



**VICTORIOUS NATION'S
VICTORIOUS LEADER**

Karabakh
is **Azerbaijan!**



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Ilhamy'.



ILHAM ALIYEV



Presidential
Elections
07.02.2024

A white outline map of Azerbaijan is positioned behind the text, showing the country's geographical shape.

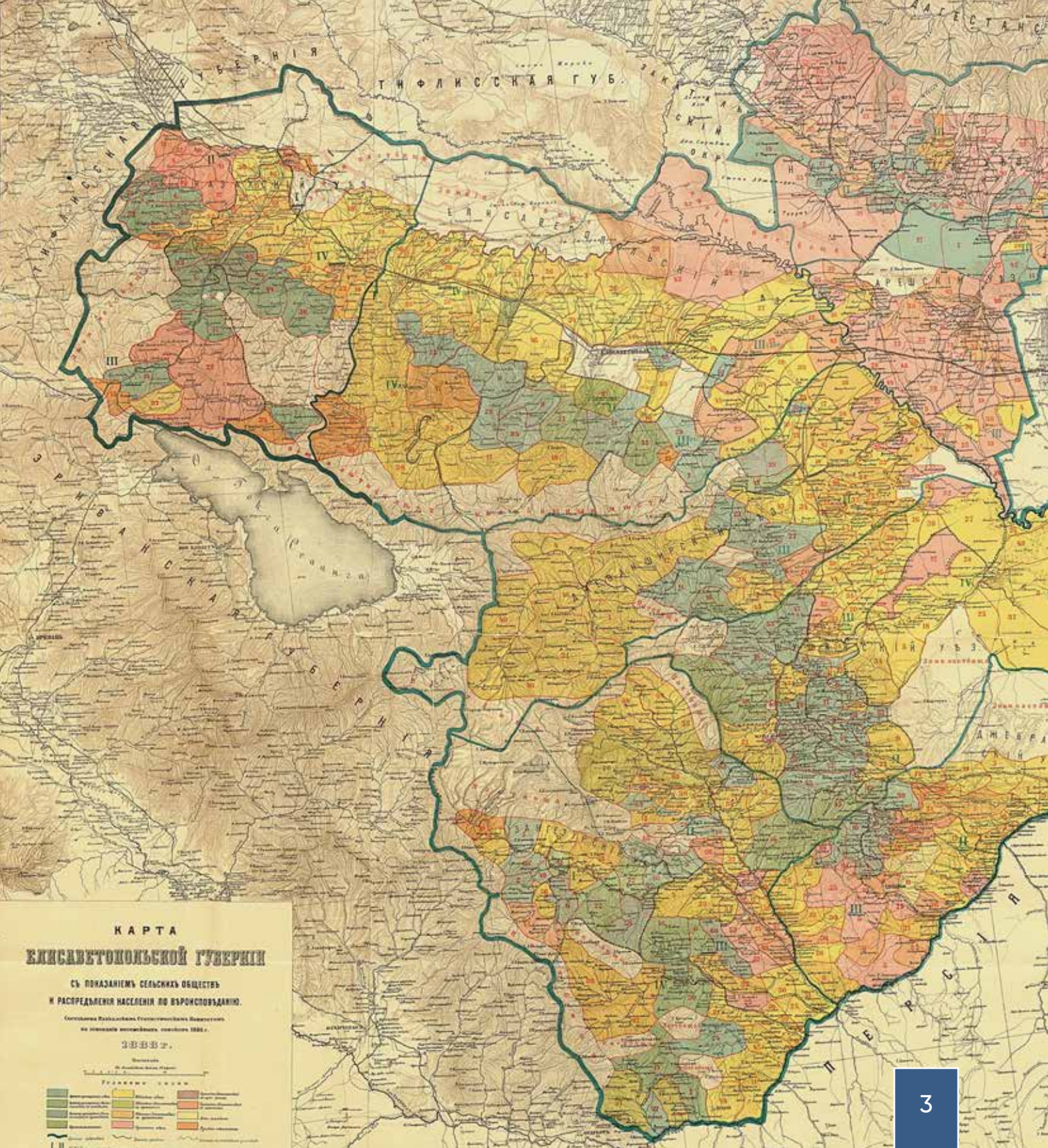
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Brief Historical Overview

Historically, the Karabakh province has been a part of Azerbaijani States during various periods. In 1748, it gained status as a sovereign khanate, later annexed to Tsarist Russia after 1822. During the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, the Karabakh Governorate was established with Shusha as its administrative center. Notably, Karabakh historically existed as a unified province, undivided into mountainous and plain parts.





КАРТА

ЕЛИСАВЕТОПОЛЬСКОЙ ГУБЕРНИИ

СЪ ПОКАЗАНИЕМ СЕЛЬСКИХ ОБЩЕСТВ
И РАСПРЕДЕЛЕНІЯ НАСЕЛЕНІЯ ПО ВЪРОИСПОДАНИЮ.

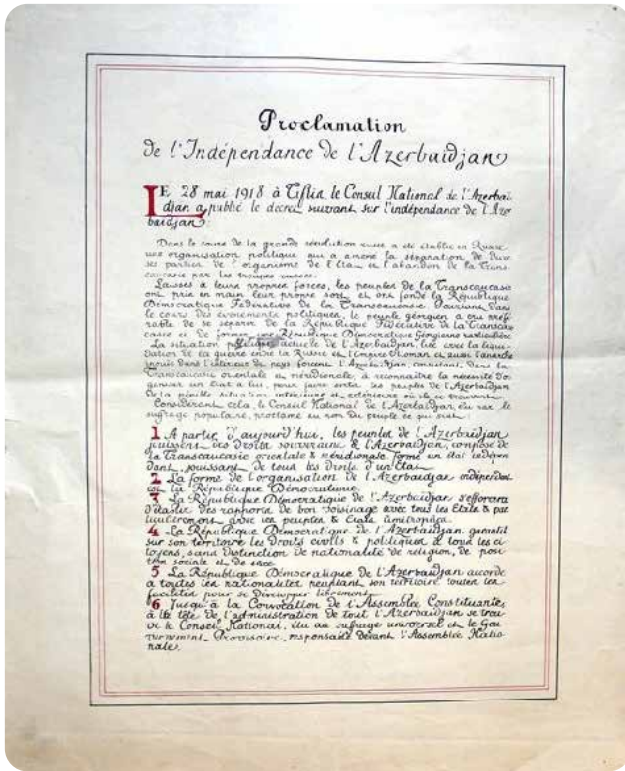
Составлена Императорским Статистическим Вѣдомством
по данным всероссійскаго переписи 1889 г.

