



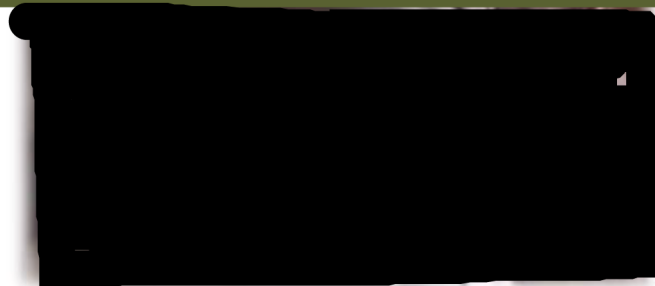
**THE HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDER OF ARMENIA**



**THE HUMAN RIGHTS
OMBUDSMAN OF ARTSAKH**



**FIFTH AD HOC REPORT
ON TORTURE AND INHUMAN TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF ARTSAKH DEFENSE
ARMY AND CAPTURED ARMENIANS BY AZERBAIJANI ARMED FORCES
(FROM NOVEMBER 19-DECEMBER 2, 2020)**



WARNING!
18+

**YEREVAN
STEPANAKERT
DECEMBER 2020**

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Introduction

The Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) continuously monitor the treatment of members of Artsakh Defense Army (hereinafter referred to as ADA) and Armenians captured by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces during the offensive against Artsakh and Armenia, as well as after the established ceasefire.

Already 5 ad hoc reports summarizing findings of war crimes and gross violations of International Humanitarian Law committed by Azerbaijani Armed Forces have been submitted to the international bodies. The mentioned reports include the materials obtained starting from September 27 to November 18, 2020.

Though a complete ceasefire was established by the Statement of the Prime Minister of Armenia, the President of Azerbaijan and the President of Russia on November 10, 2020, new evidence of atrocious acts conducted by the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are being emerged. Accordingly, the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh continue the monitoring and documentation of all the materials demonstrating the criminal approach of the Azerbaijani military and the violations of IHL.

The two human rights institutions have constantly stressed that impunity and the absence of appropriate condemnation for committed war crimes create a favorable environment for Azerbaijani side to commit new atrocities, with even more cruelty and cynicism towards ethnic Armenians, regardless of whether the victims are combatants, rendered *hors de combat* or members of peaceful civilian population, even where there is an established ceasefire.

VIEWER WARNING:

The following Report and its Annexes contain violent and gory materials.

1. Torture and Inhuman Treatment of Prisoners of War and Captured Ethnic Armenians by Azerbaijani Armed Forces


The Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh continue to obtain evidence of war crimes committed by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces involving torture and inhuman treatment of prisoners of war and captured ethnic Armenians.

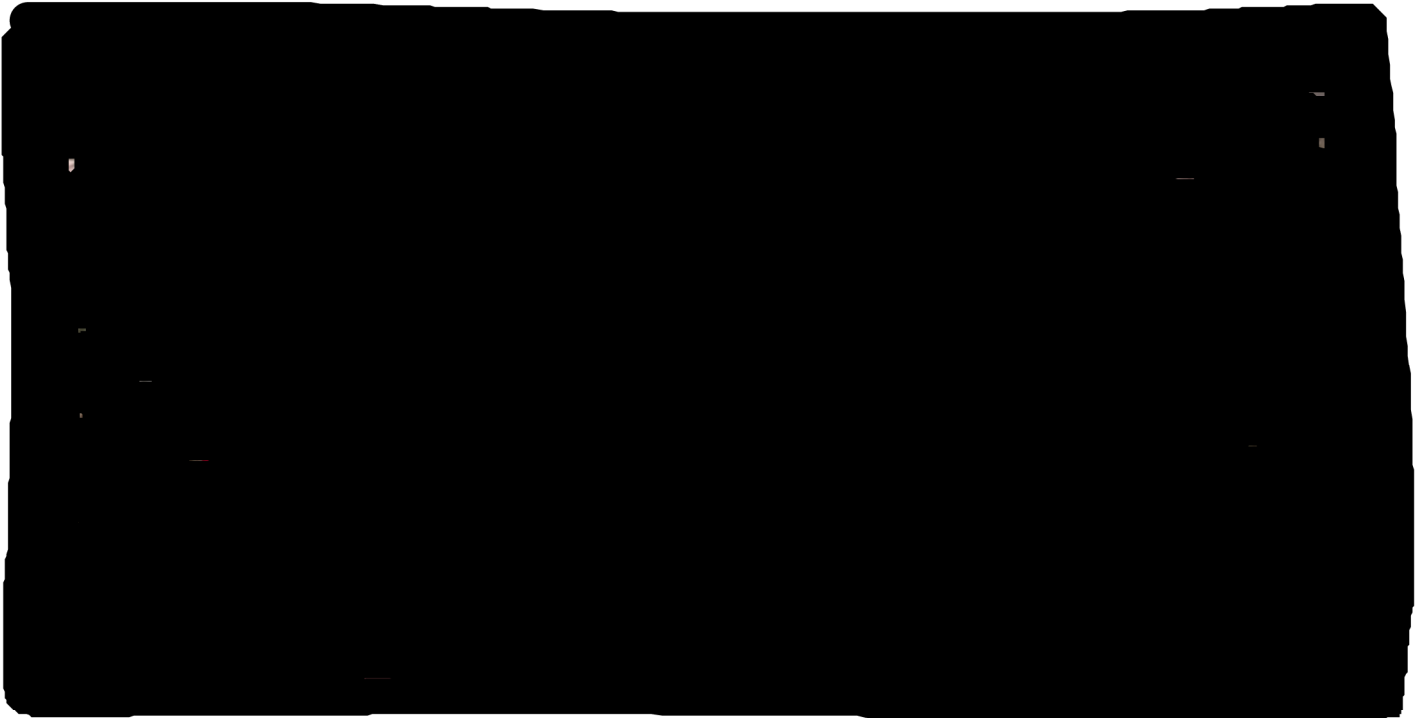
A video footage (Annex 1¹) that has been disseminated through Azerbaijani internet sources demonstrates the extremely atrocious activities of the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces. In particular, in the mentioned video members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces put the severed head of an ethnic Armenian on a body of a dead animal, apparently of a pig (see images *a* and *b*). In the video, the members of Azerbaijani Armed forces are mocking and insulting the body of the ethnic Armenian claiming that it is their “revenge”. In addition to that, one of the soldiers tells others “to go and to bring petrol and fuel”.

