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**Ref: 56 sham trials of Armenian civilians and POWs in Baku**

Since the trilateral Ceasefire Agreement was signed on 9 November 2020, the Azerbaijani government has refused to comply to article 8 about the immediate exchange of all POWs between the two states. **Over 200 Armenian POWs and civilian captives are still illegally held by Aliyev's regime, while 34 hostages** have been tortured to death thus far. Systematically refusing the requests from the Council of Europe to provide the exact number of hostages, Baku has acknowledged holding only 60 detainees [1].

Moreover, Azerbaijan's State Security Service and the Prosecutor General's Office has commenced fabricated criminal proceedings against Armenian captives based on groundless accusations and testimonies conducted under torture and intimidation, labelling them 'terrorists' and 'saboteurs', thus grossly violating the international humanitarian law, as well as the III Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war [2].

**The trials of 56 Armenian captives in separate groups** have commenced in the Baku Court of Grave Crimes without proper legal representation [3]. The State Security Service has claimed that the hostages in question had illegally partaken in terrorist acts committed by a group of people upon prior conspiracy, an organized group or criminal association, illegal acquisition, transfer, sale, storage, transportation or carrying of weapons and ammunition, attacks on enterprises, institutions, organisations or individuals as part of armed formations or groups, and illegal crossing of the state border of Azerbaijan [4].

- The trial of a group of fourteen Armenians commenced in the Baku Court for Grave Crimes **on 16 June 2021**. The Azerbaijani media announced the names of those captives: **Gegham Serobyan, Hrach Avagyan, Armen Baghasyan, Gor Gasparyan, Kamo Sefilyan, Volodya Hakobyan, Gevorg Hasertyan, Sisak Yengoyan, Albert Petrosyan, Romik Sedrakyen, Aram Minosyan, Mkrtich Minosyan, Edgar Matesyan, and Yuri Karapetyan** [5].
- **On 23 June** the trial of another group of captives started at the Baku Court for Grave Crimes. The members of this group have been also pronounced: **Rafik Karapetyan, Gurgen Goloyan, Hrayr Tadevosyan, Vagharshak Maloyan, Egiazaryan Sasun, Arsen Vardanyan, Vakhagen Bakhrikyan, Setrak Soghomonyan, Armen Dilanyan, Manuk Martonyan, Mels Anbardanyan, Andranik Mikaelyan and Felix Grigoryan** [6].
- **On 2 July** a further group of Armenian captives were brought to trial: **Haykaz Hovanesyan, Varazdat Manukyan, David Stepanyan, Levan Tosunyan, Artur Baghdasaryan, Serop Avakyan, Varazdat Arutyunyan, Zhora Manukyan, Hrair Herabyan, Narek Gasparyan, Grigor Kuregyan, Ashot Gevorkyan, and Martin Agramanyan** [7].
- **The judicial investigation of an extra group of Armenian captives begun on 2 July 2021**. A preliminary court hearing claimed that the members of an armed group consisting of 13 Armenian citizens, including **Yeghish Astanyan, Karen Aramyan, Tigran Avakyan, Grigor Gevorgyan, Hovsep Manukyan, Gevorg Martirosyan, Robert Gevorhyan, Vagarshak Avetisyan, Volodya Hakobyan, Andranik Sukiasyan, Andranik Manukyan, Grigor Saghatelyan and Eduard Kirakosyan**, had illegally crossed into the territory of Azerbaijan with the alleged aim of committing terror. The next court hearing on this case is scheduled on 5 July [8].
- **On June 9** the Armenian captives **Lyudvik Mkrtchyan (born in 1969) and Alyosha Khosrovyan (born in 1967)** were charged for alleged torture of 'Azerbaijani captives' during the Artsakh War in



the early 1990s, violation of laws and customs of war, creation of illegal armed groups, illegal crossing of the Azerbaijan border. The defendants have pleaded not guilty to all charges, while the fabricated trials continue [9].

- **On 14 June Vicken Euljekjian (born in 1979) was sentenced to 20 years** in a maximum-security prison in Azerbaijan. Lebanese-Armenian Vicken Euljekjian, a dual citizen, was captured with his fiancée, Maral Najarian in his car near Shushi on November 10, 2020. No weapon or sharp object was found in the car when the couple were arrested. Vicken Euljekjian was charged under Article 114.3 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (participation of a mercenary in a military conflict or military operation), 214.2.1 (terrorist actions by a group of persons upon a prior conspiracy, an organized group, or a criminal organization), 318.2 (illegal crossing of the state border of the Republic of Azerbaijan) and other articles of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the Yasamal District Court by the Baku Military Court Judge Elbey Allaverdiyev. He has informed his family through the ICRC that he has no adequate lawyer and no satisfactory translator. As all 55 detainees on trial, Vicken Euljekjian has equally denied all charges against him and asked for appeal, but it is unclear if this has been granted to him [10].

We urge world leaders and governments, humanitarian organisations and international bodies such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe to:

- **urgently send international observers to monitor the Baku trials;**
- **require immediate end to ALL sham trials in Baku and publication of the full list of ALL detainees (alive or dead);**
- **ensure the release of ALL civilians and POWs held illegally by the Azerbaijani authorities;**
- **condemn Ilham Aliyev's regime for continuous contempt of international laws and obligations of the United Nations member states.**

[1] <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/19/azerbaijan-armenian-pows-abused-custody>

[2] <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/10787583>

[3] <https://eurasianet.org/armenian-soldiers-on-trial-in-azerbaijan>

[4] <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3444147.html>

[5] <https://minval.az/news/124131749>

[6] <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3438517.html>

[7] <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3448915.html>

[8] <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3448279.html>

[9] [https://turan.az/ext/news/2021/6/free/politics\\_news/en/4844.htm](https://turan.az/ext/news/2021/6/free/politics_news/en/4844.htm)

[10] <https://en.azvision.az/news/145653/-azerbaijan-sentences-lebanese-mercenary-who-fought-in-karabakh-to-20-years-in-prison-.html>