FIFTH INTERIM REPORT

ON

VIOLATIONS BY ARMENIA OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW IN THE COURSE OF NEW ARMED AGGRESSION AGAINST AZERBAIJAN

27 SEPTEMBER - 31 OCTOBER 2020

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ABBREVIATIONS

Armenia SSR Armenia Soviet Socialist Republic

Azerbaijan SSR Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic

ECHR European Court of Human Rights

ICRC International Committee of Red Cross

IDPs Internally Displaced Persons

IHL International Humanitarian Law

MLRS Multiple Launch Rocket System

PoWs Prisoners of War

SC Security Council

UN United Nations

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

INTRODUCTION

On September 27, 2020 the armed forces of Armenia, blatantly violating the ceasefire regime have launched another aggression against Azerbaijan, by intensively attacking the positions of the armed forces of Azerbaijan along the frontline, as well as by deliberately subjecting to artillery shelling residential areas of Tartar, Aghdam, Fuzuli and Jabrayil districts. On the following days, densely populated residential areas – Shamkir, Beylagan, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Goranboy, Tartar, Barda, Aghjabadi and the city of Ganja were subjected to heavy bombardment, including with mid-range missiles.

As a result, there have been casualties among civilians and military servicemen of Azerbaijan. Extensive damage has been inflicted on many houses and other civilian infrastructure.

The new aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan is yet another blatant violation of fundamental norms and principles of international law, IHL, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its Additional Protocols, as well as the United Nations Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884 of 1993 demanding the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the armed forces of Armenia from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

According to preliminary estimation, as of October 30, totally 91 civilians, including children, women and elderly have been killed, more than 400 civilians have been wounded as a consequence of heavy artillery shelling. As of October 29, 2406 private houses, 92 apartment buildings and 423 civilian facilities were damaged and became unserviceable as a result of armed attack.

Vehicles belonging to civilians became unserviceable, and numerous small and large horned animals and haystacks were destroyed as well. Extensive damage was inflicted upon water, energy and other civilian infrastructure.

The armed forces of Armenia do not even spare ambulances and medical facilities in a blatant violation of IHL, in particular *Article 35* of the First Geneva Convention of 1949.

Also, a medical worker was seriously injured as a result of the shooting by the armed forces of Armenia of a sanitary medical vehicle, clearly marked with a white flag, collecting the bodies of Armenian soldiers in the area of Sugovshan.

Every time when the humanitarian ceasefire was agreed between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the armed forces of Armenia violated it by subjecting residential areas and civilian infrastructure in Azerbaijan, including the city of Ganja, Barda, Mingechevir and Gabala to bombardment by different types of missiles like Scud, Smerch, Tocka-U and etc, launched both from its own territory and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The latest humanitarian ceasefire of October 26 has already been repeatedly violated by the armed forces of Armenia.

Below are some of those cases recorded for the last two weeks:

- Ganja – the 2nd biggest city, in which more than 331 000 people reside and which is located far from the frontline, was subjected to "SCUD/Elbrus" ballistic missile attack

launched from the territory of Armenia on October 17, 2020, around 02:00. This attack on a densely populated Ganja city has taken place for the third time in a row since October 4, 2020 (See Section 3).

- Barda a city located approximately 100 km from the border with Armenia and 30 km away from the Contact Line, became a subject of attack by armed forces of Armenia. The rockets with banned cluster munitions were launched from the Smerch MLRS at densely populated areas of the Barda city, including its business center and surroundings. The use of 9N235 cluster munitions from 9M55 Smerch rockets was confirmed by Amnesty International. According to the preliminary reports, this terrorist attack by Armenia led to death of 21 civilians and 70 others were wounded. Civil infrastructure facilities and vehicles were extensively damaged. A day before, on October 27, Barda district has already came under the 300 mm "Smerch" cluster munition rocket attack by the armed forces of Armenia. As a result five civilians died, including a toddler and thirteen civilians were injured.
- Mingechevir the 4th biggest city in Azerbaijan, in which 106 000 people reside, hosts the Mingechevir Water Hydropower Complex and is located far from the frontline was hit with missiles on 17 October 2020 around 01:00.
- Tartar city has been under the heavy artillery shelling since September 27. Over the last two weeks, the armed forces of Armenia have intentionally shelled private houses, civilian infrastructure, including schools and even a funeral ceremony. On October 26, Tartar city and the villages of the Tartar district became a subject of artillery attacks, including by the use of 300 mm "Smerch" MLRS again. More detailed information on civilian casualties is below.
- Ordubad district was hit with the missile by the armed forces of Armenia from the territory of the occupied Gubadli region on October 15 at 10:44.
- Aghdam district as a result of artillery shelling of the residential areas of the district four civilians, including one journalist were injured on October 18. Artillery shelling of the villages of the Aghdam district continued on October 26.
- Gabala, Kurdamir and Siyazan districts located far away from the frontline became a subject of missile attacks launched from the Gafan and Jermukh regions of Armenia on October 22. The attack on these residential areas resulted in injury of a resident of Gabala and severe damage to five houses.
- Tovuz, Dashkasan and Agjabadi districts were also shelled by the armed forces of Armenia on October 26.
- Gadabay, Tovuz and Dashkasan districts were again fired upon by the armed forces of Armenia on October 28.

¹ https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/10/armenia-azerbaijan-first-confirmed-use-of-cluster-munitions-by-armenia-cruel-and-reckless/

In order to repel military aggression by Armenia and to ensure the security of civilians and densely populated residential areas inside the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan have launched counter-offensive measures. Azerbaijan acts on its sovereign soil exercising its right of self-defense and takes adequate and proportionate measures in full compliance with IHL to thwart the imminent threat to its civilian population and ensure their security.