Furthermore, in the same video one of the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces puts his foot on the chest of the beheaded body of the ethnic Armenian and brutally pushes it squeezing out blood from the severed neck.

The bleeding body of the captured Armenian, the absence of other visible injuries on it, the position and the color of the head and the body, as well as the facial reflexes of the severed head indicate that the person had been murdered in a ruthless way, that is he was beheaded while he was alive (see image *c*).

This video is an evidence of a grave war crime committed by the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces. The severe violence of the perpetrators is beyond of imagination. Moreover, this gruesome crime is followed with actions demonstrating extreme cynicism based on the hatred against ethnic Armenians. The perpetrators must be punished by all means of International Criminal Law.

¹ Available at 

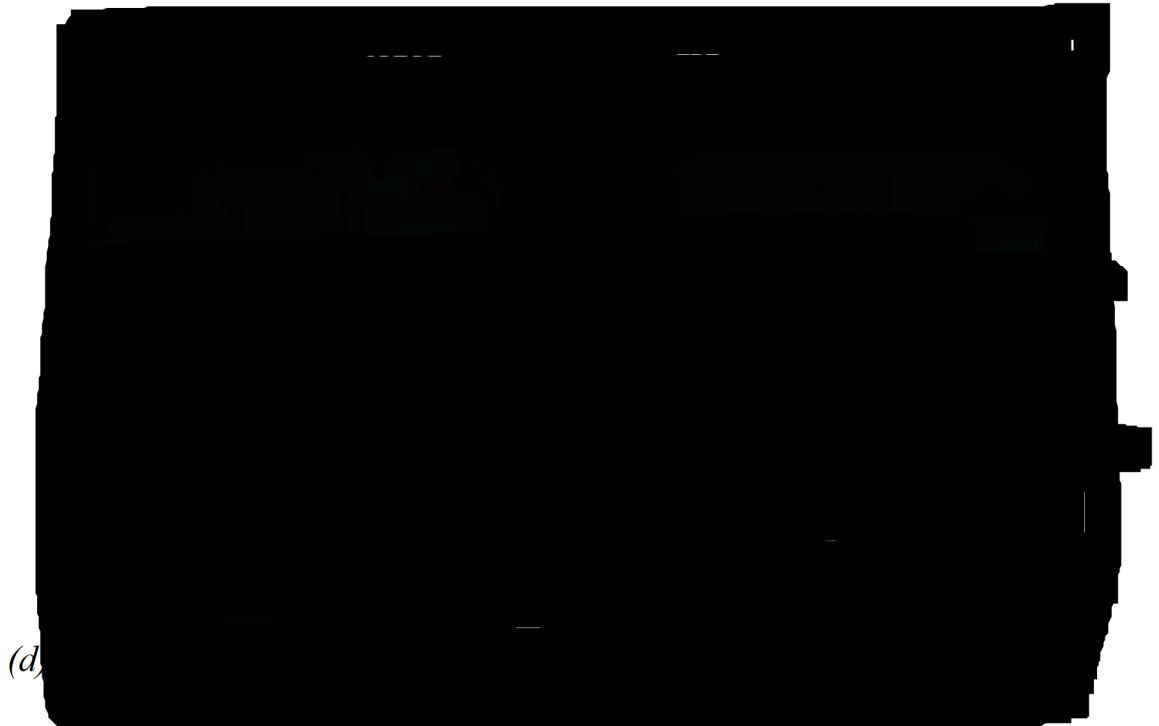


(a)