1889 г.

Масштаб 1:100,000

Сѣверный Кавказъ	Южный Кавказъ	Кавказскія горы
Сѣверная степь	Южная степь	Средняя степь
Сѣверная дикая степь	Южная дикая степь	Средняя дикая степь
Сѣверная пустыня	Южная пустыня	Средняя пустыня
Сѣверная тундра	Южная тундра	Средняя тундра
Сѣверная тайга	Южная тайга	Средняя тайга
Сѣверная тундра	Южная тундра	Средняя тундра
Сѣверная тайга	Южная тайга	Средняя тайга
Сѣверная тундра	Южная тундра	Средняя тундра
Сѣверная тайга	Южная тайга	Средняя тайга

Background of Regional Conflict



In the early 20th century, following the First World War, the South Caucasian States declared their independence. Azerbaijan ceded Yerevan to Armenia to establish a political center for Armenians. As a result, Armenia formed its own republic on a territory of 9,000 square kilometers.

In the aftermath of the establishment of the Soviet government in Azerbaijan on April 28, 1920, Armenians, asserting claims to other neighboring territories, expanded their influence under the auspices of the Bolsheviks. Azerbaijan's Zangezur province was ceded to Armenia, and Karabakh was artificially divided. During the meeting of the Caucasian Bureau of the Russian

Communist Party on July 5, 1921, a decision was made to grant autonomous status to the mountainous part of Karabakh. This decision, by artificially dividing Karabakh and assigning it territorial autonomy, laid the groundwork for future conflicts.

Throughout the Soviet Union era, Armenia consistently asserted territorial claims over the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. With the ascent of Mikhail Gorbachev to power, these claims were revived. There was a mobilization of society to harbor animosity towards Azerbaijanis, and political actions, coupled with violent acts, were initiated toward the end of 1987.

Armenia's Aggression against Azerbaijan

In 1987, large demonstrations in Yerevan, advocating the unification of Karabakh with Armenia, led to ethnic cleansing and the expulsion of Azerbaijanis from their homes in Armenia. From November 1987, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis, facing aggressive violence and death threats, had to traverse snowy mountains bare-handed to seek refuge in Azerbaijan.

During that period, more than 250 thousand Azerbaijanis were forced to leave their historical lands. Of them, 242 people were brutally murdered, and 1154 people were injured. However, Armenia did not conduct any legal investigation into these crimes, identify, or punish the criminals.

Azerbaijanis were displaced from their historical lands in Armenia for the second time over the last 40 years. After being deported from Armenia in 1947-53, they were subjected to ethnic cleansing in 1987-88.

These events marked the beginning of the bloody Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which would last for years. Large-scale provocations were orchestrated against Azerbaijan in both the territories of Armenia and Azerbaijan, particularly in the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, driven by nationalist emissaries from Armenia.

On February 20, 1988, Armenian deputies of the Council of People's Deputies of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO), which was part of Azerbaijan, voted in favor of joining the region to the Armenian SSR. Two days later, the firing at a peaceful Azerbaijani demonstration near Asgaran settlement, resulting in the death of two young men, signaled the escalation of the conflict into an armed stage.

To heighten tensions further, the Sumgait provocation was soon committed. The arrest and trial of its perpetrators, as well as the identification of the role of Armenian intelligence in the events, unveiled the secret details of Armenia's open war against Azerbaijan.

The subsequent events revealed that the Soviet authorities failed to intervene and halt the escalating conflict in time. The steps taken only deepened the conflict further.

The Special Governance Committee was established by the decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in response to terrorist acts, armed attacks, and attempts to obstruct State institutions committed by Armenia on the border with Azerbaijan, as well as in the territories of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO). However, the activity of the Committee during 1989 inadvertently gave further impetus to separatism. This step itself created the conditions to remove that territory from the control of the central Azerbaijani authorities and further expand the aspirations of Armenian ideologues.

With the collapse of the USSR in 1991, a new geopolitical reality emerged in the region. The administrative borders of the newly independent republics within the USSR became international borders, protected by international law in accordance with the principle of "uti possidetis juris". The international community recognized Azerbaijan's independence based on its Soviet-era borders.

Since the beginning of 1991, Armenia, in violation of international law, violated the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan and initiated an undeclared war of aggression and occupation. This involved utilizing terrorist groups comprising military units and foreign volunteers armed with weapons seized from Soviet military bases and purchased from foreign sources. Armenia also committed serious war crimes, including genocide.

At the beginning of the 20th century, contrary to the prohibition of war of aggression and war as a means of national policy outlined by international law, as well as, according to the Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter prohibiting the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of a State, Armenia carried out armed aggression against Azerbaijan.

Taking advantage of the international community's indifferent stance towards this aggression and, in some cases, its support, Armenia expanded its acts of direct and indirect aggression against Azerbaijan.

To avoid being recognized as an aggressor and to obscure its role in the conflict, Armenia pushed the idea of annexation into the background and instead favored establishing an 'independent' so-called regime in the former NKAO.

In the aftermath, Azerbaijani citizens of Armenian descent in Karabakh fell victim to Armenia's territorial claims. The establishment of an illegal so-called regime on Azerbaijan's national territory posed a direct challenge to the newly declared sovereign statehood. On November 26, 1991, the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan decided to abolish the NKAO.



Massacres Committed by Armenians and Khojaly Genocide

Military units and armed groups of Armenia were committing massacres against the civilian population in Azerbaijani territories, forcibly expelling Azerbaijanis from these areas well before the full establishment of the Armenian army. Despite the efforts of a small number of volunteer defense forces among the local population, they have been unable to prevent these massacres.

At the initial stage of the conflict, the Armenian armed forces deemed the Azerbaijani civilian population a legitimate target. These actions began to escalate from 1990 onwards. By the end of 1991, systematic attacks on over 30 villages inhabited by Azerbaijanis were accompanied by mass killings of the civilian population.