The political and military leadership of the Republic of Azerbaijan has declared on numerous occasions since the start of the counter-offensive operations that only military objects and installations will be targeted and civilians residing in the occupied territories as well as civilian infrastructure therein will not be targeted. On October 04, the Ministry of Defense issued an official appeal to those civilians calling them to stay away from the conflict zone, especially from firing points, military facilities and military infrastructure of the armed forces of Armenia. The Ministry further stated that appropriate conditions will be created for their evacuation from the conflict zone and all their rights will be protected.² On October 24, the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan renewed this call and expressed the readiness to take all the necessary measures to ensure the security, food, medical care and other needs of the civilian population who will cross to the Azerbaijani side. The Ministry of Defense also appealed to the servicemen of the armed forces of Armenia to lay down their arms and surrender. As it was underlined in the call of the Ministry of Defense, all the rights of prisoners of war and civilians will be protected in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, and necessary conditions, through international organizations, will be created for persons wishing to move to third countries³.

The following served as a basis for the data presented:

- 1. Facts collected by the staff of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- 2. Information obtained from the General Prosecutor's Office;
- 3. Information from verified media publications.

²https://mod.gov.az/en/news/the-military-command-of-azerbaijan-addressed-the-peaceful-population-living-in-the-occupied-territories-32628.html

https://mod.gov.az/en/news/the-civilian-population-living-in-occupied-territories-is-advised-to-stay-away-from-military-facilities-33280.html

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONFLICT

After the collapse of the USSR, the international legal doctrine of *uti possidetis juris* secured the international, regional and national legitimacy of the boundaries of newly independent States. Under this legal doctrine, the former administrative borders of Azerbaijan SSR, which had included Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, were recognized by international law as the legitimate borders of the newly independent Republic of Azerbaijan. This was later reaffirmed in the UN Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 on the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict started with the Armenians` open territorial claims to Azerbaijan's historical lands and ethnic provocations in1988. In the early 1980s, the Armenians in the Soviet Union leadership, leaders of Armenian SSR and the Armenian Diaspora abroad exploited the weakening of the central government of the USSR to embark on a campaign to annex the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast to Armenia.

The United Nations Security Council adopted the above-mentioned four resolutions in 1993 in response to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan. These resolutions condemn the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories; reaffirm respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, inviolability of its international borders and the inadmissibility of use of force for acquisition of territories; confirm that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is part of Azerbaijan; and demand the immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories.

The resolutions also made specific reference to violations of IHL, including the displacement of a large number of civilians in Azerbaijan, attacks on civilians and bombardments of its territory.

27 years after their adoption, the key demands of these UN SC resolutions remain unimplemented. At present 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan – Nagorno-Karabakh and 7adjacent districts are under the occupation of Armenia. One million of IDPs and refugees fled their homes to save their lives and settled indifferent parts of Azerbaijan.

These criminal actions of Armenia shattered the foundations of IHL and were aimed at creating a new spiral of social and humanitarian crisis by disrupting the normal life of the civilian population in areas close to the line of contact.

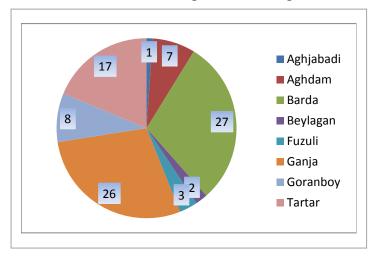
Over almost 30 years, Armenia has been pursuing the aim to consolidate its occupation of this territory and maintain the status-quo created through illegal use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan accompanied by heinous war crimes, crimes against humanity, such as genocide and ethnic cleansing.

1.1. Deaths Among the Civilian Population

The armed forces of Armenia with the use of artillery, rockets and missiles shelled Shamkir, Beylagan, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Goranboy, Tartar, Barda, Aghjabadi, Khizi, Tovuz, Yevlakh, Gabala, Kurdemir and Ordubad districts and the cities of Ganja and Minghechevir.

It should be mentioned that Vagharshak Harutyunyan, the chief advisor of the Prime Minister of Armenia in his interview to "Vesti" program on Russia TV channel on October 6, 2020 confessed that strikes at peaceful settlements are of deliberate nature in order to cause panic."⁴

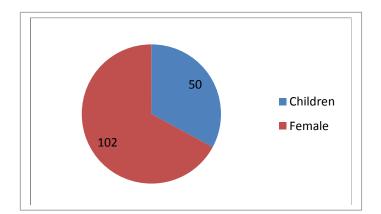
As a result of deliberate targeting of densely populated residential areas 91 civilians, including 10 children and 27 females were killed (see Annex 1). Thus, death toll among civilians has increased by 26 in one week since the release of the 4th Interim Report on October 26, 2020. The number of deaths among civilians in regions of Azerbaijan is as follows:



Aghjabadi	1
Aghdam	7
Barda	27
Beylagan	2
Fuzuli	3
Ganja	26
Goranboy	8
Tartar	17
TOTAL	91

1.2. Civilian Injuries

According to preliminary estimation, totally 404 civilians were seriously wounded. 50 of them are children and 102 females.