(b)

(c)

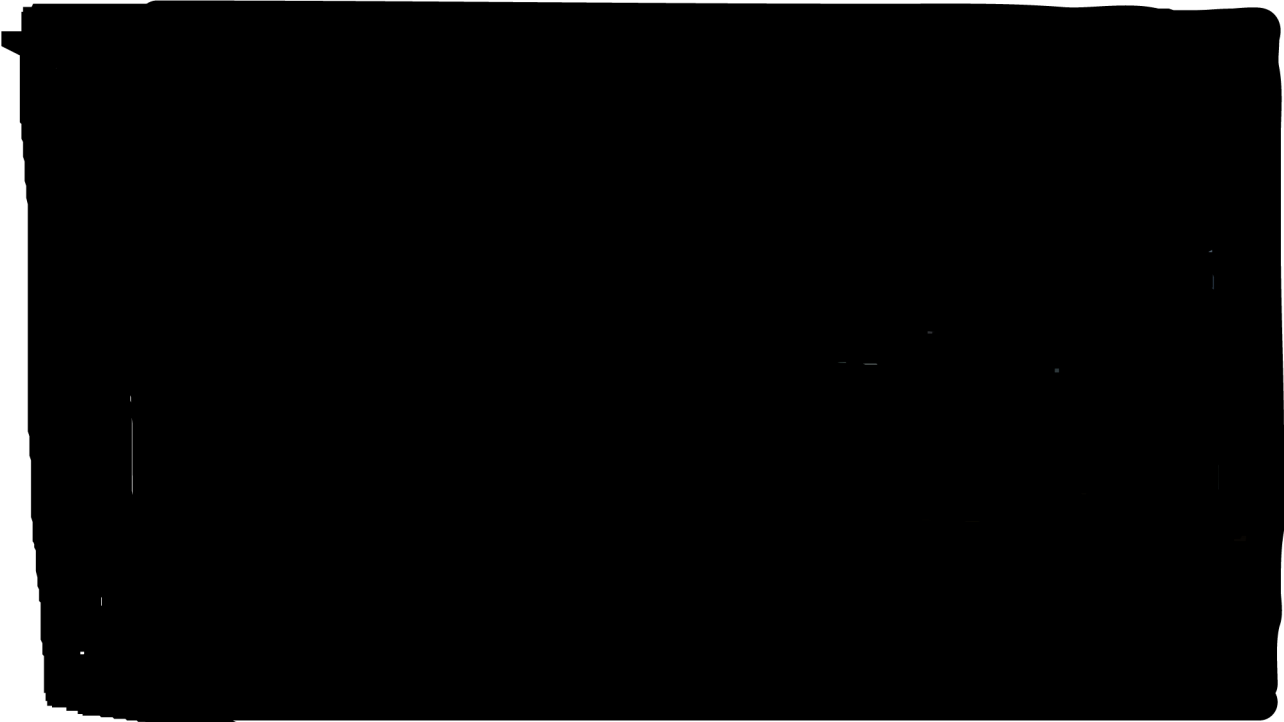
Azerbaijani internet sources uploaded another footage (Annex 2²) demonstrating the treatment towards Armenian prisoners of war. In the mentioned video the members of ADA were forcibly crawling on the ground while five members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces with masks ruthlessly attacked them and were continuously kicking them (see images *d* and *e*).



(d)

² Available at [redacted]

In another video (Annex 3³) disseminated by the Azerbaijani internet sources a group of captured ethnic Armenians is sitting in a vehicle. One of them, an elderly civilian is being constantly kicked by members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces, who also target his head (see images *f* and *g*).



