

Liberated Shusha

The occupation of Shusha since May 8, 1992 was considered a tragedy for every Azerbaijani, regardless of where he lived. The military-political junta of Armenia believed that Shusha would remain under the subordination of Armenia forever, and they prepared a 20-year long-term development plan for the city. Former Armenian presidents Robert Kocharian and Serzh Sargsyan come there every year on the day of the occupation of Shusha and take part in "holiday festivities." The wedding ceremonies of the Armenian couples, who lived in the occupied territories, were deliberately carried out in Shusha. The Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan organized entertainment feasts and dances in Shusha to gain the trust of the Armenian community. The wife of the Prime Minister of Armenia, in order to anger the Azerbaijani side, announced that she would organize mugam Mejlis (meetings) in Shusha and invite female officials from Azerbaijan to these Mejlises. Armenian President Armen Sargsyan, having attended the opening of the "State Geological Museum" in one of the historical and architectural monuments of the city of Shusha, tried to present the city as the capital of the so-called "Artsakh" republic.

Pro-Armenian states and the double standards of the some International organizations pursued a policy of reconciling with the fact of occupation of Azerbaijan. However, the fear that the real owners of Shusha would one-day return haunted the Armenians living there. Therefore, in the 28 years of Shusha's occupation, the number of the Armenian families living there was no more than the number of Armenian families living in Nagorno-Karabakh before the rise of the Armenian separatism.



Culture House where "the inauguration" of the separatist regime leader Arayik Harutyunyan was held

That day has come. The Azerbaijani army has been strengthened; its military-technical base has been equipped with the most modern weapons. Army units were ready to liberate our lands from occupation. On September 27, 2020, by the order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, began the victory march of the Azerbaijani army.

The Azerbaijani forces first advanced in the direction of Hadrut, and after defeating the enemy in the direction of Fizuli and Jabrayil. On October 4, a precision missile strike by the Azerbaijani army destroyed the "House of Culture" in Shusha, where the leader of the separatist regime, Araik Harutyunyan, had "inaugurated"

just a few months before the war. Because of the strike, were killed more than 20 police and soldiers and about 200 separatists were seriously injured.

After Hadrut's release on October 15, Armenian forces began to withdraw. Azerbaijani forces then liberated the cities of Zangilan and Gubadli, and fighting continued in the direction of Lachin. Special Forces of our army crossed the forests and mountain passes and entered the territory of Shusha region.

Throughout October, Azerbaijani forces came under artillery and rocket fire from Shusha, as well as from nearby villages. On October 28, our special forces were stationed around the village of Chanagchi, a few kilometers southeast of Shusha. Violent clashes took place around Dashalti and near Shusha on October 30.

The relief of Shusha did not allow approaching the city with the military equipment.

Therefore, Special Forces marched in the direction of Shusha for five days. The Armenian command expected the Azerbaijani army to advance in the direction of the Red Bazar settlement. The second direction in which Azerbaijani troops were expected to attack Shusha was Lachin. However, the command of



Azerbaijani soldier enters Shusha



the Azerbaijani army made an unprecedented decision due to its scale, plan and sequence. A new road was opened to Shusha from the dense Karabakh forests. A 42-kilometer-long bulldozer and a new manual road were opened from the Great Mountains to the forests in three days. In this way, the engineers and sappers turned the narrow mountain path into a forest road where machinery could move. As a result, Azerbaijani units were able to deploy artillery around Chanakhchi. The

successful attack of the Azerbaijani mountain infantry also broke the last resistance of the besieged Armenian soldiers.

Azerbaijani forces also seized control of part of the Shusha-Lachin road. Armenian officials said Shusha came under heavy fire on the morning of November 5 and the fighting continued the next day. Azerbaijani forces managed to besiege the city from three sides - south, west and east. Employees of the National Security Service of Armenia left Shusha on November 6, when the city collapsed. The next day, thousands of Armenians left Shusha and Khankendi and went to Armenia, causing heavy traffic jams.

The tactics of the liberating Shusha from occupation are one of the brightest pages in the history of the war. On November 7, 400-strong Azerbaijani Special Forces, armed with light weapons and divided into four groups of 100 people each, climbed the steep cliffs of Shusha with ropes and entered in the city from different directions in the morning as a result of hand-to-hand combat. At the same time, one group blocked the Lachin corridor so as not to send additional support from Armenia, and another group provided fire support to the forces entering Shusha after the liberation of Dashalti. Armenian forces were evacuated from the city in the afternoon, and on the morning of November 8, Azerbaijani forces completely cleared the city from the Armenian bandits.

