have a responsibility to investigate atrocities such as those committed by Armenian forces at Khojaly and prosecute the perpetrators. However, to date none of those responsible for the crimes committed at Khojaly have been prosecuted by Armenia.

In a telling admission of culpability, Armenia's then Defence Minister and ex-President, Serzh Sargsyan, was quoted by the British journalist Thomas de Waal, as saying, "before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that ... the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]" (Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York and London, New York University Press, 2003), p. 172).

Deliberate targeting of the Azerbaijani civilian population continued during military operations conducted by Armenia from September 27 to November 10, 2020. Purposefully targeting the civilian population and civilian infrastructure of Azerbaijani cities such as Ganja, Barda, Tartar, which are located at a considerable distance from the war zone, Armenia resorted to the same terror tactics as they had in

1992. This time with the use of multiple launch rocket systems and cluster munitions, Armenia once again unlawfully targeted and killed peaceful Azerbaijani civilians.

The Republic of Azerbaijan believes that continuous measures taken at the national level as well as under international law, will serve to end impunity and bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes committed during Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan.

There have to be a legal assessment on the Khojaly genocide and those who committed this terrible tragedy should receive its proper punishment.

We engrave the victims of the Khojaly tragedy in our national memory and honor their reminiscence. Rest in Peace!"

**President Ilham Aliyev visited Khojaly genocide memorial
(February 26, 2023)**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has visited the Khojaly genocide memorial in Khatai district, Baku on the 31st anniversary of the bloody tragedy which went down in the history of mankind in the 20th century as the Khojaly genocide.

President Ilham Aliyev laid a wreath at the memorial and paid tribute to Khojaly victims.

Azerbaijani Ombudsperson issues statement on 32nd anniversary of Khojaly Genocide (February 22, 2024)

Thirty-two years have passed since the Khojaly Genocide, one of the most horrific crimes against humanity in the history of mankind, which proves Armenia's policy of ethnic hatred and genocide against Azerbaijanis.

On the night of February 25 to 26, 1992, Khojaly city was occupied by Armenian armed forces with the participation of the 366th Motor Rifle Regiment of the former Soviet Army, and the local population was subjected to genocide, and the city was completely destroyed.

As a result of the act of genocide, fundamental human rights and the norms and principles of international humanitarian law were severely violated. A total of 613 residents of Khojaly, including 63 children, 106 women, and 70 elderly individuals, were mercilessly killed. Eight families were completely annihilated, and 25 children lost both parents, while 130 children lost at least one parent. Among the wounded, 76 were children, and 487 individuals were severely wounded. Of those killed, 56 were subjected to particularly cruel methods, including being burned alive, having their scalps peeled off, and enduring other horrifying forms of torture. In addition, the fate of 150 individuals, including 68 women and 26 children, among the 1275 taken hostages remains unknown until today.

The mass killing in Khojaly constituted severe violations of international conventions such as the Geneva Conventions on the Protection of War Victims, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and grossly infringed upon the fundamental right to life.

Thirty years ago, by the initiative of the National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, the Khojaly Genocide was politically and legally evaluated for the first time by the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and consequently, 26 February was declared the Day of the Khojaly Genocide.

The campaign "Justice for Khojaly," organized and continuously implemented by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and aimed at international recognition and legal and political evaluation of this criminal act, is of great importance in terms of enhancing public awareness of this tragic event at the international level and demonstrating significant resistance against mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and cases of racial, religious, and ethnic discrimination. As a result of the activities carried out within the framework of the campaign, the legislative bodies of 17 countries, 24 states in the United States, as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Organization of Turkic States, condemned this heinous mass killing, recognized it as genocide, and adopted relevant decisions and resolutions.

The discovery of mass places of burial found in Aghdam, Shusha, Khojavend, Fuzuli, and Kalbajar districts after the Second Karabakh War and local anti-terror operations carried out last year, as well as during the building and reconstruction and exploration activities in the liberated territories, and also some time ago near the Askeran fortress close to Aghdam district, which is close to Khojaly, signs of torture on the human remains in those mass graves reaffirm the brutal killing of our compatriots during the act of genocide in Khojaly and the implementation of the policy of genocide against Azerbaijanis.

Despite numerous appeals from our side, Armenia has not made any efforts to determine the fate of nearly four thousand missing persons and nor has it provided information about the mass graves where our compatriots, who were subjected to torture and killed, are buried.

International organizations and the global community must undertake a legal assessment of the Khojaly Genocide, widely acknowledged as one of the most significant massacres of the 20th century. It is crucial that those accountable for this grave crime against humanity are brought to the court of justice for prosecution.