(*f*)

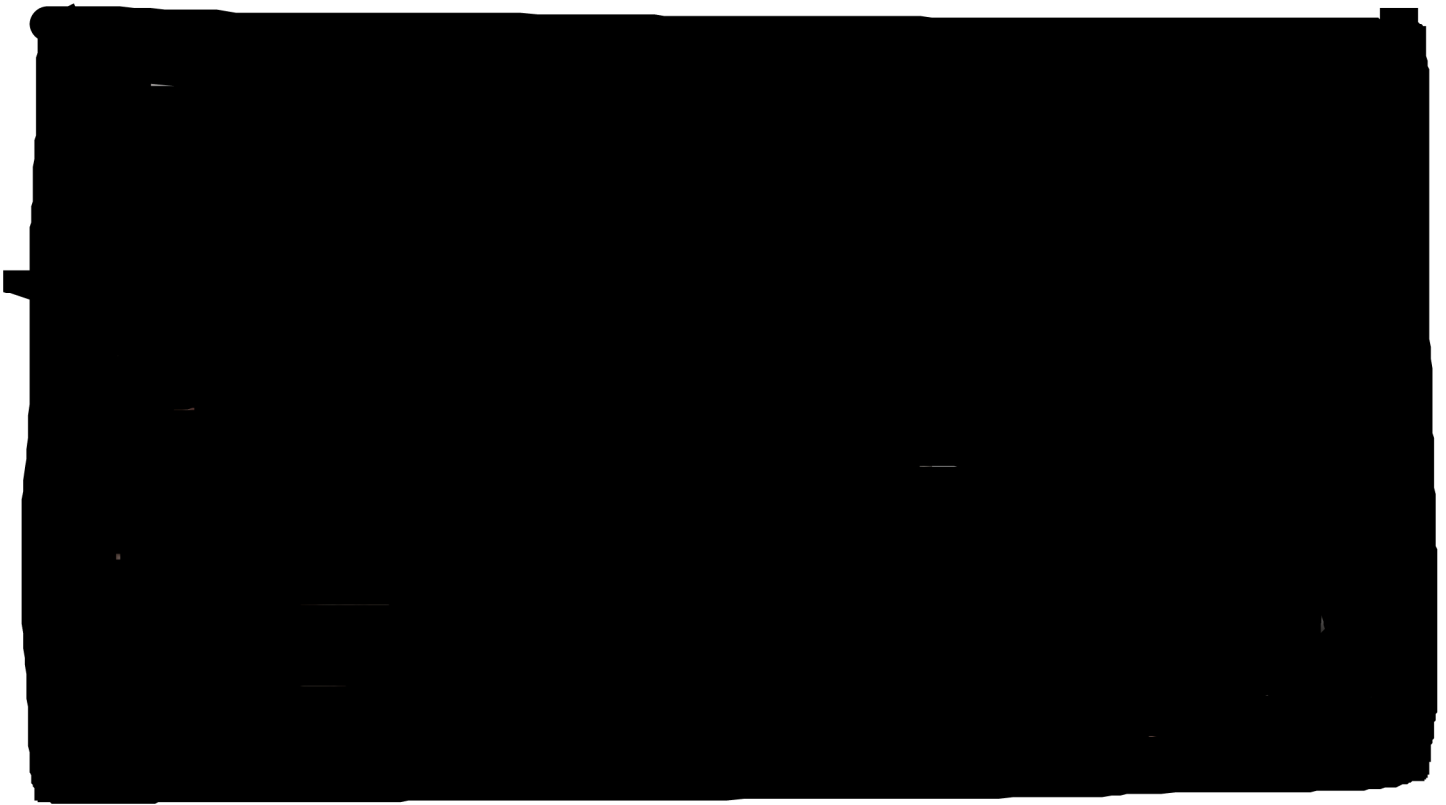
(*g*)

The Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh also revealed several footages that have been widely disseminated through social media networks, depicting inhuman and humiliating treatment towards the prisoners of war and captured ethnic Armenians.

In one of those videos (Annex 4⁴) the captured member of ADA is compelled to repeat greetings to familiars of the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces and to tell that “Karabakh is Azerbaijan”. In the video, the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces twice hit the head of the Armenian prisoner of war, [REDACTED] (see images *h*, *i* and *j*).

³ Available at [REDACTED]

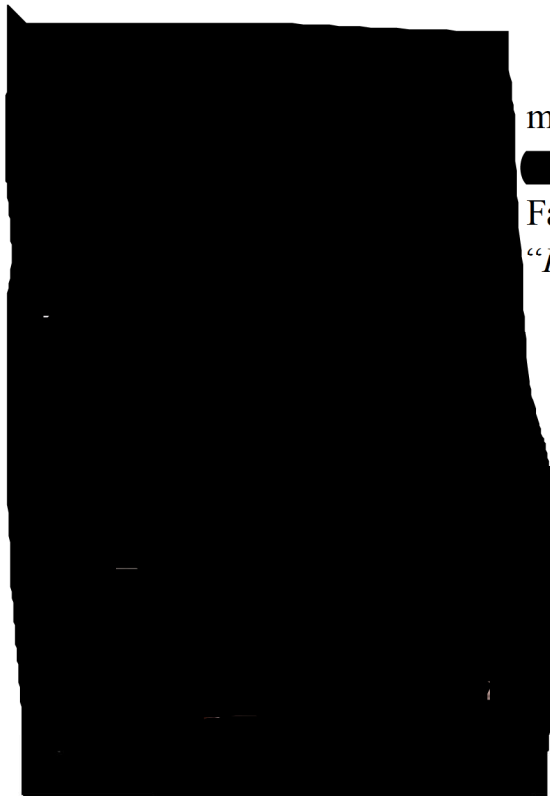
⁴ Available at [REDACTED]