Wounded children and female		
50		
102		

⁴ https://thehill.com/opinion/international/520382-washington-can-initiate-peace-in-the-south-caucasus; https://caspiannews.com/news-detail/pashinyans-advisor-confirms-armenias-deliberate-attacks-on-azerbaijani-civilian-settlements-2020-10-9-0/

Below are some cases on wounded civilians:

On October 27, as a result of the 300 "Smerch" rocket attack with banned cluster munitions by the armed forces of Armenia on the Garayusifly village of the Barda district 5 civilians were killed, 13 others wounded, including minors - Ismayilova Aysu (2005), Alizada Elvin (2013), Hajiyeva Ayisha (2009), Iskandarly Tahira (2017) and Karimli Shukur (2005).

On October 22, Amirbeyov Murad (born in 2003), a resident of Hajally village of the Gabala district, received various injuries as a result of rockets launched by the armed forces of Armenia. Five houses in the village were severely damaged.

On October 19, the Tartar district came under intensive rocket artillery fire of the armed forces of Armenia. A resident of Alasgarli village - Salimov Niyaz (1962), was hospitalized with various injuries as a result of a shell hitting the yard of his house.

On the same day, as a result of a shell falling on Banovshalar settlement of the Aghdam district - Guliyeva Shamama (1955), and Guliyeva Maya (1976) were hospitalized with various injuries. Mahiyaddinli Chichek, a resident of Pashabeyli village, was also hospitalized with various injuries as a result of artillery shelling.

On October 17, due to the intensive rocket and heavy artillery shelling in direction of Aghjabadi district by the armed forces of Armenia, Hajiyev Rauf (1991), a resident of the village of Arazbar, has received various injuries as a result of an artillery shell falling on the yard of his house, and the house itself was severely damaged.

On October 15, early in the morning the armed forces of Armenia subjected Aghdam district to intensive rocket and artillery fire from various directions. Valiyev Shahsuvar (1969) and Musayev Roman (1979) have been injured as a result of shelling that hit their houses in Birinji Baharly settlement in Aghdam.

On October 14, a shell falling on the yard of a rural secondary school in the territory of Tartar district resulted in hospitalization with various wounds of Zeynalov Ramiz (1971), representative of Tartar District Authority for Duyarli village, Ahmadov Kamran (1966), representative of Asgarli village and the following villagers: Aliyev Matlab (1965), Ahmadov Khayyam (1987), Ibrahimov Ilgar (1965), Aghazade Firdovsi (1996) and Suleymanov Agha (1960).

On the same day, Gambarov Namig (1983), an employee of the Azerbaijan Television and Radio Broadcasting CJSC (AZTV) was hospitalized with various injuries as a result of the attack on journalists' vehicle by the armed forces of Armenia. On October 19, Hasanov Anar (1982), an AZTV reporter got wounds and was hospitalized with various injuries as a result of a fire by armed forces of Armenia.

2.1. Targeting Public Facilities and Private Property

As of October 29, 2406 private houses, 92 apartment buildings and 423 objects of civilian infrastructure have been damaged and have become unserviceable as a result of Armenia's armed attacks since September 27, 2020.

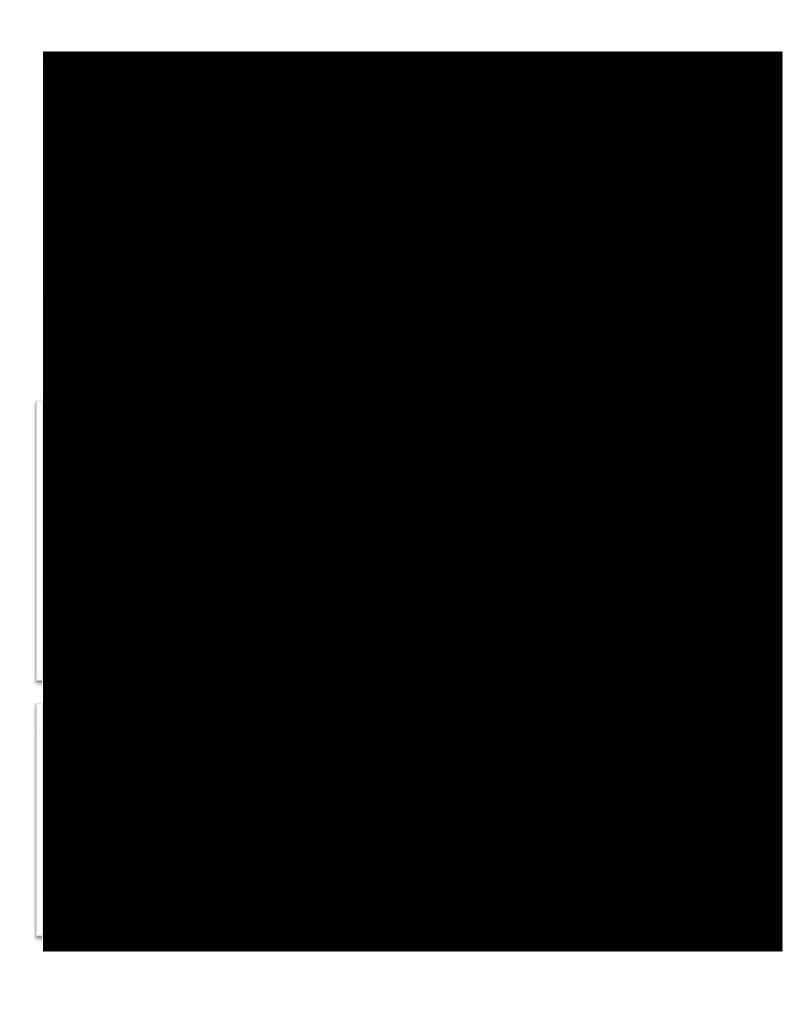




Photo 12: Damaged elementary school in the Ganja city

Photo 13 – 14: Scene evidence from the ruins in the Ganja city (17-October-2020)



