

## Reply of the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Working session 14

3 October 2012

### **Tolerance and non-discrimination II**

- *Prevention and responses to hate crimes in the OSCE area*

Statement full of groundless accusations against the Republic of Azerbaijan voiced by the representative of Armenia is of no surprise to us. Many times we have come to witness how they take things out of context and present them in absolutely different shape. But what is surprising is that the representative of Armenia – the country which bears primary responsibility for starting war, committing aggression against Azerbaijan, implementing ethnic cleansing against the large population of ethnic Azerbaijanis, committing other atrocious crimes and openly advocating racist ideology - attempts to criticize the neighboring countries and lecture them on peace and human rights.

We were not surprised to hear from the representative of Armenia that as if, it is multiethnic, multicultural, multi-religious, multilingual Azerbaijan which can serve as a model for peaceful coexistence, that is cultivating “...a state-sponsored policy of racial hatred against Armenians, as well as other ethnic groups...”. I should bring into the attention of the representative of Armenia that multiculturalism is one of the distinct features of Azerbaijan that differs it from Armenia. Suffice it to say that despite the on-going war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, there are more than 20 000 Armenians living in Baku only, while in Armenia which used to be home for more than 200 000 ethnic Azerbaijanis now lives no single Azerbaijani.

Representative of Armenia while falsely accusing Azerbaijani leadership in “...promoting racial hatred and racism” forgets about the statement of then President of Armenia Robert Kocharian voiced in his speech in Council of Europe saying “*Armenians and Azerbaijanis are ethnically, genetically incompatible*”. The then Secretary General of the Council of Europe Walter Schwimmer said that “*Kocharian's comment was tantamount to warmongering*” and manifestation of “*bellicose and hate rhetoric*”, while the then President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Peter Schieder stated that “*since its creation the Council of Europe has never heard the phrase 'ethnic incompatibility'*”. What representative of Armenia also forgets is the confessions the incumbent President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan made in his interview with Thomas de Waal, which has been fixed in the latter’s book “Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War”. Armenian representative should rather be concerned about having a leader who has publicly conceded to committing ethnic cleansing in Karabakh and killing hundreds of innocent civilians in one night in Khojaly.

As regards Ramil Safarov’s extradition to Azerbaijan and his pardon I should say it took place on the basis of the agreement reached between Azerbaijan and Hungary, as well as in absolute accordance with the international commitments, Constitution and legislation of the

Republic of Azerbaijan. This issue should not be treated as separate but rather from the context of Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and ethnic cleansing policy committed against Azerbaijanis. Ramil Safarov is one of the million Azerbaijani IDP's and refugees who have suffered ethnic cleansing and whose lands have been occupied by Armenia. It should also be noted that Ramil Safarov did not murder Gurgen Markaryan because he was an Armenian, in other words it should in no way be construed as a crime ethnically motivated. Markaryan was murdered because of his behavior publicly insulting in numerous times flag of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijani people and honor of innocent victims of Khojaly genocide. As regards the response to Ramil Safarov's return to his homeland it should be underlined that he is not revered for killing someone, be it an Armenian, but for defending the honor of Azerbaijan, it's flag and the victims of Khojaly.

I wish also to remind representative of Armenia the response of Armenians to extradition of Varujan Garabedian, an Armenian terrorist who had been sentenced to life imprisonment in France for organizing a terrorist attack that resulted in death of 8 people in Orli airport. Despite the fact that he was not even a citizen of Armenia, he was extradited to Armenia, welcomed by then President Robert Kocharyan and was declared a national hero. Representative of Armenia should rather explain to us why Monte Melkonian, another Armenian terrorist who had organized several terrorist attacks, murdered several Turkish diplomats in different European countries, brutally slaughtered tens of innocent civilians in Nagorno Karabkh, is so much revered in Armenia which is obvious from the numerous monuments erected in different parts of Armenia to honor him.

In her statement representative of Armenia mentioned Sumgayit events and claimed as if Armenians were being killed in Azerbaijan including Nagorno Karabakh, trying to justify the war unleashed by Armenia with these groundless claims. I have to say that the first innocent victims of the conflict were two Azerbaijani youngsters who were shot dead by Armenians in Askeran. This followed by massive forceful expulsion of more than 200 000 ethnic Azerbaijanis (100% of Azerbaijani population) living that time in Armenia. Only after this tragic events took place in Sumgayit, according to results of the prosecution and investigation conducted by the Central Soviet authorities I can say main perpetrators of the crime were ethnic Armenians, convicted felons, Eduard Grigoryan and Zhirayr Azizbekian, as well as other Armenians.

That time Sumgait had 14 000 Armenian residents (4,67% of total city population). Of them, according to Soviet Prosecutor-General Office died only 26 (0,20% of Armenian population) during the tragedy. Evidently, had it been an act of inter-ethnic strife, the wholly outnumbered Armenians would have sustained larger casualties than 0,20% of their population. Today, up to 800 Armenians continue to live in Sumgait, and a total of up to 30 000 Armenians live in major cities of Azerbaijan. Meanwhile, no Azerbaijanis are left in Armenia – all were ethnically cleansed.

Tragic events in Sumgayit were a deliberate act of provocation and sabotage by some elements within the Communist Party, to fuel ethnic tensions, and keep pro-independence Azerbaijan and Armenia fighting each other – a classic example of “divide and rule” policy.

This had been acknowledged by then Armenia's Defense Minister (incumbent President) Serzh Sargsyan in his speech in March 30, 2005, during Parliamentary hearings in Armenia: *“There are grounds for a judgment that the mass pogroms and killings of peaceful Armenian population in Sumgait ... were exercised with the knowledge of CC CPSU [Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in Moscow]”*. He later confirmed his words during a briefing at the National Press Club in Washington DC in October 2005.

No doubt continuation of Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is the main obstacle to peace and stability in the region. Azerbaijan is faithful to peaceful solution of the conflict and remains in this position. We believe instead of trying to put a blame on us for this unwanted situation, Armenian side should rather think of righting the wrong they have done – which means withdrawing occupying forces from Azerbaijan's Nagorno Karabakh region and adjacent to it 7 other regions. This would remove the main hindrance on the way to peace, security and prosperity in the region.

Thank you!