(h)

(i)

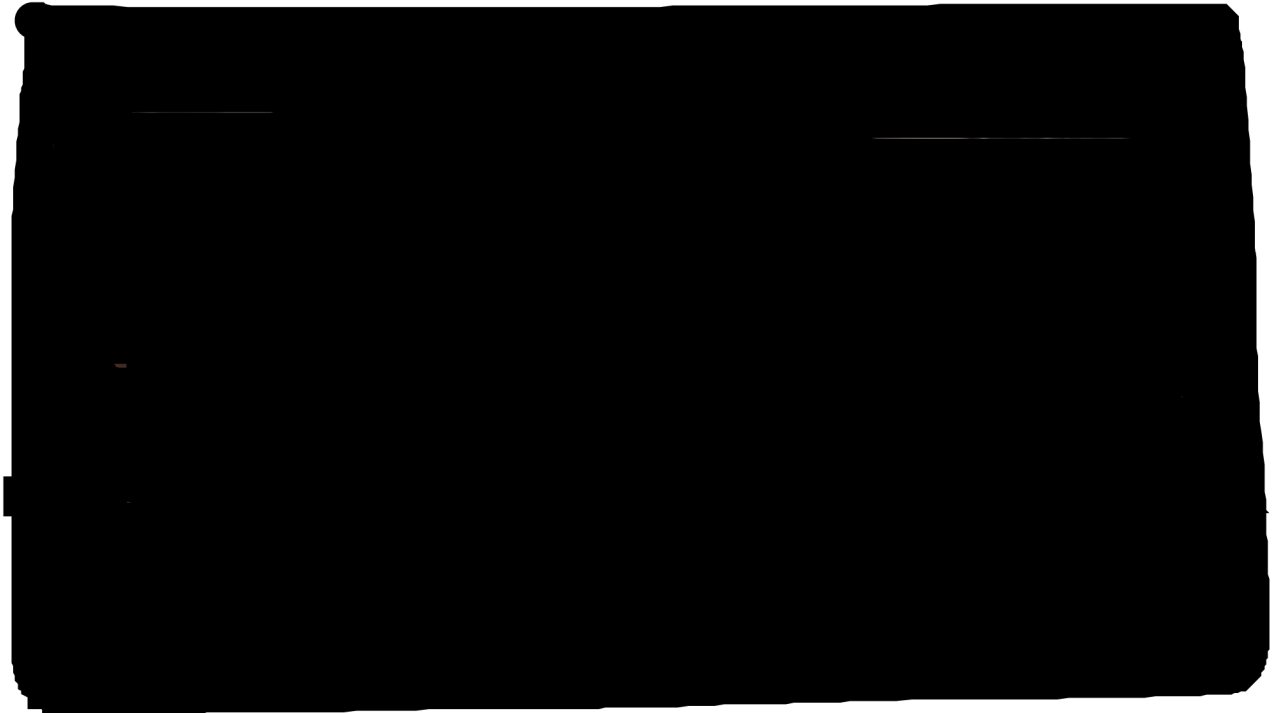
(j)



Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the member of Azerbaijani Armed Forces, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] uploaded the described video on his Facebook account with the following caption *“Feeling cool in Sabirabad”* (see image *k*).

(k)

In one of the obtained videos (Annex 5⁵) an Armenian prisoner of war is sitting on his knees with his hands tied up behind his back, and a member of Azerbaijani Armed Forces is insulting him and hitting him on the head and on the face (see images *l* and *m*).



(*l*)

(*m*)

Another footage disseminated through Azerbaijani internet sources (Annex 6⁶) demonstrates how an Armenian prisoner of war is forced to tell that “Karabakh is yours”, “Karabakh belongs to Azerbaijan” by the person shooting the video. This is a widespread practice among the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces; several videos with the same content (Annexes 7⁷ and 8⁸) are uploaded to social networks by the Azerbaijani internet sources (see images *n* and *o*).