On the same day, the President of Azerbaijan, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, appealed to the nation describing the announcement of the liberation of Shusha as one of the happiest days of his life: "Shusha, which has been under occupation for 28 years, has been liberated! Shusha is free now! We have returned to Shusha! We won this historic victory on the battlefield. November 8, 2020 will forever remain in the history of Azerbaijan. This history will live forever. This is the day of our glorious victory! We won this victory on the battlefield, not behind the negotiating table. "

The message of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev on the liberation of Shusha Azerbaijanis took to the streets, waving the Azerbaijani flags together with the Turkish flags, which supported Azerbaijan in the great victory for Karabakh.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed a statement on November 10, 2020 at 00.00 Moscow time on a complete ceasefire and all military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

Taking into account the historical significance of the city of Shusha and its liberation from occupation, it was decided to celebrate November 8 as a Day for Victory every year. On December 29, 2020 President Ilham Aliyev signed an order on awarding servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the Medal for the Liberation of Shusha. Heroic Azerbaijani fighters, led by the commander of the unit, Lieutenant General Hikmet Mirzayev, 4646 people were awarded the medal "For the liberation of Shusha" (<https://president.az/az/articles/view/49682>), 337 of them died heroically for Shusha.

The state is taking urgent measures to heal the wounds of Shusha. Was established the “Karabakh Revival Fund” to carry out construction, restoration, and landscaping works in the liberated territories, as well as to support safe living and efficient activities.

According to the order, 5,784 servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who demonstrated personal courage and bravery by participating in the combat operations for the liberation of the city of Shusha, have been awarded the medal "For the Liberation of Shusha". By the orders of President Ilham Aliyev, a total of 10,430 servicemen were awarded medals for the liberation of Shusha. It should be noted that 405 Azerbaijani soldiers and officers died heroically in the battles for Shusha.



On August 29, 2021, a statue of Uzeyir Hajibeyli, a house-museum of Bulbul, a bust of Molla Panah Vagif and a museum-mausoleum complex were opened in Shusha. The Liberated Shusha hosted the Vagif Poetry Days on August 30-31, 2021 and the 13th Uzeyir Hajibayli International Music Festival on September 18-24, 2021.

On April 22, 2022 the fifth Congress of World Azerbaijanis-Victory Congress was held in the city of Shusha.

On September 16, 2022 Turkish Business Forum dedicated to the restoration and development of Azerbaijan’s Karabakh region was held in Shusha.

On May 12, 2023, the opening ceremony of the Year “Shusha - Cultural Capital of the Turkic World - 2023” took place.

On July 21, 2023, the Shusha Global Media Forum on “New Media in the 4th Industrial Revolution” was held with the participation of President Ilham Aliyev.

On July 6, 2024, the informal summit of the Organization of Turkic States was held in Shusha on the theme of “Building a Sustainable Future through Transport, Connectivity and Climate Action”. The Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States signed the “Garabagh Declaration” within the framework of the Summit.

On July 20-22, 2024, the second Shusha Global Media Forum themed “Unmasking False Narratives: Confronting Disinformation” was held. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attended the Forum and answered the questions.

In the near future, Shusha will return to its former appearance and continue its mission as the cradle of Azerbaijani culture.

Address of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Victorious Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ilham Aliyev: <https://video.azertag.az/en/site/video/106661>

Orders of the President Ilham Aliyev on awarding servicemen of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan Republic with “For the liberation of Shusha” medal:

1.https://azertag.az/xeber/Azərbaycan_Respublikası_Silahlı_Quvvələrinin_hərbi_qulluqçularının_Su_sanın_azad_olunmasına_gorə_medali_ile_təltif_edilməsi_haqqında_Azərbaycan_Respublikası_Prezidentinin_Serencami-1677223 29.12.2020

2.https://azertag.az/xeber/Azərbaycan_Respublikası_Silahlı_Quvvələrinin_hərbi_qulluqçularının_Susanın_azad_olunmasına_gorə_medali_ile_təltif_edilməsi_haqqında_Azərbaycan_Respublikası_Prezidentinin_Serencami-1815553 24.06.2021