During the occupation of Baganis Ayrim village in the Gazakh district and the villages of Garvand, Tugh, Salakatin, Akhullu, Khojavand, Jamilli, Nebiler, Mesheli, Hesensabad, Kerkijahan, Gaybali, Malibeyli, Yukhari and Ashaghi Gushchular, Garadagli villages of the former NKAO where Azerbaijanis lived, the civilian population was systematically killed with special cruelty.

It would be sufficient to mention that as a result of the attack by Armenian military units on the village of Meshali on December 23, 1991, around 07:00 in the morning, 28 people, including 8 women and 3 children, were killed, and 14 people were injured. The village was set ablaze. On February 15, 1992, once again early in the morning, Armenian militants attacked the village of Garadagli. More than 80 civilians of the village were brutally murdered, 50 people were captured, 42 families lost their breadwinner, about 140 children became orphans. These tragic events illustrate Armenia's aggressive policy of occupying Azerbaijani territories by eliminating the Azerbaijani population. To achieve this goal, Armenia carried out mass killings (genocide) and forced expulsion (ethnic cleansing) of Azerbaijanis.

The crimes committed against the Azerbaijani civilian population were a case of genocide as they aimed to wipe out the Azerbaijani ethnic group with special intent (*dolus specialis*) and due to their scale, brutality.

Serzh Sargsyan, the former president of Armenia and a direct participant of the Khojaly genocide, openly confessed his intentions in an interview with British journalist Thomas de Waal: "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. And that's what happened".

The genocide committed against Azerbaijanis in Karabakh is the gravest crime perpetrated by Armenians during the conflict and is still awaiting justice.

After committing the crime of genocide, the Armenian armed forces expanded their activities. Armenia, participating in the negotiation initiatives of international mediators, seized the opportunity to occupy new territories. On May 8, 1992, before the Tehran negotiations concluded, the city of Shusha, a cultural cornerstone of Azerbaijan, fell under occupation. Subsequently, on the 17th of May, the Lachin region was occupied. Armenia entered the Kalbajar region when progress was made in the negotiations within the framework of the Minsk Group.



SERZH SARGSYAN:

"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. AND THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED".



The international community's indifference and Armenia's impunity allowed these crimes to become more brutal. The atrocities committed against the civilian population in Khojaly were marked by their scale, cruelty, and insidiousness.

The city of Khojaly occupied a crucial position in Armenian plans, driven by its strategic geographical location (10 kilometers from Khankendi, between the Aghdam-Shusha and Asgaran-Khankendi highways), the presence of the sole airport in Karabakh, and for its substantial population.

After a month-long siege, on the night of 25-26 February 1992, Armenian military units attacked Khojaly, surrounded the city and massacred the civilian population, including children, women, and the elderly. Those attempting to flee the city towards Aghdam were shot by Armenian gunmen who had set up ambushes along the roads. 613 peaceful Azerbaijanis, including 106 women, 63 children, and 70 elderly people, were brutally murdered based on their nationality. 8 families were completely annihilated, 25 children lost both parents and 130 children lost one parent. Additionally, 487 civilians suffered serious injuries, and 1,275 people were taken hostage. The fate of 150 hostages, including 68 women and 26 children, remains unknown.

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BOTH PARENTS AND 130 CHILDREN LOST ONE PARENT.
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The Heydar Aliyev Phenomenon

In the 1970s and 1980s, while holding key positions in Azerbaijan's State security service and later serving as the head of the republic, Heydar Aliyev demonstrated determination against Armenian territorial claims, provocations, and violations. Despite Moscow's decision in the 1960s to cede part of Azerbaijan's territory to Armenia, Heydar Aliyev did not allow the implementation of this decision during his leadership. Even while serving under the leadership of the Soviet Union in Moscow, Heydar Aliyev maintained a steadfast stance on various issues, actively safeguarding national interests as a member of the Political Bureau. Heydar Aliyev's removal from the central government provided a significant opportunity for Armenia and the Armenian lobby, leading to the immediate escalation of the Karabakh conflict.

Taking advantage of the situation following the occupation of Shusha, Armenia devised a plan to seize the ancient Azerbaijani land of Nakhchivan. Consequently, in May 1992, the intensity of fighting on the Nakhchivan border increased, and additional forces were mobilized. At that time, Heydar Aliyev, presiding over the Supreme Assembly of Nakhchivan, took decisive steps in the defense of Nakhchivan, and thwarted Armenia's efforts.

However, the weakness of Azerbaijan's political power, internal conflicts, and the deepening economic crisis in Azerbaijan prevented the removal of aggressor forces from its sovereign territories. During this challenging period, driven by insistent demand of the people, the incumbent government agreed to Heydar Aliyev's return from Nakhchivan to Baku and to take necessary actions according to the situation. Heydar Aliyev supported the people and devoted the rest of his life to their welfare. He mobilized all forces, engaging in intensive activities to safeguard Azerbaijan's statehood, establish a strong army, restore stability, and take significant measures to counter Armenia's military aggression.



The challenging situation and the weakness in the front allowed Armenia to continue its occupation, resulting in the occupation of Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Gubadli, and Zangilan districts, as well as a part of Aghdam, which were around the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast.

As a result of the military aggression of Armenia, 20% of the internationally recognized sovereign territories of Azerbaijan, including 7 villages of the Gazakh region and 1 village of Nakhchivan, were occupied by the Armenian armed forces, more than 750 thousand civilians were expelled from their native land, ethnically cleansed, more than 20 thousand Azerbaijanis died in battles, 3890 Azerbaijanis were missing, their further fate is still unknown.



AS A RESULT OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSION OF ARMENIA, 20% OF THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SOVEREIGN TERRITORIES OF AZERBAIJAN WERE OCCUPIED, MORE THAN 750 THOUSAND CIVILIANS WERE EXPELLED FROM THEIR NATIVE LAND, ETHNICALLY CLEANSED, MORE THAN 20 THOUSAND AZERBAIJANIS DIED IN BATTLES, 3890 AZERBAIJANIS WERE MISSING.

