



AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ MİLLİ MƏCLİSİ MILLI MAJLIS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Beynəlxalq Münasibətlər və Parlamentlərarası Əlaqələr Komitəsi Committee on Foreign and Interparliamentary Relations

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To the Members of the Denmark-Azerbaijan Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Parliament of Denmark

Dear Colleagues,

It is with deep concern that we address this letter to draw your attention to the grave humanitarian and human rights violations that have been committed against the Azerbaijani people by the Republic of Armenia. As is well-documented, the conflict that Armenia started in 1987 has caused immense suffering to Azerbaijanis. Over one million Azerbaijanis were forcibly displaced from their homes as a result of Armenia's aggressive policies. Unlike other conflicts where displacement occurs as an unintended consequence, the displacement of Azerbaijanis was the result of Armenia's deliberate policy of ethnic cleansing and territorial expansion.

The root cause of these atrocities lies in the deeply entrenched racism within Armenia's political establishment. Racism has been normalized and institutionalized as the state policy in Armenia. Armenia conducted total and systematic ethnic cleansing in the Armenian territory and the Azerbaijani lands that were under occupation for nearly three decades. In addition to expelling Azerbaijanis, Armenia engaged in the widespread destruction of Azerbaijani cultural heritage, exploitation of natural resources, looting of public and private property, and the deliberate contamination of Azerbaijani territories with landmines.

Recently, a video recording of a speech delivered on July 23, 1993, by Levon Ter-Petrosyan, then-President of Armenia, has surfaced. In this speech, President Ter-Petrosyan described the ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis from Armenia and the occupied Azerbaijani territories as a historic achievement. Without further comment, we present the relevant excerpt of President Ter-Petrosyan's statement as it was:

"Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh solved a problem the Armenian people had been unable to address for 600 years. Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh have been completely cleansed of other ethnicities. I say again, this was a 600-year-old problem, and its significance will be felt by the Armenian people for another 600 years. Imagine if today there were those 180,000 non-Armenians in Armenia – today we would not have a state. We would not be able to protect Zangezur, safeguard our northeastern regions, or preserve the shores of Lake Sevan. We

would have several new autonomies here. Let us recall that Azerbaijanis were the majority in three regions: Vardenis, Masis, and Amasia – and they were numerous throughout the Zangezur zone. This problem has been resolved."

This statement by the then-sitting president during whose rule the occupation and much of those ethnic cleansing occurred is an extraordinary piece of evidence proving Armenia's systematic policy of ethnic cleansing and dangerous ideology of racial hatred that has fueled its actions. The statement proves the deliberate intent (*mens rea*) behind the ethnic cleansing and occupation, the state responsibility of Armenia, and a coordinated plan demonstrating the systematic and organized nature of those crimes against humanity and breach of peace.

It must be emphasized that, regardless of who has been in power in Armenia, this policy has continued unabated. Levon Ter-Petrosyan's successor, former President Robert Kocharyan, himself a ruthless warlord, propagated outrageous and racist ideas of "ethnic and genetic incompatibility" between Azerbaijanis and Armenians. Another former president and warlord Serzh Sargsyan, openly boasted of his role in the massacre of Azerbaijani civilians in Khojaly in 1992. The current Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan, who once pursued annexationist policies under the slogan "Karabakh is Armenia," actually continues the racist policy by his predecessors refusing to enable the return of Azerbaijanis expelled from Armenia.

The international community, including parliaments, should not remain indifferent to such unprecedented state-level racism and human rights violations. As a member of the United Nations and a party to numerous international human rights conventions, Armenia must be held accountable for these actions.

We, therefore, kindly request you to condemn Armenia's systematic policy of racial discrimination and ethnic cleansing at the state level, to call on the Armenian government to abandon its racist policies, to facilitate the safe and dignified return of expelled Azerbaijanis to their homes in Armenia, and to that end to start dialogue with the Western Azerbaijan Community – the organization uniting expelled Azerbaijanis from Armenia.

We believe that addressing this issue is essential for justice, stability, and lasting peace in the region.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,



Samad SEYIDOV
**Chairman of the Committee on Foreign and
Interparliamentary Relations**