

**Delegation of the Republic of Armenia**  
**30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**  
*Vienna, 17 May 2021*

**Second right of reply at the General debate**

Mr. Chair,

It was not my intention to have a lengthy discussion, but I have to react to the statement made by the delegation of Azerbaijan. We express our regret at the continuous abuse of this session of the CCPCJ by raising groundless and questionable narratives in an apparent attempt to divert the attention from the abysmal track record of crimes committed by Azerbaijan during and in the aftermath of the war of aggression against Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) and its people unleashed by Azerbaijan last fall.

Bearing in mind the mandate of the CCPCJ and in order to keep the focus of our discussion on the topics covered by that mandate, I should point out to number of crimes committed by Azerbaijan and its armed forces during the mentioned war.

First, is the deployment of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters, who were recruited and transferred to the area of conflict months before the war, which indicates beyond doubt that this has been premeditated and pre-planned action. The employed recruitment scheme and the provided logistical support are a clear case of financing and providing logistical support to terrorism as well as diversion of firearms to terrorists.

The deployment of FTFs by Azerbaijan with the help of its ally has been extensively covered by the mainstream international media, it was confirmed by top level dignitaries of many states as well as in the reports of many authoritative bodies, including the UN Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries. For instance, the latter in its report of 11 November 2020 has stated that “the Government of Azerbaijan, with Turkey’s assistance, relied on Syrian fighters to shore-up and sustain its military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, including on the frontline.” This is a crime clearly punishable under the international law including the relevant resolutions of the UN Security council on counter terrorism. The UN Working Group further mentioned “it is even more worrisome that the Syrian fighters deployed to Azerbaijan are allegedly affiliated with armed groups and individuals that, in some cases, have been accused of war crimes and serious human rights abuses during the conflict in Syria, thus seemingly perpetuating a cycle of impunity and risking further abuses of international law”.

A more detailed report and facts about these crimes was provided by the delegation of Armenia at the Kyoto Crime Congress, which contained detailed description of the methods

of recruitment, transit and subsequent deployment of FTFs to Azerbaijan to engage in the latter's war of aggression against the people of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh).

Mr. Chair,

The destruction, alteration of identity, and acts of vandalism against the Armenian rich cultural and religious heritage on the territories of Artsakh currently under the military control and occupation of Azerbaijan, have continued even after the trilateral statement of November 9, 2020. Numerous videos and photos distributed regularly on the internet by the servicemen of the Azerbaijani armed forces themselves evidence their barbaric acts against the artifacts of Armenian cultural heritage. The complete demolition of the Armenian Holy Mother of God Church (Zoravor Surb Astvatsatsin Church) near the town of Mekhakavan, as documented by the BBC, as well as the intentional alteration of the architectural outlook of the Holy Ghazanchetsots Cathedral of Shushi, with removal of its main dome, are the most recent examples of those crimes. The same Cathedral has been attacked twice intentionally by Azerbaijani armed forces using precision missiles.

The crimes against Armenian cultural heritage in the territories of Artsakh occupied by Azerbaijan are directly emanated from the long-established policy of hatred and xenophobia fostered in Azerbaijan against Armenians. The President of Azerbaijan in one of his statements has called all Armenians of the world the "enemies of Azerbaijan". Azerbaijani authorities have used the dehumanization and demonization of Armenians as an instrument of propaganda to shape public opinion and create deeply rooted damaging stereotypes about Armenians. The most recent racist and hate-generating enterprise of Azerbaijan is the shameless installation of the military trophies park in Baku, dedicated to the war in Artsakh, inaugurated on April 12, 2021, with the display of the mannequins of the Armenian prisoners of war.

Mr. Chair,

I have listed only some of the crimes which come under the mandate of the CCPCJ not mentioning the long list of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Azerbaijan during and after the 44-days war of aggression against people of Artsakh, last fall in violation of all its obligations under the international law and the international humanitarian law.

Against this background, it is clear that Azerbaijan is trying to create fake narratives and groundless allegations against Armenia in a desperate attempt to whitewash all the crimes committed by Azerbaijan during and after the 44-day war and to divert the attention of the international community from its grave crimes.

Thank you