



ԵԱՀԿ-ՈՒՄ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՇՏԱԿԱՆ ՆԵՐԿԱՅԱՑՈՒՑՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Right of Reply
by the Delegation of Armenia
in response to the Delegation of Azerbaijan
at the 1402nd special meeting of the Permanent Council

15 December 2022

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank all those colleagues who raised their concern and condemned the blocking by Azerbaijan of the only life road, which connects Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and the rest of the world.

Understandably, Azerbaijani delegation denies this fact. Moreover, they claim that the whole international community, with few exceptions, have been misled by the Armenian propaganda. So we have to congratulate the Armenian Foreign Ministry for being so instrumental in “misleading the whole international community”.

Regardless of these denials and claims, the fact remains that Azerbaijan is blocking the road to Nagorno-Karabakh and has cut the gas supply.

Regarding the issue of stopping the gas supply we have just heard from Azerbaijani delegation that there is a technical reason. I want to inform colleagues that Nagorno-Karabakh receives gas from the Republic of Armenia through the pipeline, which is not part of the Azerbaijani gas network, though it passes through the territory controlled by Azerbaijan.

Therefore, the statement of the Azerbaijani delegation is nothing more than a rather clumsy attempt to justify the closure of the road.

With regards the so-called eco-activists I have already talked about that at length today. But would like to inform colleagues, that before coming here I got information that two journalists from Azerbaijan were arrested by the Azerbaijani police under the charges that they visited area of the road which had been closed by so-

called activists without the permission of the Azerbaijani Government. This is the formal charges that have been put forward by Azerbaijani government against these journalists. So whatever Azerbaijan is saying here, i.e. that the protests are not organized by the Azerbaijani Government, is a clear lie.

Azerbaijani delegation spoke of so-called environmental and economic crimes, as well as ecological impact. Considering that there are around 30 000 hectares of land not far from Baku heavily contaminated as result of extensive the oil and gas exploitation, and this is the assessment from the Azerbaijani sources, and that we have never heard of any attempt by the so-called “Azerbaijani eco-activists” to protest in Baku or in close vicinity of those exploitation sites, it is patently obvious the political background and purpose of the so-called protests.

We have never ever heard for the last 30 years of “ecological activists” protesting in Baku or in Azerbaijan in general. We all know what happens to those who try to raise their voices; they are arrested, intimidated, killed by Azerbaijani regime. So, all the attempts by Azerbaijan to portray those state officials who are now pose as environmentalists “protesting” and keeping the road closed are futile.

As to the mining activities in Nagorno-Karabakh, I have to recall the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which says clearly that all peoples have the right of self-determination, and by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

These rights are inherent to the people of Artsakh who through the process of democratic elections have formed a formal government with the power to deliberate and decide on matters of economic and environmental nature. The Republic of Armenia has never interfered in these decisions of the Government of Artsakh by fully respecting the democratically formed and lawful authorities. Therefore, we resolutely reject all the allegations and unfounded claims by the Azerbaijani delegation against Armenia and the Armenian authorities.

We call on Azerbaijan to switch to constructive mode necessary to move forward to peace and normalization of relations on the basis of all norms and principles of international law, in particular, those of the UN Charter, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Helsinki Final Act, which Azerbaijan, I still believe, is bound to follow.

Thank you.