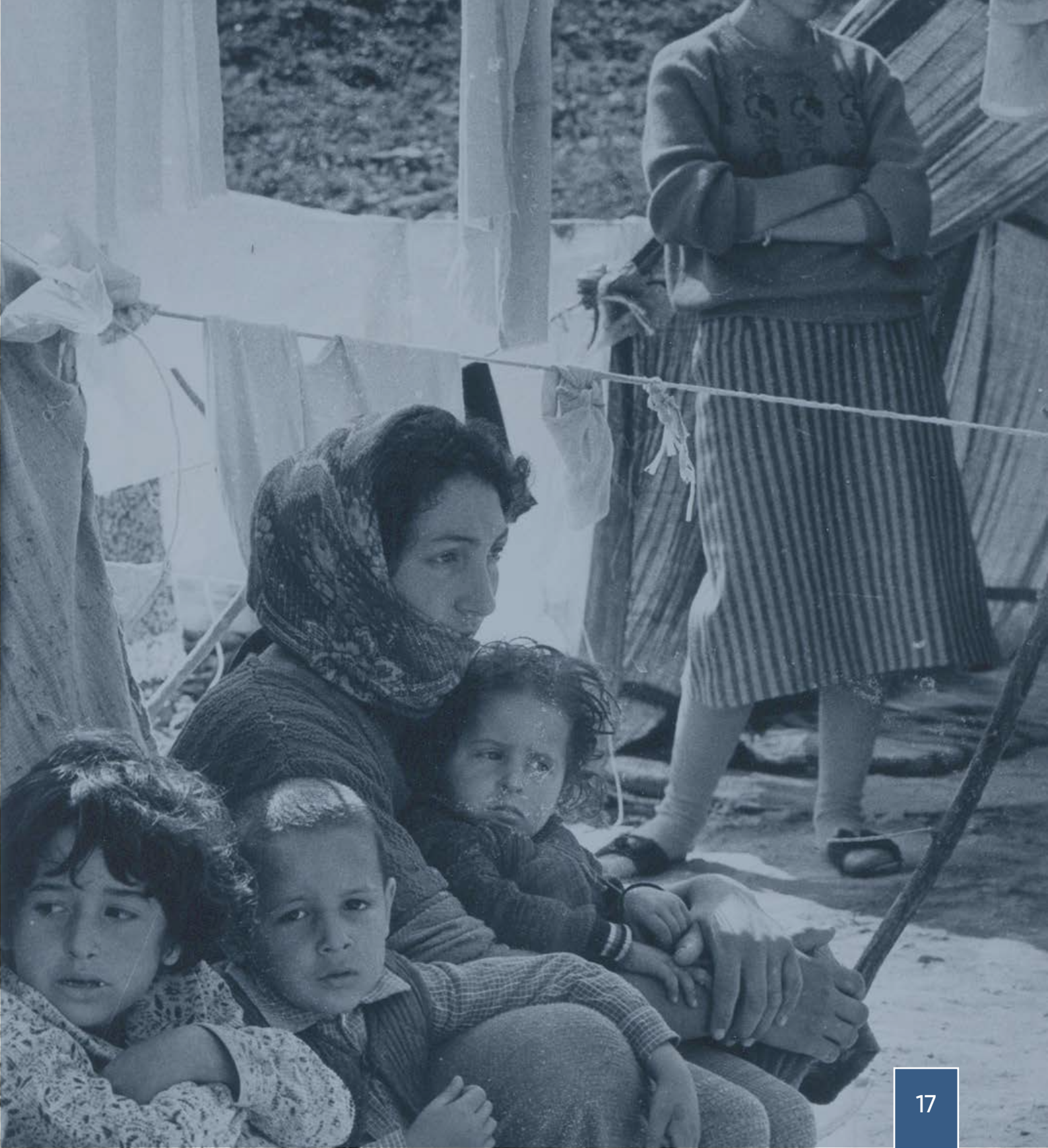




Addressing the people on November 2, 1993, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev called for national unity and mobilization to defend the Motherland from Armenian aggression. At the end of 1993, the reorganized army units launched a counter-offensive operation and in a short period of time liberated dozens of settlements, including the village of Horadiz. Under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, the Azerbaijani army demonstrated to the whole world that it is capable of liberating its sovereign territories from occupation and changed the course of the war.

Heydar Aliyev announced to the world a policy of resolving the conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. On May 8, 1994, a ceasefire agreement was signed in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. This understanding would lay a solid foundation for future victory and strengthening of Azerbaijan's long-term development and position.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, dedicated the rest of his life to resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and carried out tireless activities. In various international organizations - the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and other organizations, 20% of the territory of Azerbaijan is under occupation Armenia. Issues of existence, massacres committed, the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in accordance with international legal norms were raised, and efforts were made to effectively use all their capabilities. Participation at these levels also helped break the information blockade created around the facts of Azerbaijan.



Occupation in International Documents

At the end of the twentieth century, Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, a crime of genocide committed against Azerbaijanis, was a gross violation of the fundamental principles and norms of international law. In four resolutions (822, 853, 874, 884) adopted by the UN Security Council in 1993, emphasizing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, violation of internationally recognized borders and the inadmissibility of occupying territories by force, the occupying forces were required to immediately and completely withdraw from sovereign territories Azerbaijan. Unconditional removal was required.

However, the obligations arising from these resolutions have not been expressed in concrete actions and have not led to the application of legal force by the collective security mechanism. The Security Council did not take any measures either immediately after the adoption of the resolutions or over the next 27 years to prevent Armenian military aggression and bring it to international responsibility.

After the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council and remaining unimplemented, issues of conflict resolution were consistently raised at the meetings of the OSCE Summits in 1994 and 1996, relevant decisions were made expressing the support of the OSCE member-states for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

In the decision adopted at the Budapest Summit in 1994, the OSCE once again stated the need to quickly resolve this conflict, eliminate it peacefully, and also noted the further intensification of the negotiation process and the work of the Minsk Group in order to end the conflict and resolve the problem peacefully.