⁵ Available at [REDACTED]

⁶ Available at [REDACTED]

⁷ Available at [REDACTED]

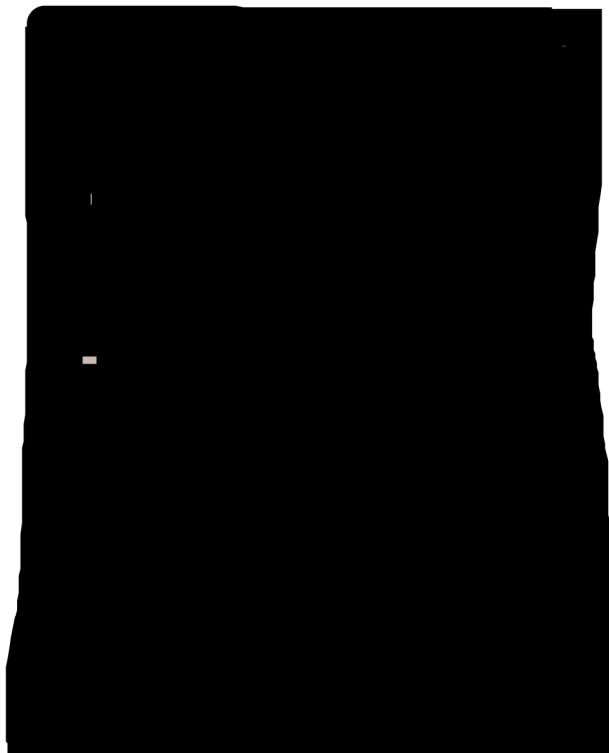
⁸ Available at [REDACTED]



(n)

(o)

Moreover, in some cases, those videos are also demonstrating the injuries on the faces of ADA members, **which is undeniable evidence of an inhuman treatment towards the Armenian prisoners of war** (see image *p*).



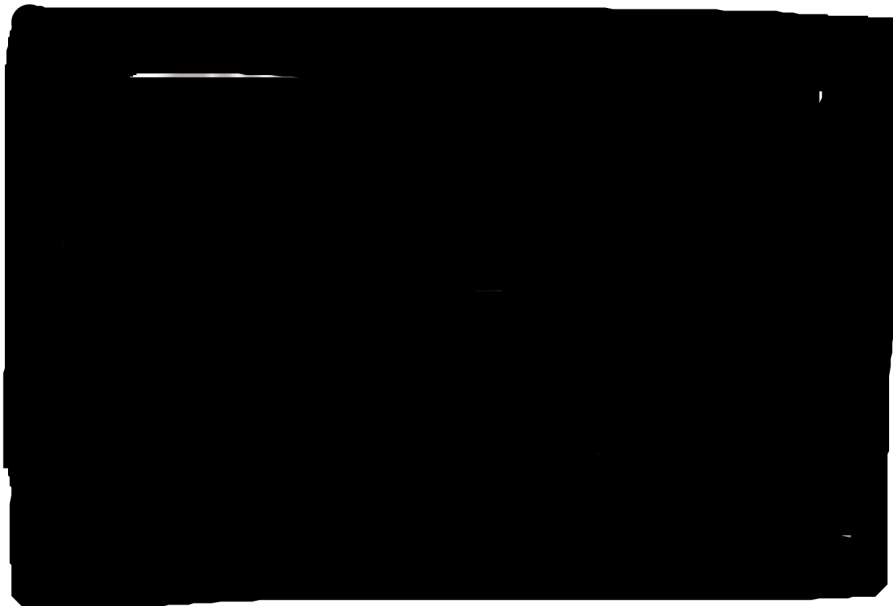
(p)

In the other videos disseminated through social networks by the Azerbaijani internet sources the captured Armenians are forced to repeat the words of the members of Azerbaijani armed forces who simultaneously record the videos.

In some other cases, the compulsion to repeat the words is accompanied by insults and swearing. In the footage (Annex 9⁹) the captured member of ADA is compelled to repeat the words in Azerbaijani language and simultaneously he is being insulted by the member of Azerbaijani Armed Forces.

The revealed footages prove that nothing refrains the Azerbaijani Armed Forces from conducting those humiliations.

In another video (Annex 10¹⁰) the captured member of ADA, R. V. is standing on his knees with his hands tied up behind his back and telling that “Armenian authorities have forcibly sent him to Karabakh in order to kill children and peaceful Azerbaijani civilians”. The head and the neck of the captured person are bandaged (see image *q*).



(q)

⁹ Available at [REDACTED]

¹⁰ Available at [REDACTED]

Azerbaijani social media sources also spread videos (Annexes 11¹¹ and 12¹²) in which the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are compelling Armenian prisoners of war to kiss the flag of Azerbaijan with the purpose of humiliating them (see images *r* and *s*).



The Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh and the Human Rights Defender of Armenia also revealed a video (Annexes 13¹³) posted on Azerbaijani social media platforms in which the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are compelling Armenian prisoners of war to kneel and clap while they are dancing around them. In this way the members of ADA are being cynically mocked which is a clear evidence of inhuman and disrespectful treatment towards Armenian prisoners of war (see images *t* and *u*).

¹¹ Available at [REDACTED]

¹² Available at [REDACTED]

¹³ Available at [REDACTED]



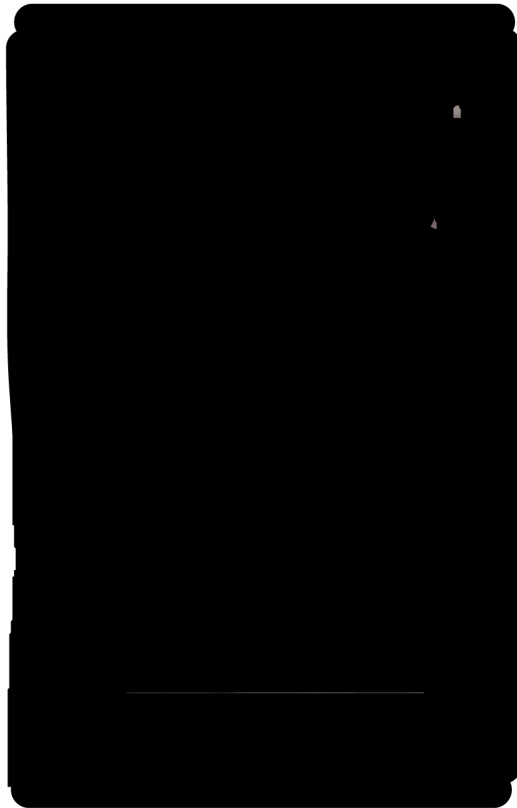
(t)

(u)

It is obvious, that these various forms of coercion pursue one goal, to humiliate captured ethnic Armenians and to deepen their sufferings. The footages of these humiliating actions are also being disseminated through social media networks in the purpose of becoming available to a wider audience, including the relatives of the captured persons, which, obviously, aggravates the sufferings of the latter.

One of the most important issues concerning the prisoners of war is the provision of medical assistance and their conditions of detention. The Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh have emphasized that the Azerbaijani authorities are keeping Armenian prisoners of war in improper conditions and without necessary medical assistance. For example, in the footage (Annex 14¹⁴) disseminated by Azerbaijani internet sources, a member of ADA is kept in a dirty and ruined building, he is blindfolded and his hands are tied up behind his back (see image v).

¹⁴ Available at [REDACTED]



(v)

The monitoring of Azerbaijani internet sources and social media indicates that the Armenian prisoners of war and captured ethnic Armenians are being repeatedly subjected to inhuman treatment even after the established ceasefire. These actions are totally inadmissible and constitute clear evidence of war crimes committed by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces.

Moreover, in many cases these extremely cruel videos disseminated by the Azerbaijani internet sources are becoming available to the relatives of the captured Armenians, who are sending those videos to the Offices of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh.

1. Humiliating Treatment of Dead Persons

The circulating videos and photos prove that the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces continue the outrage upon the personal dignity of the ethnic Armenians and treat the dead persons in an inhuman and disrespectful manner.

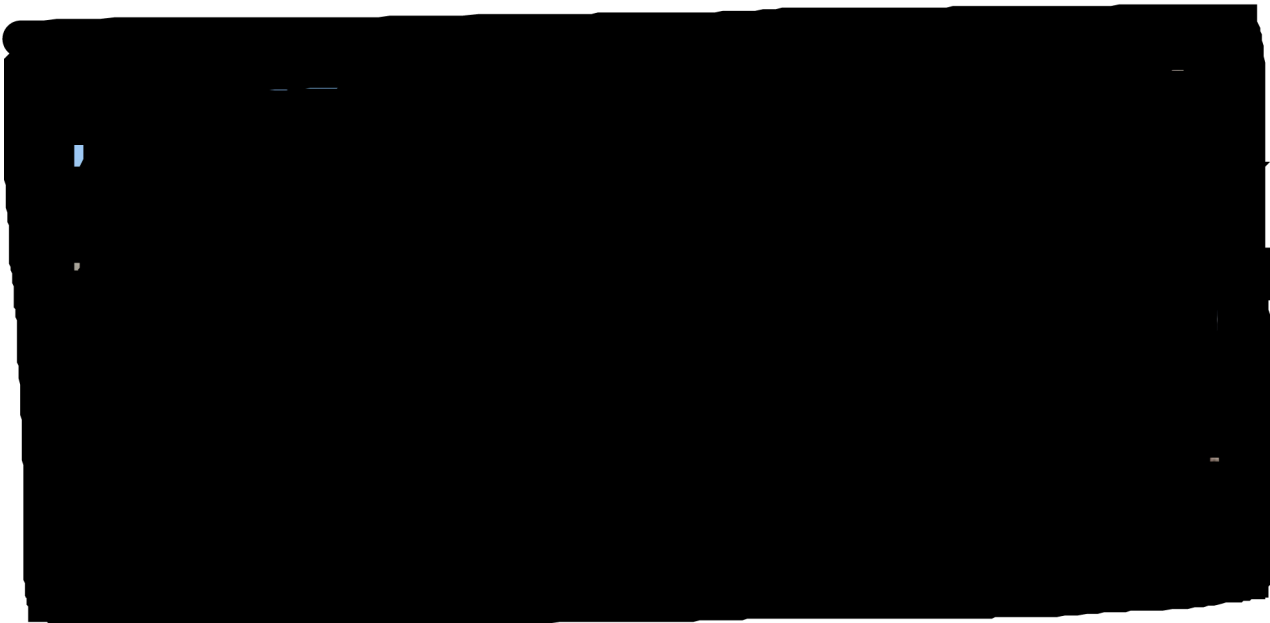
The monitoring of social media initiated by the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh indicates that the dangerous tendency of taking pictures with the dead bodies of ADA members still continues (see image w).