Photo 15: Interior of the Imamzade mosque damaged as a result of the attack on the Ganja city

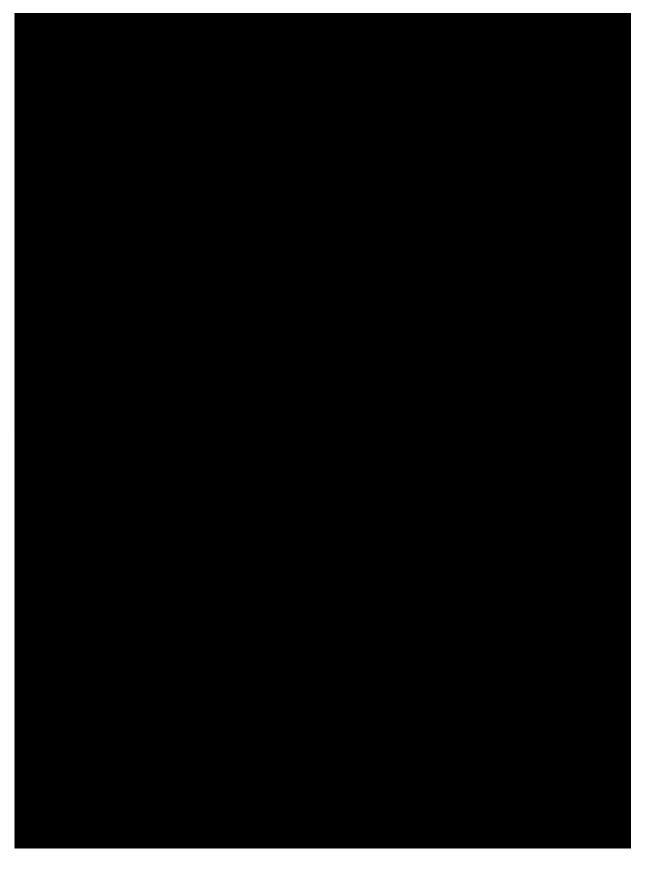


Photo 16 – 17: Private houses of residents of Ganja after missile attacks (17-October-2020)



Photo 18-19: Damaged secondary school No. 1 in Tartar

PARTICULAR CONCERN IS MEDICAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING DELIBERATE TARGETS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF ARMENIA.

Photo 20 – 23: Local ambulance was targeted by artillery fire in the Tartar district, in a blatant violation of Article 35 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949. The driver was seriously wounded



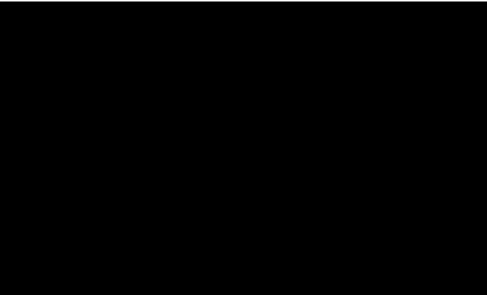


Photo 24: Shikar Shikarov secondary school in Tartar district

2.2. Targeting Civilian Infrastructure

Vital civilian infrastructures, such as electricity, gas, water, communication stations have also been targeted. The armed forces of Armenia targeted the Oghuz-Gabala-Baku water pipeline, which supplies drinking water to the Absheron Peninsula and is of special strategic importance for Azerbaijan. Air Defense Forces of Azerbaijan neutralized the missile and its parts consequently fell in the 250 meters perimeter from the pipeline.

10 kV Telestudio overhead line from 35/10 kV Khangarvand substation in Goranboy, and the 35 kV Gulustan and 10 kV Azizbeyov, 2ndSubartesian overhead lines from 110/30/10 kV Naftalan substation were repeatedly fired and shelled upon in Goranboy. The 0.4 kV distribution network in Tapgaragoyunlu is badly damaged. Repair and restoration work has not yet been possible.

10 kV AzGes №3, Sarijali №11 overhead lines from 110/35/10 kV Tartar substation and 10kV Borsunlu №3 from 35 kV Demirchiler substation were fired upon.

35 kV Horadiz-BoyukBahmanli overhead line, as well as 10 kV Shukurbayli, Gazakhlar, Babi and Alkhanli overhead lines from the 35/10 kV Horadiz and Mahmudlu substation was fired upon in different places and then restored in Fuzuli. In Alkhanli and Shukurbayli villages, the 0.4 kV distribution network is damaged and out of service.

110 kV Tazakand-1, Tazakand-2, Khindiristan-1 and Khindiristan-2 overhead lines were fired upon in Agdam. These lines have also been restored. In Aghjabadi, 10 kV Minakhorlu from 110/35/10 kV Karabakh substation and 10 kV PMK-4 overhead line from 35/10 kV Qiyamadinli substation were also fired upon.

According to the latest data, the gas supply of Tapgaragoyunlu village of Goranboy remains to be limited. At present, natural gas is being supplied at about 50% of Fuzuli district. The gas supply for 53 residential settlements has been suspended, except Tartar city and 51 villages, 25 villages of Aghjabadi, a village and 5 settlements of Aghdam.

