

**Statement by the Commissioner for Human Rights
(Ombudsman)
of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the 34th anniversary
of the January 20, 1990 Tragedy**

34 years have passed since the events of January 20, which left an indelible mark as one of the most tragic and heroic pages in the glorious history of Azerbaijan.

On the night from January 19 to 20, 1990, Soviet forces, which had entered Baku to suppress the peaceful opposition of the resilient population protesting against the overt support of Armenia's aggressive policies backed by the former USSR leadership, committed brutal massacres against the people.

As a result of this act of terror, as one of the gravest crimes against humanity in history, 150 peaceful civilians, including women, children, and the elderly, in Baku and several districts of Azerbaijan have been killed, 744 people were injured, and another 841 were unlawfully detained.

The Great Leader Heydar Aliyev, as always, stood by the side of his people during these difficult times, and on January 21, 1990, he held a press conference at the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Moscow with his family to bring the heinous crime committed against humanity to the attention of the world, by making a sharp statement condemning the former Soviet leadership for this military intervention. The National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, upon his second return to power, expressed his political and legal positions on this crime, and 20th January was declared a National Day of Mourning.

As a result of this military aggression, particularly targeting the civilian population, including women, children, and the elderly, the principle of international law to respect human rights and freedoms, the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international legal documents were severely violated.

Despite numerous calls to international organizations and the global community, there has been no legal evaluation of this crime against humanity, and those responsible for this violent act have not been brought to justice.

As the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I call on international organizations to legally condemn this heinous crime committed against the peaceful population and grave violation of human rights, and I urge them to take decisive actions to hold the accused accountable before the court of justice.

Sabina Aliyeva
The Commissioner for Human Rights
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
(Ombudsman)

19 January 2024

The statement has been issued to the UN Secretary-General (UNSG), UN Security Council (UNSC), UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the heads of the European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CoE), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), International (IOI) and European Ombudsmen Institutions (EOI), Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Association of Ombudsmen of member states of this institution, OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (OIC-IPHRC), European Network of Ombudspersons of Children (ENOC), International Peace Bureau, ombudspersons of other countries and national human rights institutions (NHRIs), diplomatic missions of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the diplomatic missions of foreign countries in Azerbaijan, and diaspora organizations of Azerbaijan.