

Opinion of the Azerbaijani Ombudsperson regarding the Statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe

The Statement made by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Dunja Mijatović regarding the peaceful action held by the civil society organizations on the Khankendi-Lachin Road is regrettable.

Although it was expected that the Commissioner for Human Rights would demonstrate a more objective, impartial and fair attitude, in contrary, opinions in her last statement are not reflecting the truth but also are of political nature, and overshadow the peace-building activities in the region.

As I have indicated in my last statement on the issue in question, the peaceful civilians are seriously concerned about Armenia's illegal exploitation of deposits of natural resources in the territories of Azerbaijan, where the Russian peacekeeping contingent were temporarily deployed, as well as its adverse environmental impacts. For that reason, the members of civil society hold peaceful action to grab the attention of an international community to this existing danger.

This peaceful action does not create any obstacles to the free passage of vehicles for humanitarian aid. Furthermore, there are no obstacles for the delivery of necessary goods and medical care for the residents of Armenian origin of the Karabakh economic region of Azerbaijan.

Although it is directly related to her mandate, Armenia's occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan for nearly three decades, the genocides directed against the civilian population, the looting of cities and villages, Armenia's policy of ethnic cleansing in the historical lands of Azerbaijan, the loss of life and health of hundreds of civilians as a result of firing densely populated civilian objects with the use of prohibited weapons during the Patriotic War, landmine contamination of our territories during the occupation period and aftermath, the failure of Armenia to provide any information about the fate of nearly four thousand missing compatriots, and other facts of similar unlawful acts, which are contradicted to the universal principles of international law, for some reason it did not bother the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

It must be noted that even today the return of Azerbaijanis, who were displaced from their native lands about 30 years ago, to the liberated lands is delayed due to the destruction and mine terrorism caused by Armenia during the occupation.

I would like to remind you that in the UNGA Resolution "Situation in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan" adopted in 2006, the issue of assessment of the impact of the fires in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan on the ecological security of the region was raised, as well as in the 2016 Resolution of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly titled "Inhabitants of frontier regions of Azerbaijan are deliberately deprived of water", the immediate withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the region concerned and the provision of an on-the-spot survey by independent engineers and hydrologists were demanded.

I consider it is a bias to express unfounded opinions against Azerbaijan regarding its citizens' protests against ecoterrorism, which violates the rights of people to live in a healthy environment, using their rights enshrined in the national legislation and in the ECHR, by the Commissioner, who did not respond to our repeated appeals regarding the war crimes committed by the military and political leadership of Armenia, the serious threat to human life caused by the mines buried during the occupation and post-war period, and the ecocide crimes and call her to demonstrate a neutral stand.

Sabina Aliyeva

The Commissioner for Human Rights

(Ombudsman)

of the Republic of Azerbaijan

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