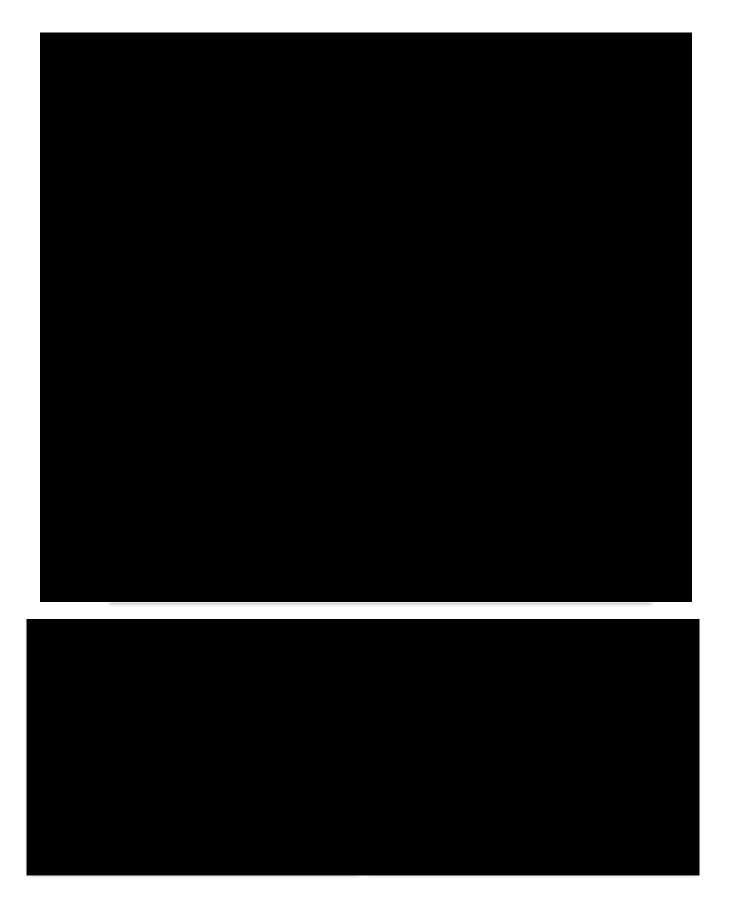


Photo 27-29: Barda streets after the missile attacks on October 28, 2020

SECTION 3. VIOLATIONS DURING THE HUMANITARIAN CEASEFIRE

Despite the humanitarian ceasefire agreed a few times during the month of October, armed forces of Armenia continued to target civilian property and other civilian infrastructure in densely populated residential areas. Below are some of those cases:

After October 11 (the day of heinous attack on Ganja) most of the casualties within one single day among civilians have been recorded following the attacks on Ganja on October 17, 2020, and on Barda on October 27-28.

On October 17, the Javadkhan area in the central part of Ganja was subjected to "SCUD/Elbrus" ballistic missile attack launched from the territory of Armenia. Serious damages have been inflicted upon civilians and infrastructure. Only in Ganja 25 civilians were killed and around 100 civilians were wounded since the humanitarian ceasefire was first agreed on October 10, 2020.

In view of systematic attacks on the city of Ganja, the following statement of Vagram Pogosian (so called "spokesperson" of the illegal puppet regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan) made on October 5, 2020, should be recalled: "A few more days and I'm afraid that even archaeologists will not be able to find the place of Ganja. Get sober, before it is too late." ⁵

On October 27, as a result of the 300 "Smerch" rocket attack with banned cluster munitions by the armed forces of Armenia on the Garayusifly village of the Barda district, according to the preliminary estimation, five civilians died, including a toddler and thirteen civilians were injured. On October 28, around 1pm Armenia launched again 300mm "Smerch" rockets with banned cluster munitions at densely populated areas of the city of Barda, including its business center and surroundings. According to the preliminary reports, this act of terror by Armenia resulted in death of 21 civilians and injuries of 70 civilians. Civil infrastructure facilities and vehicles were extensively damaged.

Also, on October 15, the armed forces of Armenia have intentionally shelled a funeral ceremony in the cemetery of the city of Tartar. As a result of this attack 4 civilians –Orujov Parviz (1989), Rustamov Vasif (1962), Zamanov Shakir (1988), Amirov Isgandar (1967) have been killed and four other civilians have been hospitalized with various injuries. Artillery shelling by the armed forces of Armenia of the Jamilly village of the Tartar district led to death of its two residents Anar Rasul oghlu (1994) and Guliyev Anar (1984). Shabanov Rasul (1972) was wounded and his house severely damaged.

⁵ https://www.1lurer.am/en/2020/10/05/A-few-more-days-and-even-archaeologists-will-not-be-able-to-find-the-place-of-Ganja-Poghosyan/328058

Photo 30 – 31: Children wounded as a result of the missile attack on the city of Ganja (17-October-2020)





Photo 32 – 33: Injured residents of Ganja after the attack of the armed forces of Armenia





Photo 38: Funeral of Aysu Iskandarly (born in 2013)killed by armed forces of Armenia in the Garayusifly village of the Barda district