Sabina Aliyeva
The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan
(Ombudsman)

22 February 2024

The statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Turkic states Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, foreign ombudsmen and national human rights institutions, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.

**Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry issues statement on 32nd anniversary of Khojaly genocide
(February 25, 2024)**

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry has issued a statement on the 32nd anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The statement reads: "Today, it has been 32 years since the Khojaly genocide committed against Azerbaijani civilians during Armenia's military aggression and occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan.

Armenia's policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide against Azerbaijanis was carried out along with crimes against humanity in settlements, including Baganis Ayrim, Jamilli, Karkijahan, Meshali, Malibeyli, Gushchular, Garadagli, etc. throughout the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan. One of the worst atrocities of this kind was committed against Khojaly residents.

On the night of 25-26 February 1992, Khojaly city, which was sieged and whose ground traffic, as well as energy supply was cut off since October 1991 and January 1992 respectively, was occupied by Armenia's armed forces with the assistance of the former USSR's 366th Motorized Rifle Regiment following massive artillery shelling.

As a result of the occupation, 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women, 70 elderly citizens were brutally murdered, 8 families were completely wiped out, 130 children lost one of their parents, and 25 children lost both of their parents. The fate of 150 people, including 68 women and 26 children out of 1275 people, who were taken prisoner and hostage as well as cruelly tortured is still unknown.

Use of heavy weaponry without any military necessity against the city of Khojaly where peaceful Azerbaijanis were living, investigative materials on atrocities committed against the civilians, eyewitness testimonials, as well as the confession of Armenia's then Defense Minister and ex-President, Serzh Sargsyan that "Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that ... the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]" leaves no room for doubt that the massacre committed was not an accident, but a deliberate crime of genocide planned by Armenia and carried out by its subordinate forces.

As other crimes against humanity perpetrated by Armenia against Azerbaijanis, Khojaly genocide is also a gross violation of international humanitarian law, human rights law, as well as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Due to the failure to end the impunity of Armenia for crimes against humanity, this country continued its existing practice and committed war crimes against the population living in regions such as Ganja, Barda, Terter which are located at a considerable distance from military operations during the 44-day Patriotic War. This once again demonstrates the dire consequences of failing to bring those responsible for crimes against humanity such as genocide, which fall under the scope of universal jurisdiction, to justice.

From this perspective, world community's support for measures taken at the national and international level to end the impunity of criminals, as well as collaboration in this field are critical.

This year for the first time, on the 32nd anniversary of the Khojaly genocide, our tricolor flag is flying over all the territories of Azerbaijan, including the city of Khojaly, which is a mental blowout and an incurable wound for every Azerbaijani.

Liberation of Khojaly embodies our strength and solidarity, thus it is a bond of loyalty to the victims of the Khojaly genocide.

At the same time, Azerbaijan believes that continuing measures taken at the national level and within the framework of current international law will serve to end impunity and bring those responsible for serious crimes committed during Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan to justice.

On this 32nd anniversary of the tragedy, we remember with deepest respect and honor the memories of the innocent victims of Armenia's ethnic hatred and genocidal crimes, including the Khojaly genocide.

Rest in Peace!"

**President Ilham Aliyev made post on anniversary of Khojaly genocide
(February 25, 2024)**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has shared a post on his social media accounts on the 32nd anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The post says: “26 February 1992. Khojaly genocide.”



**President Ilham Aliyev observed a minute of silence to honor
the memory of the victims of the Khojaly genocide
(February 26, 2024)**

At 17:00 on February 26, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev paid tribute to the victims of the Khojaly genocide by observing a minute of silence.

**President Ilham Aliyev laid foundation stone for Khojaly Genocide Memorial and
met with representatives of general public
(February 26, 2024)**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has laid the foundation stone for the Khojaly Genocide Memorial in the city of Khojaly, met with representatives of the general public.

The head of state first met with the ceremony participants.

Female resident: Welcome. May Allah bless you, Mr. President. It is the happiest day of our lives.

Residents: May Allah protect you, Mr. President.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you.

Addressing the meeting, **President Ilham Aliyev** said:

- This is the first time we have been commemorating the innocent Khojaly victims in Khojaly on the anniversary of the Khojaly genocide. After 32 years, we have returned to our native lands. In order to perpetuate the memory of the victims of Khojaly, the foundation of a memorial complex will be laid here today, on February 26. I must inform you that this project was ready a long time ago, the place was chosen – near the Khojaly Genocide Memorial in Baku. But every year I had certain hesitations regarding the construction of the memorial complex and postponed the project. Because, just like you, I also believed and knew that we would return here, that we would return to Khojaly where a memorial complex would be created to perpetuate the memory of innocent victims. After 32 years, you are back. After 32 years, after that horrific tragedy, we are living, building and restoring every corner of Azerbaijan, every corner of Karabakh as its owners and as children of this Motherland. Extensive construction work is underway on all the liberated lands.