UNITED NATIONS



Security Council

S

Distr. GENERAL
S/RES/822 (1993)
30 April 1993

RESOLUTION 822 (1993)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3201st meeting, on 12 April 1993

The Security Council,

Recalling the statements of the President of the Security Council of 29 January 1993 (S/23199) and of 4 April 1993 (S/23519) concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General dated 14 April 1993 (S/23600),

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 the latest invasion of the Nagorno-Karabakh district of the Republic of Azerbaijan by local Armenian forces,

Concerned that this situation could lead to a further escalation of the conflict and the displacement of large numbers of civilians,

Expressing its grave concern at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in particular,

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Security Council

Distr. GENERAL
S/RES/853 (1993)
29 July 1993

RESOLUTION 853 (1993)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3218th meeting, on 23 July 1993

The Security Council,

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

Having considered the report issued on 27 July 1993 by the Chairman of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (S/24154),

Expressing its grave concern at the deterioration of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic and at the tensions between the two States,

Noting with alarm the escalation of the situation in particular,

UNITED NATIONS



Security Council

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Distr. GENERAL
S/RES/874 (1993)
14 October 1993

RESOLUTION 874 (1993)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3242nd meeting, on 14 October 1993

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993 and 851 (1993) of 29 July 1993, and reaffirming the statement read by the President of the Council, on behalf of the Council, on 18 August 1993 (S/24324),

Having considered the letter dated 1 October 1993 from the Chairman of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/24323),

Expressing its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-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,

Calling upon the parties concerned to make effective and permanent cease-fire arrangements as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the OSCE Minsk Group

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Security Council

Distr. GENERAL
S/RES/894 (1993)
12 November 1993

RESOLUTION 894 (1993)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3253rd meeting, on 12 November 1993

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993, 851 (1993) of 29 July 1993 and 874 (1993) of 14 October 1993,

Reaffirming its full support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and its sincere efforts to the OSCE Minsk Group,

Noting with alarm the letter dated 9 November 1993 from the Chairman-in-Office of the Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council and its enclosure (S/26719, annex),

Noting its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-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,

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities and the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the use of force in response to the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh district and the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Azerbaijani Republic,

Noting with alarm the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region,

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

Expressing its grave concern at the latest displacement of a large number of civilians in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the city of Goradis, and particularly at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the city of Goradis,



At the OSCE Lisbon Summit in 1996, thanks to President Heydar Aliyev's strong stance to protect national interests, the principles put forward by Azerbaijan for resolving the ongoing conflict and after many intense negotiations were included in the final document of the international organization, for the first time with a mandate to protect security in Europe.

The fact that the conflict has been going on for many years, peace negotiations have failed, and the status quo in the region poses a threat to international peace and security and the failure of the Security Council to fulfill its mandate necessitated the transfer of the conflict to the UN General Assembly. On September 15, 2006, a General Assembly resolution was adopted based on Azerbaijan's appeal in 2004 regarding the situation in the occupied territories. The Resolution expressed concern about the environmental damage caused by the fires in occupied territories and stressed the necessity to urgently conduct an environmental operation to suppress the fires without delay.

Another resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on March 14, 2008. Addressing the political and legal aspects of the conflict, the resolution emphasized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and reaffirmed the principles of conflict resolution. Particular attention was paid to the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return of people expelled from the occupied territories, and the impossibility of recognizing the illegal situation caused by the occupation.




At the same time, the conflict became a topic of widespread discussion within regional organizations. These discussions led to the formation of a general consensus around the principles of the legal basis for resolving the conflict and the adoption of documents condemning the unlawful act of Armenia.

The consistent and purposeful activities of Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev and then President Ilham Aliyev in the international arena formed a general consensus in all international organizations regarding the legal basis for conflict resolution.

At the 16th summit of heads of State and government of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Azerbaijan became an active and reliable member, held in Tehran in 2012, at the 17th summit held in Venezuela in 2016, as well as at the one held in Baku in 2019 At the 18th summit, the need to resolve the conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and recognized international borders was expressed.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation expressed the true nature of the conflict and Armenia's use of military force, assessing the facts and events from the point of view of international law. The resolutions adopted in connection with the conflict strongly condemn Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, demand the immediate withdrawal of occupation forces from the occupied territories, call on Armenia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and note the need to resolve the conflict based on the principles of territorial integrity and inviolability of borders.





The UN Secretary General and the President of the Security Council proposed that the Security Council vote for the adoption of a resolution condemning the aggression of Armenia and recognizing the existence of an act of aggression against Azerbaijan.

The organization also drew attention to the serious violation of international humanitarian law and regarded the acts of violence committed against the Azerbaijani civilian population in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as crimes against humanity. The organization's member-states stated that Armenia is responsible for all illegal activities committed against Azerbaijan.

All organizations unequivocally emphasized the withdrawal of occupation forces and the illegality of the situation created by force. This was an expression of the fact that Armenia is an aggressor, has committed crimes on the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan as a result of military aggression, the illegality of the so-called institution it created and is in no way recognized by other states.

Negotiation Process

Azerbaijan believed that the conflict had to be resolved peacefully, based on the principles and norms of international law, and participated in the peace negotiations of the OSCE Minsk Group from this standpoint. Azerbaijan rightly called on the international community to take appropriate position regarding the aggressive war waged by Armenia at the end of the 20th century, and called on the Minsk Group to resolve the conflict based on OSCE principles and commitments.

However, the peace mission carried out by the OSCE through the Minsk Group remained fruitless for many years. Back on July 23, 1993, after the occupation of Aghdam by Armenia, the Chairman of the Minsk Group, Mario Raffaelli, admitted the failure of the mediation mission and stated that new territories of Azerbaijan were occupied instead of implementing Security Council Resolution No. 822.



BACK ON JULY 23, 1993, AFTER THE OCCUPATION OF AGHDAM BY ARMENIA, **THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MINSK GROUP, MARIO RAFFAELLI,** ADMITTED THE FAILURE OF THE MEDIATION MISSION AND STATED THAT NEW TERRITORIES OF AZERBAIJAN WERE OCCUPIED INSTEAD OF IMPLEMENTING SECURITY **COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 822.**



After the signing of the ceasefire agreement, Azerbaijan's support for a phased resolution of the conflict in the negotiation process included, first of all, the withdrawal of aggressive Armenian armed forces from Azerbaijani territories, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and the initiation of dialogue with Armenians living in Karabakh.

In the 2000s, negotiations conducted either within the framework of the Prague Process or based on Madrid Principles provided for a gradual resolution of the conflict, the unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return of internally displaced persons to their native lands and the opening of lines of communication.

Azerbaijan has made it clear to the international community that it will not allow undermining its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the inviolability of the right of about a million internally displaced persons to return to the homeland of their ancestors.