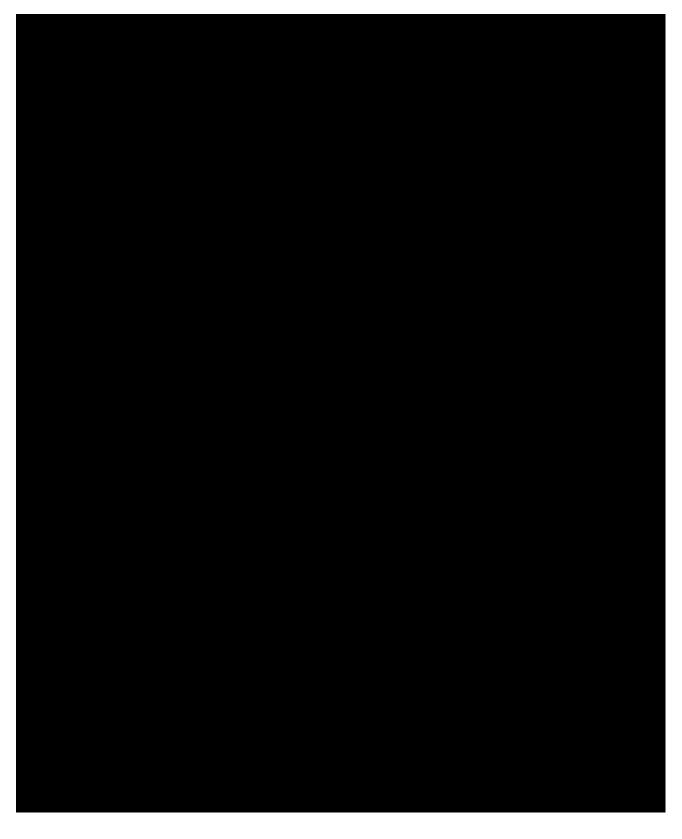
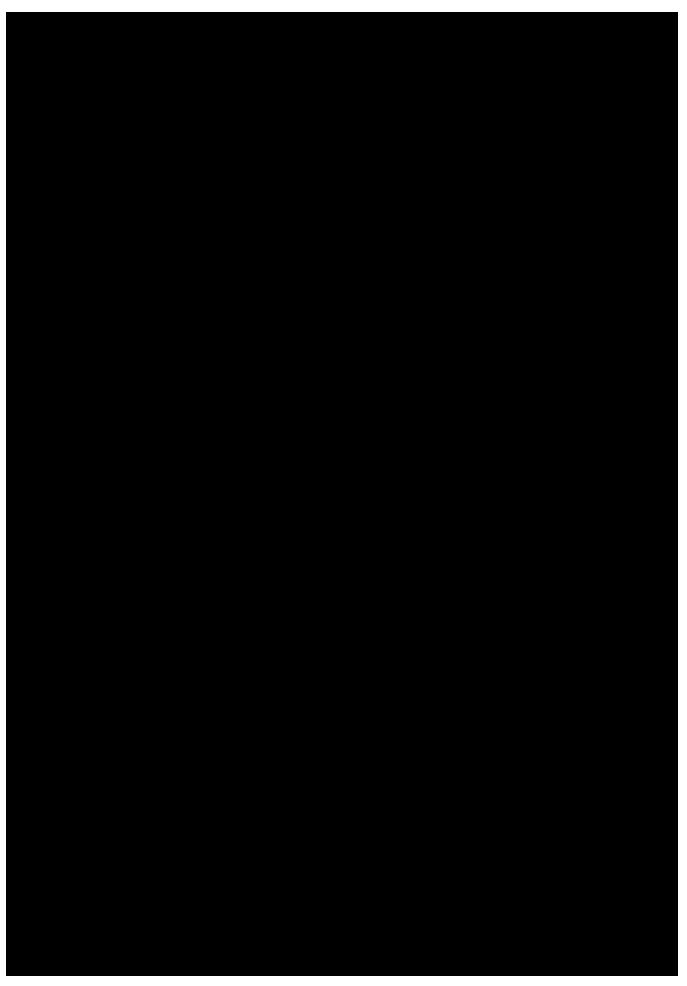
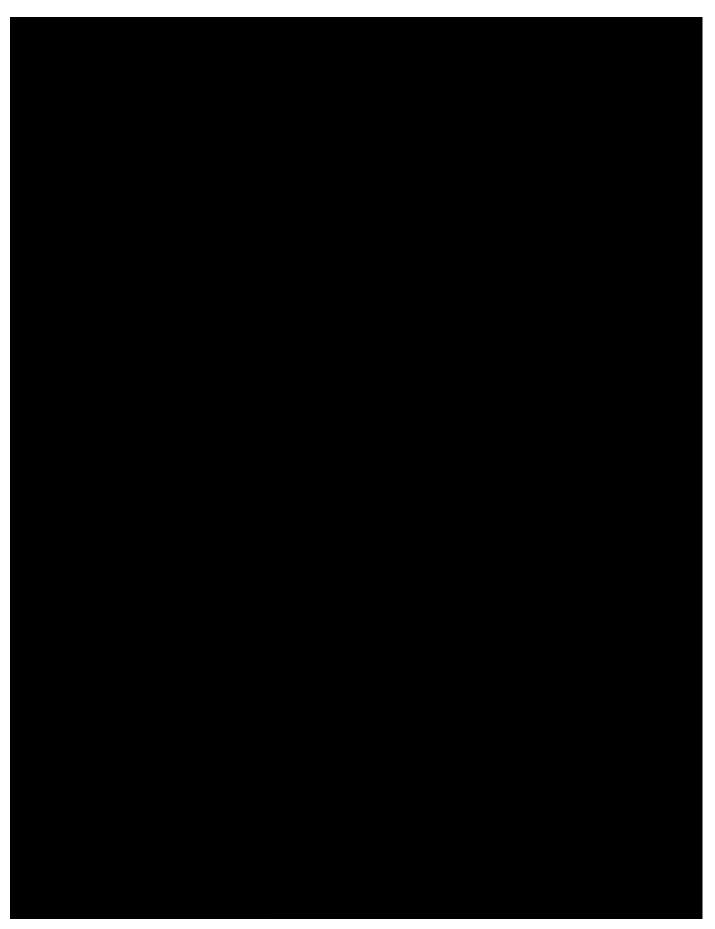


Photo 42– 43: Operational-tactical missile exploded in the territory of the Ordubad district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan





SECTION 4.VIOLATIONS WITH RESPECT TO CIVILIANS IN THE TERRITORIES UNDER CONTROL OF ARMENIA

There are mass media reports indicating that Armenia does not take necessary measures with a view to clearly distinguish journalists from combatants. Some photos suggest that in some instances, journalists in the theatre of active military operations also act as combatants.