The Khojaly genocide will never be erased from the memory of our people. The people of Azerbaijan will never forget this bloody crime. Thirty-two years ago, the Armenian state committed this horrific tragedy and killed innocent people. A total of 613 people were brutally killed, 150 people went missing – of course, their fate is also known, more than 1,000 people were taken hostage, more than 60 children, over 100 women and 70 old people were brutally killed by Armenian savages and fascists in one night.

Unfortunately, our call for “Justice for Khojaly!” has fallen on deaf ears. It is true that 18 countries have recognized this bloody tragedy as an act of genocide thanks to our efforts. However, there are no big states among these countries. International organizations, many of them have remained indifferent to this tragedy.

The state of Azerbaijan, our government agencies and also the Azerbaijanis living abroad, our public organizations, including the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, have made great effort to inform the world about the Khojaly genocide. The “Justice for Khojaly!” campaign, which has been widely promoted by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, has reached out to various parts of the world. Many events and presentations have been carried out, books and articles have been published, and exhibitions have been organized. In other words, we have made a great deal of effort to convey this truth to the world, and we rightly demanded justice from the world. Because the Khojaly genocide is a bloody crime that was perpetrated before the eyes of the world. Denying the Khojaly genocide is unfair and dishonest. However, the Armenian state, the same forces that stood behind it back then and are still there now, the same countries were doing everything in their power to cover up this crime, not to bring Armenia to account, not to introduce sanctions against Armenia, and to let them get away with it.

We worked for decades, especially in recent years, to bring the perpetrators of this bloody crime to justice. But we saw that only we should restore this justice ourselves, and we did exactly that. The Second Karabakh War was a celebration of justice. As a result of the Second Karabakh War, most of the occupied lands were liberated, while the rest of the occupied territories were liberated five months ago.

I know that you, the natives of Khojaly, were just as happy as all the people of Azerbaijan at the time. I also know that you were having certain thoughts about what would happen to Khojaly and Khankendi? I knew that, but I couldn't tell you what would happen. But you and I know that everything will be fair. We could not consider our territorial integrity and sovereignty fully restored without Khojaly. Khojaly has such a great place in the history and consciousness of the Azerbaijani people, this tragedy has

left such deep wounds in our hearts that we could not be at peace with ourselves until Khojaly was liberated. Five months ago, as a result of the anti-terror operation, all our territories that were then under occupation and where the separatists were challenging us, including Khojaly, were liberated. On October 15, 2023, the Azerbaijani flag was raised in Khojaly. We have also started major construction work in Khojaly.

Our “Justice for Khojaly!” demand was completely justified. The fact that we secured this justice on the battlefield is fully consistent with international law and historical justice. We have restored historical justice. We avenged the innocent victims of Khojaly on the battlefield and did not let their blood remain on the ground. True, it took 30 years, but the work we did in those 30 years and our consistent policies made it possible for us to come and live here today.

At that time, in the numerous meetings with displaced people during the years occupation – they are called formerly displaced now, and the concept of displaced people has already been completely erased from all our citizens – I told them every time that the day would come when we would raise the Azerbaijani flag on all our lands and restore our territorial integrity. More than a hundred IDP settlements were built, and I participated in the opening of all of them. The first IDP settlement was established with the participation of Great Leader Heydar Aliyev in Aghjakand settlement at that time, specifically for the people of Khojaly. We did not have such great financial opportunities at that time. However, whatever money we had was used for these purposes, and this was an indication in itself. In other words, the Great Leader showed to us all that we must create conditions for those living in the most difficult conditions. At the same time, our main goal was the liberation of our lands. In the numerous meetings with the IDPs at the time, I was saying to them that these conditions had been created for them and that these conditions were good. The last tent camps, as you know, were removed in 2007. But it was a temporary residence. After the liberation of our lands even better conditions will be created in your native lands, and today we are seeing that. The former IDPs have already returned to five settlements. This year, the number of settlements will reach 20. This year, life will be restored in both Khojaly and Khankendi, including the nearby villages of Malibayli, Karkijahan, Turshsu of Shusha. The city of Aghdam is being restored, and the first relocation to Aghdam will begin next year. In other words, construction work is gaining momentum.