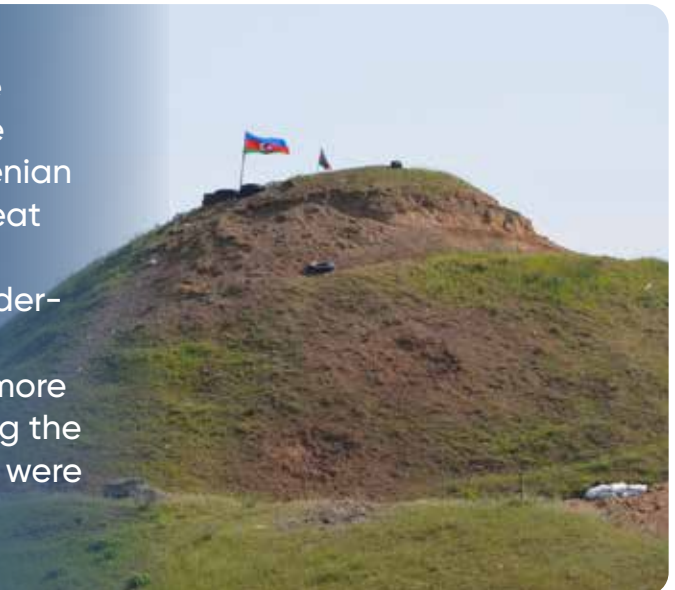
However, Armenia tried to gain more time through negotiations, maintain the status quo, and ultimately annex the occupied territories. Armenia, which did not want to withdraw occupation troops from the sovereign territories of Azerbaijan, participated in the negotiations to create a false image in international public opinion. The change of presidents in Armenia, the attempts of each of them to start negotiations from a new page led to delays, and ultimately, reckless activities of the Armenian leadership led to the termination of the negotiation process.

Armenia's Provocations and Subversive Activities

At all the meetings in which Azerbaijan participated within the Minsk Group, attempts to find an agreement on a constructive basis were faced with constant provocations from Armenia. When the negotiations became intense and specific issues were discussed, Armenia resorted to all sorts of provocations and tried to slow down the process. In addition to provocative and threatening statements by political leaders, creating tension in the region, flagrantly violating the ceasefire in conflict zones, conducting large-scale military exercises in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, attempting to interfere with the positions of the Azerbaijani armed forces has become a common practice in these subversive activities.

During negotiations in 2016, on April 2, the occupying forces of Armenia violated the ceasefire on the front line and fired heavy artillery at populated areas, schools and hospitals near the front line. As a result of these attacks, 6 civilians were killed and 33 people were injured.

The armed forces of Azerbaijan gave a worthy response to the large-scale provocation, broke through the Armenian defense line and forced them to retreat in a short period of time. Under the leadership of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the soldiers and officers of Azerbaijan showed heroic courage; more than 2,000 hectares of land, including the strategically important Lalatepa Hill, were liberated from occupation.



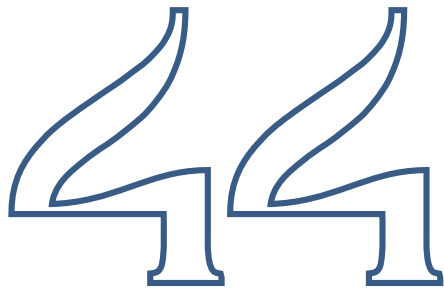
After 2018, the political and military leadership of Armenia made statements about the annexation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and a new aggressive war. The formula of a “new war for new territories” was announced, and the occupation of new territories was announced as a “preventive war” against Azerbaijan.

In August 2019, during a speech in Khankendi, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said that “Karabakh is Armenia, full stop,” in fact abandoned the peace process and destroyed the possibility of resolving the conflict through negotiations. The Armenian leadership has chosen the path of provocations and military conflict instead of the one of peace and negotiations.

At the Valdai Forum held in Sochi on October 3, 2019, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev once again demonstrated Azerbaijan’s iron will and determination to restore its territorial integrity with the statement “Karabakh is Azerbaijan and an exclamation point.”

On July 12, 2020, Armenia launched a large-scale attack on Tovuz, a border region of Azerbaijan, in accordance with its new attack strategy. The attempted attack was decisively prevented by the Azerbaijani armed forces. By having occupied the Tovuz region and strategic heights, Armenia aimed to seize new territories of Azerbaijan, control oil and gas pipelines passing through it, prevent the transportation of energy resources of Azerbaijan and other Caspian states to European markets, and deprive Azerbaijan of a strategic source of revenue.

After this, in August, Armenia sent a sabotage group to the territory of Azerbaijan to commit terrorist acts against civilians and military personnel. The sabotage group was not allowed to enter the territory, and the commander of the group was detained by the Azerbaijani military. Armenia made a strategic mistake by committing successive provocations and not taking into account the power, determination and iron will of Azerbaijan.



-day

Patriotic War

On September 27, 2020, Armenia launched another attack attempt. The Armenian armed forces fired at populated areas and military positions of Azerbaijan using various types of weapons, including heavy artillery, from several directions. There were casualties and wounded among civilians and soldiers.

A large-scale counter-offensive by the Azerbaijani army, and then military operations called "Iron Fist", became an unexpected but fair response to the provocation. This was an action arising from the desire of the Azerbaijani people to liberate their occupied sovereign territories over the past 30 years and the right to exercise the possibility of self-defense based on international law. Stemming from the Article 51 of the UN Charter, Azerbaijan used proportionate military force arising from the need to prevent military aggression from Armenia.

Azerbaijan's goal was to liberate its sovereign territories from occupation by the Armenian armed forces, ensure the return of internally displaced persons to the homeland of their ancestors, and ensure peace and the rule of law in the region. It was the Patriotic War.