Photo 49 – 51: A person claimed to be a journalist wears military uniform and holds a machin gun in his hand

There are also media footages indicating civilians, including children are recruited to participate in the military activities.



Photo 52: Children helping soldiers to clean their guns

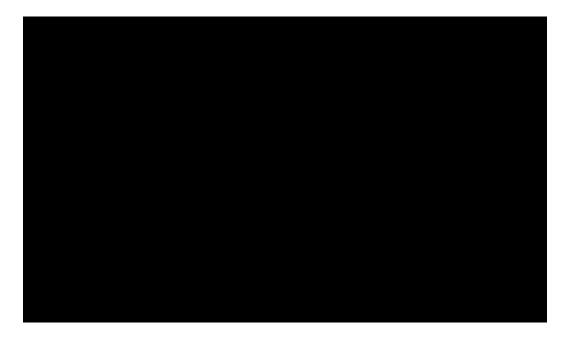


Photo 53: Armed forces of Armenia uses civilians to attack Azerbaijan



Photo 54: The Armed forces of Armenia uses underage named Valeri to attack Azerbaijan

These photographic evidences testify to violation of Armenia of its obligation under Article 58 (c) of the Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, which oblige the Party to the conflict to take all feasible precautions to protect the civilian population and civilian objects under its control against the effects of attacks.

Furthermore, involvement of the children in armed hostilities testifies to Armenia's violations under Article 77 (2) of Addition Protocol I and Article 38 of the Convention on the Rights of Child prohibiting the recruitment of children into armed forces or not allowing them to take a direct part in hostilities.

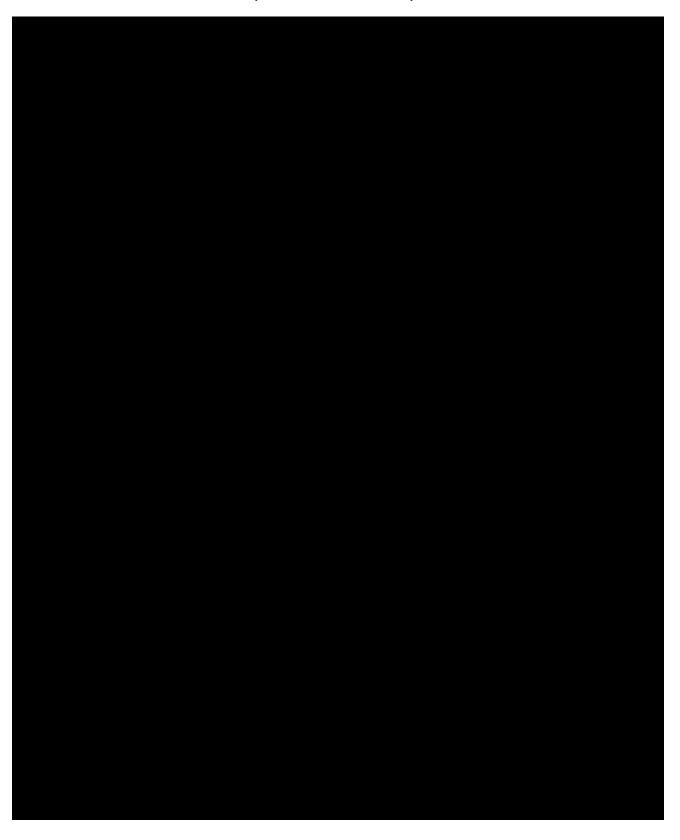
The irrefutable evidence contained in the present Report reconfirms that attacks of the armed forces of Armenia on civilian population and infrastructure in Azerbaijan is of systemic and widespread nature. The statements by officials of Armenia and the so called "representatives" of the illegal puppet regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan also prove that the deliberate armed attacks on Azerbaijani civilians and infrastructure have been preplanned and executed as a part of Armenia's war strategy.

The new phase of aggression by Armenia unleashed in the early morning of September 27, 2020, has already led to severe violations of human rights:

- 1. Armenia has been making use of missiles, artillery and other weapons to target the civilian settlements and objects as well as civilian infrastructure of vital importance deliberately, indiscriminately and systematically which is a gross violation of IHL and constitutes the war crime and crimes against humanity.
- 2. Armenia has been violating the right to life of the civilian population of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Art 2 of ECHR).
- 3. The deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure resulting from discrimination based on the nationality and ethnicity in a clear violation of Art 14 of ECHR. Of particular notice is a deliberate targeting of IDPs, their houses and other private property. Being victim to 1991-1994 ethnic cleansing committed by Armenia, they became target of Armenia yet another time. This constitutes the war crime and the crime against humanity.
- 4. During military operations, Armenia has intensively used weapons and methods prohibited by IHL. Medical facilities and vehicles have been targeted in violation of Article 35 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949.
- 5. Deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on educational facilities constitute a violation of Articles 51 and 52 of the Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. This is also a violation of the right to education of schoolchildren residing in areas targeted by armed forces of Armenia as stipulated, *inter alia*, in Article 13 of 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Serious damage has been inflicted upon private property of civilians. As a result, their houses, livestock, vehicles and other private property have been destroyed and damaged, that constitutes a violation of their right to property (Art. 1 of Protocol 1 of ECHR).
- 7. Armenia violates its obligations under international human rights law and humanitarian law with respect to civilians under its own control. This includes, among others, Articles 58 (c) and 77 (c) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, as well as Article 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This survey is far from being comprehensive. However, it demonstrates the range, variety and consistency of Armenia's violations of international human rights law and IHL. Armenia bears full responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity it has committed as a matter of the international law of State responsibility, which includes its agents and officials and those for whom it must be deemed liable by virtue of direct instruction.

