



**Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan  
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting  
Working Session 9: Rule of Law II  
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As delivered by Fidan Mahmudova  
Embassy of Azerbaijan to Poland**

The Delegation of Azerbaijan would like to reiterate that the right to be free from torture is an absolute right and no exceptional circumstances whatsoever can be invoked as a justification for torture. The issue of torture has received a high visibility within the OSCE and has been intensively discussed here for the last few years.

The delegation of Azerbaijan remains deeply concerned with continuous violations of human rights of the Azerbaijani civilians Dilgam Askarov and Shahbaz Guliyev, who have been illegally captured in the occupied by Armenia territories of Azerbaijan. These persons are being subject to torture and degrading behavior by the occupying forces, which is evident by the photos released by the Armenian mass media.

These persons, who attempted to visit the graveyards of their natives were taken hostage by occupying forces in the Kalbajar region of Azerbaijan in July 2014. Armenia makes a notorious attempt to use the captured persons to propagate the illegal regime established on the occupied territories and in this regard, has fabricated claims against them and designed a so-called “court” over these hostages.

The Azerbaijani side once again reminds the Armenian side of its obligations under international humanitarian law to respect the rights of civilians during the armed conflicts. We reiterate once again that taking hostages, as well as torture, cruel, inhumane and other degrading behavior against the civilian population of the territories under occupation is prohibited under international humanitarian law.

In light of the above-mentioned we strongly urge the OSCE Participating States to call on Armenia to immediately release the abducted and illegally captured Azerbaijanis Dilgam Shahbazov especially in view of their deteriorating health conditions.

According to the estimates of the State Commission on Prisoners of War, Hostages and Missing Persons of Azerbaijan, the fate of about 4500 Azerbaijanis remains unknown as a result of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. 554 Azerbaijanis had died in Armenian captivity.

Armenia periodically makes different provocations to make the negotiations process eternal. One of these provocations took place this April. Over 500 houses of Azerbaijani civilians were shelled from the Armenian artillery, more than 100 houses were destroyed, nearly 10 civilians, including children, were killed.

Armenia’s offensive actions also caused casualties and injuries among the servicemen of the armed forces of Azerbaijan. In 2016, the International Committee of the Red Cross facilitated the

handover, between the sides, of the bodies of those killed in action following the recent escalation. Subsequently performed forensic medical examination registered numerous signs of post-mortem mutilation of the bodies of Azerbaijani servicemen by the Armenian armed forces.

As a result of forensic examinations it was revealed that Lt-Col. Murad Mirzayev's right eye together with muscles forming ocular adnexa has post-mortem been removed with sharp-edged object, skull has been completely deformed and destroyed as a result of numerous blunt object hits and right ear has post-mortem been mutilated. Maj. Tabriz Musazada's left eye together with muscles forming ocular adnexa have post-mortem been completely removed from orbital cavity. Muscles surrounding both lateral parts of the mouth have been torn with sharp object. Jr. Corp. Shahin Javadzada's and Lieut. Gabil Orujaliyev's forensic examination of corpse identified 4 cm sized cut brutally inflicted on the right lateral part of the mouth. Sides of the cut are without hemorrhage proving its post-mortem perpetration. Photos and videos of Azerbaijani servicemen subjected to post-mortem mutilation and other inhumane and degrading behavior by Armenian occupying forces were published in the Armenian social networks, as well as media outlets.