01.12.2020

Lachin

25.11.2020

Kalbajar

20.11.2020

Aghdam

08.11.2020

Shusha

25.10.2020

Gubadli

20.10.2020

Zangilan

17.10.2020

Fuzuli

04.10.2020

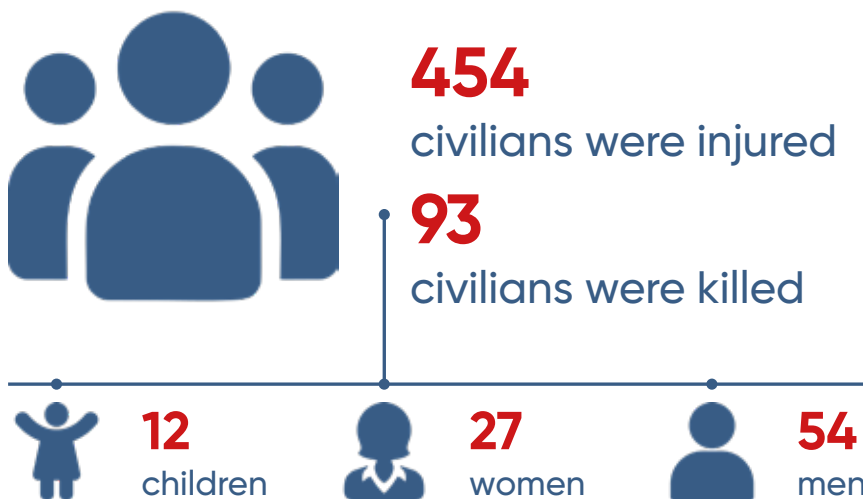
Jabrayil

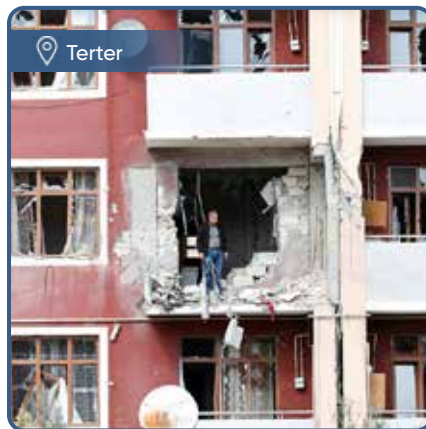
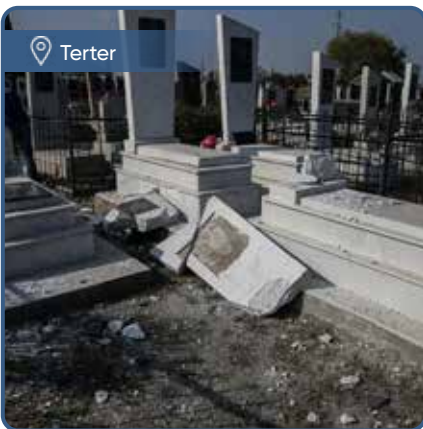


On the first day of the war, under the leadership of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani armed forces breached numerous defense lines built by the Armenians during the years of occupation in Azerbaijan and advanced victoriously on the battlefield every day, raising the victory flag in the liberated cities and villages. Control over the internationally recognized state border of Azerbaijan, which was under occupation for years, was restored.

Azerbaijan conducted the war only on the battlefield, against legitimate military targets, in accordance with the rules of international humanitarian law, and did not target the civilian population or civilian infrastructure. However, Armenia, which suffered successive defeats on the battlefield, targeted the civilian population and infrastructure, along with cities and villages close to the front zone. Armenia attacked Ganja, Barda, Terter, Mingachevir, Absheron, Khizi and other urban regions far from the front zone with ballistic missiles.

As a result of these attacks:













The liberation of the city of Shusha, considered a sacred and impregnable fortress built in 1752 for the capital of the Karabakh Khanate, on November 8 sealed the fate of the war and the capitulation of Armenia became inevitable.

On the night of November 10, the military operations were halted through a Trilateral Statement signed by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia. Armenia committed itself to the withdrawal of the occupying troops from the territory of Azerbaijan by accepting Azerbaijan's conditions, and at the same time presented a timetable for the evacuation of other territories. The occupation of Azerbaijani territories was ended. Showing humanity, Azerbaijan authorized the deployment the Russian peacekeeping contingent on its territory and created conditions for the safety of Armenians living in the territory under their control.

**THE 44-DAY-LONG
PATRIOTIC WAR
ENDED WITH A GREAT VICTORY.
HISTORICAL JUSTICE WAS RESTORED.**







The Preparatory Phase for the Peace Treaty

Right after the end of the Patriotic War, Azerbaijan took the initiative to sign a peace treaty and put forward 5 basic principles based on international law. These principles form the basis for the establishment of long-term peace between the two neighboring states and the establishment of good neighborly relations.

Azerbaijan established contacts with Armenians living in Karabakh to discuss the conditions of coexistence, including issues related to Azerbaijani citizenship, but faced attempts by Armenia and its benefactors to disrupt the peace and reconciliation process.

Armenia's insincerity, its demands regarding Azerbaijan's sovereign territories, its refusal to comply with some provisions of the Trilateral Statement, including the withdrawal of more than 10,000 military forces from the territory of Azerbaijan and the opening of unimpeded communication between the main part of Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan, as well as the use of the Lachin road, which is open for humanitarian purposes, to transport weapons and ammunition, especially mines produced in Armenia to create a new front line, showed that territorial claims against Azerbaijan are still the main theme of Armenian policy.

Under such circumstances, the Azerbaijani armed forces, observing the Armenian army units carrying out engineering and fortification works in the area of responsibility of the Russian peacekeepers, frequently took measures to prevent them. As a result of the operation held on August 3, 2022, various combat positions of illegal formations were destroyed, important heights were taken under control.

At the same time, Armenia systematically committed provocations on the border with Azerbaijan, which was still not delimited and demarcated. The Armenian army's firing on the positions of the Azerbaijani armed forces in different parts of the border, the mining of territories and roads by the Armenian subversion groups that infiltrated the Azerbaijani territories at night led to large-scale armed clashes on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border on September 12-14, 2022. As a result of the two-day fighting, Azerbaijan strengthened its favorable positions on important strategic heights and the ability to control its border.



Local Anti-Terrorist Measures

On September 19, 2023, the explosion of mines planted by sabotage groups of the illegal armed forces of Armenia on the daily road at night and the death of 9 Azerbaijani civilians who were working on the road and the police officers who arrived to the scene, prompted Azerbaijan to take local anti-terrorist measures.