As for Khojaly, after we fully restored our sovereignty on September 20, I immediately issued the order to restore houses in Khojaly first. Because the contemptible enemy committed a horrific genocide and displaced the people of Khojaly from their native land. In addition, they tried to change the historical name of Khojaly and settled separatists, our enemies, including foreign countries, in the houses of Azerbaijanis. Just look at the ugly crime they have committed against our people, and let me say this again, the world remains indifferent to it. Armenia and its patrons believed that no one would punish them. They were completely wrong, and they are still wrong today. Armenia, which is looking for a new owner and seeking refuge in somebody’s arms, should understand that the only way is to accept all of Azerbaijan’s conditions and give up its territorial claims against Azerbaijan.

We will never forget the Khojaly genocide. Let me reiterate that we took our revenge on the criminals during the Second Karabakh War and the anti-terror operation, crushed them, destroyed the Armenian army and forced it to sign capitulation twice. Unlike them, we have never fought a war against the civilian population, and everyone sees and knows that. The military operations we conducted both in 2020 and in September of last year were conducted in full accordance with international humanitarian law – everyone knows this and no one can criticize us. This is further evidence of the greatness of our nation. However, there is a feeling of revenge in our hearts when we go back to that bloody history, when we look at those terrible videos and photos. We are filled with anger, and this anger will not let up even after 300 years, not just 30. And this is natural, we are human beings, but at the same time, we are representatives of a great nation, a nation that has shaken off its manacles, a nation that united like a fist and broke the back of the enemy, the enemy with great powers standing behind it both then and now. If those great powers had not supported them, our lands would not have been occupied in the early 1990s. We were powerless then, while they had great forces standing behind them. Today we are strong, and some people are telling us that we have mercy, but did they have mercy on us?

Let me say again that all these are, of course, our thoughts and feelings. I repeat that we took our revenge, showed great professionalism, heroism and selflessness both during the 44-day Second

Karabakh War and during the one-day anti-terror operation. Our children were prepared to die to free these lands from the invaders. May Allah rest the souls of all our martyrs in peace!

Residents: May Allah rest the souls of all our martyrs in peace, amen.

President Ilham Aliyev: Our Armed Forces showed great professionalism and courage. The whole world can see this, especially today. The events, wars and bloody clashes taking place in different parts of the world show again that the Azerbaijani Army is professional, patriotic, capable and, at the same time, it conducts its operations in such a way that the seemingly impossible solution can be achieved in a short period of time – one of them, and perhaps the first, being the Shusha operation.

Today we are here, our presence here means a complete restoration of historical justice. Khojaly is being rebuilt and we will now go and get acquainted with the progress of construction. Construction work is being carried out in all other areas, and the foundation stone of the Khojaly Genocide Memorial will be laid here today. The souls of Khojaly victims are happy today, may Allah rest them in peace.

Residents: Amen.

President Ilham Aliyev: Their dear memory will live in our hearts forever. Thank you.

Assistant to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan **Anar Alakbarov** briefed the head of state on the Khojaly Genocide Memorial.

The Khojaly Genocide Memorial to be created by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation will be located along the Khojaly-Asgaran road.

It will comprise various sections, commemorating the tragic events of February 25-26, 1992, as well as depicting the historical and geographical significance of Khojaly and the town's way of life before the civilian atrocities occurred. Additionally, the memorial will include a model illustrating the district's geographical layout.

The memorial will feature documentaries recounting the Khojaly massacre.

X X X

The head of state laid a foundation stone for the Khojaly Genocide Memorial.

X X X

After laying a foundation stone, President Ilham Aliyev saw a model of the memorial complex, saying: The garden in the middle means life.

Anar Alakbarov: Yes, it does, Mr. President. The capsule will be placed inside the complex.

X X X

Residents: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Good luck to you.

Male resident: Thank you, Mr. President. Thirty-two years ago, we left Khojaly as a defeated people. We were subjected to genocide. After thirty-two years, we have come to Khojaly as winners, and it is you who won us this victory. Your leadership and your wise policies have won this Victory for us, the people of Khojaly, the entire Azerbaijani people and the entire Turkic world. On behalf of all the natives of Khojaly, we kiss and embrace you. Thank you, Mr. President, for being there for us.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you.