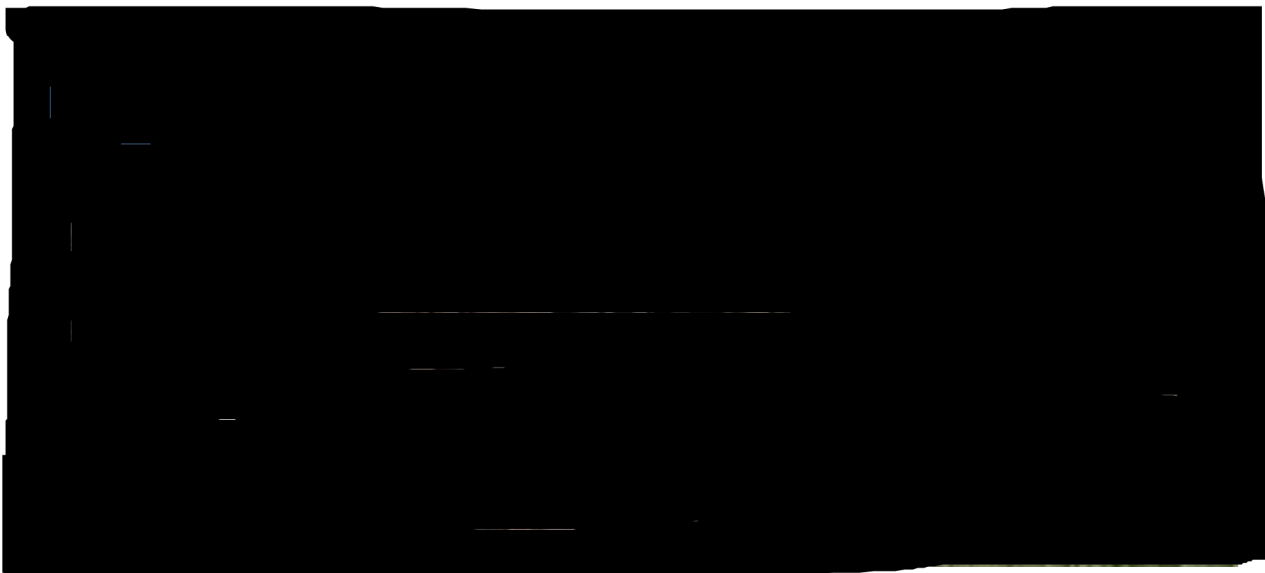
(w)

The footage (Annex 15¹⁵) disseminated by the Azerbaijani internet sources shows how several members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are taking a group photo with the bodies of dead ADA members (see images x and y).

¹⁵ Available at <http://cloud.ombuds.am/index.php/s/Fmi5jWQ9KKriZME>.



(x)



(y)

These kind of actions are totally degrading, disrespectful and outrage the personal dignity of the killed soldiers. It is important to state that the outrage upon the personal dignity, even in case of dead, constitutes a war crime under the International Criminal Law and should be punished. The bodies of all fallen soldiers should be managed in an honorable manner.

Our Offices reiterate that filming and dissemination of such content throughout social networks are aimed at mocking and humiliating the relatives of the dead ADA members. These people are subjected to unimaginable sufferings, as they can easily

find the videos on social networks, where the members of Azerbaijani Armed Forces humiliate the bodies of their fallen relatives and friends.