Local operational measures targeting only the positions of illegal Armenian military units lasted 23 hours and 51 minutes. The so-called regime created by Armenia in the territory of sovereign Azerbaijan, in coordination with the peacekeeping contingent, agreed to the elimination of illegal armed units, laying down their weapons and leaving their combat positions, the withdrawal of units of the Armenian armed forces from the territory, and the handing over of weapons and ammunition.

Along with sending aid in the humanitarian field, Azerbaijan took immediate measures to register, apply for citizenship, and reintegrate Armenian residents. At the same time, meetings with representatives of the Armenian living in Karabakh were held in Yevlakh and reintegration issues were discussed. However, they chose the plan drawn by the chauvinist-revanchist forces in Armenia and opted to leave for Armenia. It was their decision. Azerbaijan declared that it guarantees their rights and safety, repeatedly called them to stay in their homes and continue to live together, including launching an online platform. The rest of the Armenians applied for citizenship to the state institutions of Azerbaijan and continue to live in Azerbaijan as before.

Shortly afterwards, the illegitimacy of the existence of the so-called regime raised the issue of its dissolution. The so-called regime announced its dissolution on September 28, as the reintegration of the Armenian included compliance with Azerbaijani legislation. Thus, Azerbaijan secured its sovereignty over the entire national territory.

Azerbaijan had secured its sovereignty over the entire national territory through local anti-terrorist measures. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev raised Azerbaijan's National Flag in city of Khankendi, as well as in Aghdere, Khojaly and Khojavend. The holding of a military parade in Khankendi on the Victory Day, November the 8th, vividly showcased to the world the grandeur of Azerbaijan's return to Karabakh and the end of the conflict.



President

Ilham Aliyev:

“Three years ago, over the last three years and during the counterterrorism operation in September, Azerbaijani soldiers and officers showed true heroism, patriotism, and self-sacrifice. We are proud of our Army and our Armed Forces. They are the source of our pride.”

October 15, 2023, Khankendi





Rebuilding a Devastated Homeland

The situation in the liberated areas miserable. In the last 30 years, Armenia looted, destroyed and wiped out all the houses, buildings and historical architectural monuments in the cities and villages where more than 750 thousand Azerbaijanis lived. This destructive activity, carried out purposefully, was actually aimed at erasing the evidence of the national-cultural trace and historical presence of Azerbaijanis in these lands. This is a true act of urbicide and cultural genocide.

The owners of the land returned and started large-scale reconstruction works in the territories freed from occupation, yet destroyed by Armenia, and reconstruction of cities and villages according to the modern "smart city" and "smart village" concepts. The "Great Return" state program was adopted by the Azerbaijani government. Azerbaijan is rapidly rebuilding these areas with its funds, technical and economic capabilities and is successfully implementing the "Great Return" program. The first residents have already settled in Lachin, Fuzuli and newly built settlements, and the process will continue. 34,500 families and at least 140,000 residents will be resettled in the settlements to be built in the liberated areas by 2026. 1134 families, including 4516 of them, have already settled in newly established towns and villages.

Unfortunately, despite Azerbaijan's repeated calls, the international community, relevant international organizations, and leading states ignore this vandalism, destruction of national monuments, cemeteries, towns and villages. The support plan for the restoration and reconstruction of the liberated territories of Azerbaijan, similar to the Marshall Plan which was initiated for the restoration and construction of devastated Europe after the Second World War, was given no consideration. Western countries are still continuing the indifference they have shown to the occupation of Armenia for 30 years, and there are even proposes such as applying sanctions against Azerbaijan.

34,500 families and at least **140,000 residents** will be resettled in the settlements to be built in the liberated areas *by 2026.*











The main obstacle in the implementation of the planned work is the mining activities carried out by Armenia in an unsystematic and sometimes maliciously deceptive manner in the liberated areas. During these years, Armenia has mined almost every inch of the occupied territories. According to calculations, more than 1.5 million mines were buried in these areas. This puts Azerbaijan in the list of the most mine-contaminated countries in the world. Despite the demands of Azerbaijan, Armenia still continues its malicious plans, shows insincerity in the peace process and refuses to provide original maps of buried mines. Initially, the existence of such maps was generally denied, and after that, at the insistence of international mediators, some maps given were presented to Azerbaijan with less than 25% accuracy.

In Azerbaijan, the Mine Action Agency (ANAMA) conducts demining activities in liberated areas. Taking into account the amount of work to be done, demining forces of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Emergency Situations were also involved in these works. Even the first women's demining team was created.

Due to the obstructive position demonstrated by Armenia, the clearing of these areas will take a long time. **This is an indication that Armenia's terrorist activities against Azerbaijan continue through mines. From 2020, when the war started, to December 26, 2023, 341 people became victims of mine terrorism, 65 people lost their lives, and 276 people were injured. 50 of those who lost their lives were civilians, 15 were soldiers. Among the wounded, 164 are military personnel and 112 are civilians.**

These show once again that it is the civilians and the local population located in these territories that suffer the most from the mine terror of Armenia.



Vision for Future

With the signing of the act of capitulation by Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has ended and a real opportunity for peace and tranquility in the region has emerged. Armenia should take advantage of this opportunity and contribute to the transformation of its region from a field of conflict and confrontation to a field of development and cooperation.

New realities in the region require new approaches. As the initiator of peace negotiations, Azerbaijan is taking a decisive position in the direction of signing a peace treaty, demarcating and delimiting the state border, and establishing good neighborly relations.

Azerbaijan is totally ready for normalization of relations with Armenia and expects Armenia to demonstrate a sincere and constructive position and take practical steps to that end. If Armenia fails to appropriately assess the imperative of the time, it will remain on the sidelines of regional development.

Azerbaijan has optimistic views and plans for the future. The opening of transport communications in the region will reconfigure the system of international transport corridors, making the countries of the region a participant in international transit cargo transportation and international transport corridors.

Settlements and infrastructure rebuilt based on green technologies, in addition to creating living conditions that meet modern living requirements, have turned the region into a green energy zone.



The international airports built in Fuzuli and Zangilan, and the one under construction in Lachin, the infrastructure that created, and most importantly, the fascinating nature will turn Karabakh into an attractive tourist destination.

The development of economic activity in various fields and construction of new workplaces in the region are carried with the purpose of protecting the human factor and its future.

Azerbaijan provided productive foundations for peace and future development in the region by liberating its occupied territories.

Life goes on.



