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and related intolerance****Right of peoples to self-determination****Promotion and protection of human rights****Crimes against humanity****The rule of law at the national and international levels****Measures to eliminate international terrorism****The responsibility to protect and the prevention of
genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes
against humanity****Security Council
Seventy-sixth year**

Letter dated 18 August 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my previous letters regarding Azerbaijan's persistent, gross and systematic violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles of international law, in particular with respect to the principle of the non-use of force and the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force, I am writing in connection with the televised interview of the President of Azerbaijan of 14 August 2021.¹

During said interview, the President of Azerbaijan, among other incendiary remarks and overt espousal of state-led ideology of warmongering, genocidal violence and anti-Armenian hatred, openly stated that Azerbaijan started a "War of Salvation", referring to the 44-day war from September to November 2020, thus formally admitting that Azerbaijan initiated a war in an attempt to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by force, contrary to its pre-eminent obligations under international law, which prohibits the use of force to resolve disputes, and in flagrant violation of the Secretary-General's appeal for an immediate global ceasefire launched during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

¹ Interview to CNN Turk, available at <https://en.president.az/articles/52736>.



The interview demonstrates, once and for all, that, despite Azerbaijan's repeated attempts to push for deceptive narratives blaming Armenia for initiating a military attack and to hide its criminal actions behind Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, in fact, it was Azerbaijan that started the war on 27 September 2020 with the aim of achieving its long-standing objective to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by force and not through diplomatic settlement.

Having consistently rejected multiple proposals under the auspices of the internationally mandated mediation format for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)), such as the establishment of an investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations, expansion of the number of international monitors and their activities, refraining from provocative actions, including the use of snipers and engineering works along the line of contact and the State border,² Azerbaijan, instead, opted for massive violence, aggression and sponsoring of international terrorism in Nagorno-Karabakh.³ In what has become the most intense and destructive crisis in the region since the 1990s, in grave violation of the ceasefire agreements of 1994 and 1995 and international humanitarian law, Azerbaijan's massive military aggression came to be accompanied with the deliberate targeting of the civilian population, including women, children, journalists, humanitarian and medical workers, and the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, all amidst an unprecedented global healthcare crisis.

As I elaborated in my previous letters,⁴ Azerbaijan's misplaced, manipulative invocations of the concept of self-defence as a purported justification for military action are utterly incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and must be unequivocally acknowledged for what they are – an attempt to solve an international dispute by force, contrary to the obligations under international law and to the detriment of the international peace and security.

I kindly request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 34, 70, 71, 72, 81, 86, 114 and 135, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mher **Margaryan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

² Press statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, www.osce.org/mg/185746; joint statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Secretary of State of the United States of America and State Secretary for Europe Affairs of France, www.osce.org/mg/240316; joint statement by the Heads of Delegation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries, www.osce.org/mg/287531; press statement by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, www.osce.org/minsk-group/423734.

³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Mercenaries in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone must be withdrawn – UN experts" (11 November 2020), www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26494.

⁴ See, for example, the letter dated 29 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia addressed to the Secretary-General (A/75/693-S/2020/1307).