



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

Right of Reply
in response to the delegation of Azerbaijan
1379th meeting of the Permanent Council

23 June 2022

Mr. Chairman,

In reaction to the statement just delivered by the representative of Azerbaijan allow me to exercise my right of reply.

It was not the intention of my delegation to speak under this current issue, but not because we do not share the importance of the issue raised, but because when the problem of refugees is misused by those, whose expansionist and aggressive policies towards neighbouring countries and regions are not only a source of refugee flows, but also as a means of instrumentalising refugees for political, economic and financial gain or coercion, such a discussion becomes untrustworthy and undermines the very essence of the problem. In this context, it was not surprising that the delegation of Azerbaijan once again used this current issue to present its distorted perception and false narrative of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, without saying a word about the thousands of Armenian refugees and displaced persons in Artsakh, who, as a result of the war aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan in 2020, were forced to leave their homes and flee from ethnic cleansing.

That being said, we must never forget that the World Refugee Day, which we mark each year on 20 June, pursues the noble goal of reminding the international community of the plight of refugees and generating joint and concerted efforts to alleviate their suffering, regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, or the status of the territory to which they belong. World Refugee Day is also intended to prevent new wars and armed conflicts that lead to more refugees and human suffering. After all, it is ordinary people and the most vulnerable groups of the population that bear the brunt of wars and conflicts, and therefore the significance of this day cannot be underestimated.

Unfortunately, it is also true that today this purely humanitarian issue has been turned by some into an instrument of speculation, manipulation and coercion. Moreover, in some host countries, refugees are often subjected to violence and abuse, and their rights are violated on a massive scale. And as it is often the case, those who instigate conflicts and instability causing mass displacement and refugee flows in pursuit of geopolitical, economic, financial and other gains are among the most vocal and outspoken.

A vivid example of this is the statement of the delegate of Azerbaijan, who deliberately passed in silence the fact that the 44-day war of aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh has led to ethnic cleansing and the forced displacement of thousands of Armenians. Let me remind you that as a result of Azerbaijan's aggression, 90 thousand people, mostly women, children and the elderly, were forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in Armenia. Many people had to leave their homes and property to escape mass atrocities.

Let me also remind that article 7 of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, which states that, "internally displaced persons and refugees shall return to Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent areas under the control of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees" is not implemented by Azerbaijan. Instead of complying with the requirement of this provision, Azerbaijan is systematically demolishing the houses of Armenians in Artsakh.

I thank you Mr Chairman.