

Ombudsman's Opinion on Peaceful Protests held on the Khankendi-Lachin Road

The peaceful protests held by civil society organizations of Azerbaijan on the Khankendi-Lachin road have been going on for nine days.

The purpose of the protests is to prevent Armenia's illegal activities to exploit and loot natural resources of Azerbaijan, as a consequence of which the environment is subjected to serious pollution.

It must be noted that Azerbaijan is committed to its obligations and declared that it is ready to provide assistance to Armenians living in its territory in case of necessity. One of such initiatives which evidenced this approach is setting up a helpline for humanitarian needs in the Karabakh economic region of Azerbaijan.

In addition, despite the groundless claims, the regular live broadcasts on TV channels, videos circulated on social networks and in the press evidently show that the road is open and the Russian peacekeepers temporarily deployed in the area are carrying the burden of security along the corridor. So, there are no obstacles to free passage of necessary goods, and for the movement for humanitarian purposes. Family members of peacekeepers were also allowed to cross this road. Also, all conditions were created for the free passage of ambulances, as well as vehicles of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) through the Khankendi-Lachin road.

As the Ombudsperson, stressing the necessity of avoiding biased approaches, I call on other countries, international organizations, foreign media and civil society organizations to refrain from publishing misleading information, to show the same sensitivity for Armenia's provocative actions in the post-war period, which continuously undermine peace, and urge you to support the restoration of peace in the region and to take the initiative to increase mutual trust.

Sabina Aliyeva

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

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