Female resident: Mr. President, as a daughter of a martyr, I am grateful to you on behalf of all the children of martyrs. My father was taken prisoner by the Armenians during the Khojaly genocide. He was a member of a self-defense battalion. Even today, we have no information about his fate. A military commander like you visiting these lands today, on the 32nd anniversary of the Khojaly genocide, is as sacred a mission as visiting the graves of our unburied martyrs, especially because you raised the flag in Khojaly last year on October 15, i.e. the 20th year of your presidency, which proves again that your heart beats together with the families of martyrs from Khojaly. We are always grateful to you and may God protect you and our army. We are grateful to you on behalf of all the children of the martyrs.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much.

Male resident: Mr. President, by February 24, 1996, our family had completely lost hope that we would ever see Khojaly or Karabakh again. On February 24, 1996, our National Leader, our great commander, the world-famous Heydar Aliyev arranged a meeting with us – martyr families and intellectuals from Khojaly. There he assured us that we would not leave an inch of our land under enemy occupation. Then he said that he believed in Ilham Aliyev as much as he did in himself. I felt that this was a message he was giving to the future. He believed that our Commander-in-Chief, Mr. President would overcome this and that you would fulfill that mission. We express our infinite gratitude to you for giving us this honor and glory today. Thank you very much. We are grateful to you.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Male resident: Mr. President, today I want to bring to your attention that I am a doctor decorated with the Order of the Flag of Azerbaijan. In 1994, I was awarded the Order of the Flag of Azerbaijan by a Decree of the Great Leader. In 1996, when he personally presented that order to me, I conveyed a wish of the people of Khojaly that if that day were to come and our lands were to be liberated, we could meet you in Khojaly. That day has come. Today, we are in our native and free Khojaly thanks to you, who very successfully continues the domestic and foreign policy of the Great Leader. Thank you very much, be there. May Allah protect you.

Male resident: Mr. President, we will not take up too much of your time. All the people of Khojaly have made a promise to our Great Leader. I personally gave that promise to our Great Leader. I said that Mr. President, under your leadership, after our lands are liberated from occupation, we will erect your monument in the most valuable and prominent place of Khojaly. Mr. President, we ask you very much, as you have successfully chosen this place, we ask you on behalf of all natives of Khojaly to erect the monument of our Great Leader in the most valuable place of Khojaly.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much.

Residents: Thank you very much.

X X X

Then, President Ilham Aliyev, accompanied by residents, inspected the ongoing construction works in the city of Khojaly.

Female resident: As a living witness to the events of Khojaly, I express our gratitude to you for the fact that we are standing on the land of Khojaly together with you. Back on February 25, 1997, our Great Leader, the late President Heydar Aliyev personally presented my husband's "Gold Star" medal to me. Twenty-seven years have passed since then. Today, I am glad that I am meeting you in the land of Khojaly. May Allah grant you a long life and good health. Long live to our victorious army, long live our Commander-in-Chief!

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much.

Another female resident: I am sure that our grateful people will never forget your services to the nation. The golden page of our history will always live.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you.

Female resident: May Allah always have you as the leader of Azerbaijan.

Residents: Amen.

X X X

The head of state and representatives of the general public from the Khojaly district then visited the city of Khankendi.

Resident: I have conveyed all your speeches to the officers and soldiers. Sometimes I was asked about the difference between the first and second Karabakh wars. And I said that the only difference was that we have a determined Commander-in-Chief, and our soldiers and people believe in him. The people united like a fist and, as they say, the Iron Fist hit them on the head. May Allah protect you.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much.

Young resident: Mr. President, we, the young people, express our great gratitude to you. Inshallah, we as young people will come here in the future, live and follow our own paths.

Female resident: Mr. President, I am the daughter of a martyr. In other words, one of the 613 people killed is my father. He was awarded the medal "For courage". When I was looking for my father's body, the faces of all the bodies were mutilated. I was 19 years old. I was in my third year at the Medical University. Today, we are happy to be back to the lands we left crying in blood. You see, nature itself also welcomes us. Our event today is also based on optimistic notes. We are grateful to you. You are our Commander. Thanks to the unity of the People, Army and President, we broke the enemy's back and brought it to its knees in the 44-day war. You are the victorious leader of the victorious nation. You made our precious dreams come true. We are grateful to you for that. I believe that the souls of our martyrs are happy today. I cannot thank you enough. You are our Commander who has liberated Azerbaijan's lost lands.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much. This land, this region already has a new and bright date, and it is September 20, the day of the liberation of Khojaly and Khankendi. February 26 will never be erased from our memory as a horrific and tragic day. But as you also mentioned, nature itself complements your words. September 20 is the main day of freedom and celebration in this region.

Residents: May Allah protect you. We knew that you would not leave our lands under occupation.

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you.