List of 91 civilians, *including 10 children and 27 women,* killed by armed forces of Armenia (27.09.2020-29.10.2020)⁶



 $^{^{\}rm 6}$ Information provided by the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan

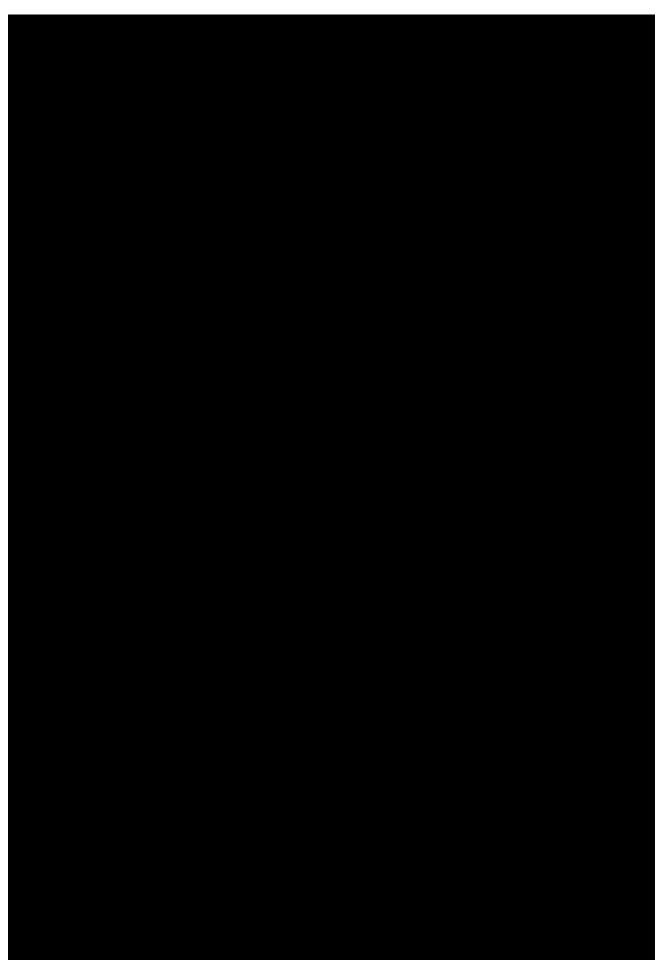


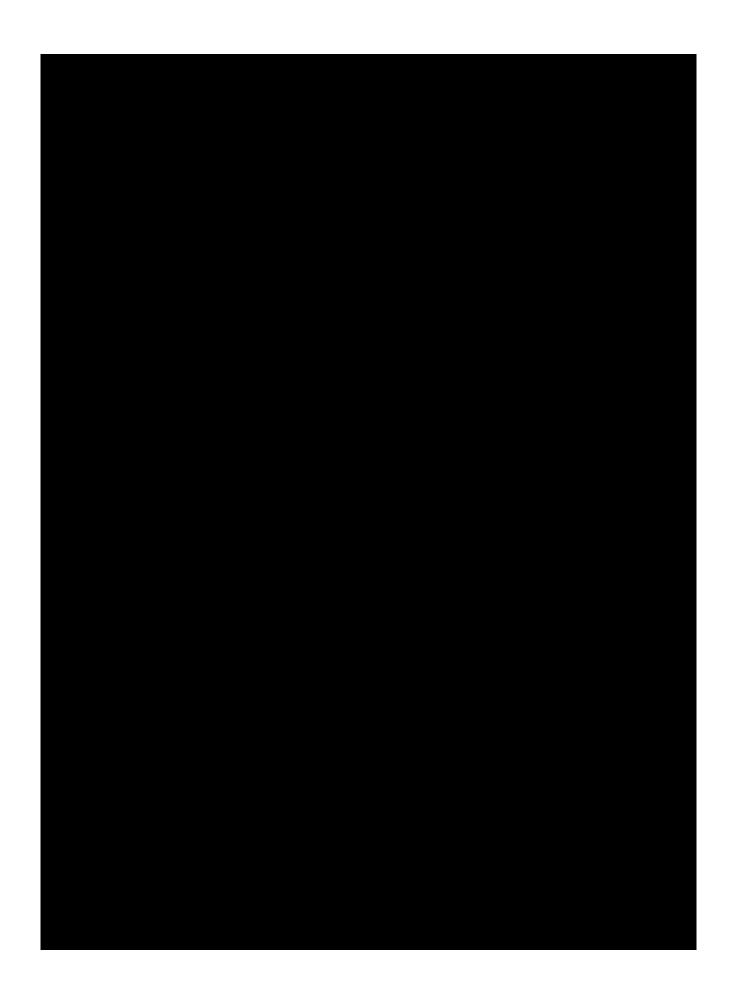
















THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN OMBUDSMAN



Address: Uzeyir Hajibeyli Street 80; Government House, Gate II; AZ 1000, Baku, Azerbaijan Phone: (+99412) 498 23 65; (+99412) 493 74 22 | Fax: (+99412) 498 23 65 Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.az (for appeals)

Call center:

