Ninth session
Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 13–17 December 2021

Conference room paper submitted by the Government of Armenia

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Delegation of the Republic of Armenia


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CONFERENCE ROOM PAPER

Regarding the non-profit organizations of Armenian diaspora

In light of the preposterous attempts of the delegation of Azerbaijan to abuse the 9th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to carry out smear campaign against Armenian diaspora organizations and famous persons of Armenian origin, including during the dubious “special event” organized on the sidelines of the Conference under the topic “Misuse of fund raising activities for corruption and related criminal purposes”, the delegation of the Republic of Armenia would like to present its position as follows.

Azerbaijan’s actions constitute an attack against the grassroots civilian activism and non-governmental organizations established and operating completely within the legal framework of the respective countries and strictly abiding by their laws and regulations.

By negatively labelling Armenian diaspora organizations and persons of Armenian descent, which are well known for their high public standing and reputation in many countries, Azerbaijan attempts to achieve the following goals.

1. During and in the aftermath of the 44-days war the Armenian organizations and celebrities of Armenian descent have been playing a vital role in providing the much needed humanitarian assistance and aid to the people of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), which has sustained major losses and great sufferings as a result of targeted and regular attacks against densely populated cities, towns, civilian infrastructure. At the same time, more than a year after the establishment of the ceasefire, Azerbaijan has been blocking the access of international humanitarian organizations to the region to provide the much needed assistance to the people of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

Thus, by targeting the Armenian organizations, Azerbaijan is trying to impair the ability of the grassroots Armenian organizations and individuals to provide humanitarian aid and assistance to the people of Artsakh in the face of Azerbaijani aggression. The ultimate purpose of Azerbaijan is to further exacerbate the already harsh living conditions for the people of Artsakh and force them to leave their homes, thus bringing to end its policy of ethnic cleansing of Armenians from their homeland.
2. The Armenian diaspora organizations and celebrities of Armenian descent have been vocally raising awareness about Azerbaijan’s war of aggression against Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in September-November 2020 and used their reputation and standing to draw the attention of the world to the violence against civilians, crimes against humanity and grave violations of international humanitarian law and to the humanitarian crisis resulting from Azerbaijan’s aggression.

Thus by attempting to tarnish the reputation of Armenian diaspora organizations and individuals, Azerbaijan tries to counter their awareness raising activities regarding the crimes of Azerbaijan and to silence their voices. Azerbaijan is also testing the resilience of the international community in terms of protecting civil society organizations and civil activism. In the face of silent tolerance, Azerbaijan will be gradually creating suitable narratives and grounds for attacking and blackmailing any international civil society organization, which have been strongly criticizing the gross violations of human rights and rampant corruption in Azerbaijan.

3. Another goal of Azerbaijan’s smear campaign is the projection of anti-Armenian discriminatory sentiments and even racially motivated hatred in other countries, which has been a prominent narrative in the public statements of Azerbaijani state officials and institutions for decades. If Azerbaijan’s attempts are not countered in a resolute manner, that could lead to major safety and security risks for citizens of many countries of Armenian origin, since through spreading falsehoods and lies about the Armenian organizations, the Azerbaijani propagandists promote anti-Armenian discriminatory sentiments and intolerance, and thus could disturb the social balance and cohesion in many countries.

Against this background Armenia draws the attention of participants in the 9th Session of the Conference to the 7 December 2021 order of the International Court of Justice, which granted provisional measures against Azerbaijan requested by Armenia regarding the anti-Armenian racial discrimination by Azerbaijan and its violations of the International convention prohibiting all forms of racial discrimination (CERD). The Court ordered Azerbaijan to take measures to prevent incitement and promotion of racial hatred and discrimination, including by its officials and public institutions, targeted at persons of Armenian origin.

4. Last but not least, with its smear campaign against Armenian organizations and individuals, Azerbaijan tries to divert the attention of the international community from its war crimes committed during and after the 44-days war of aggression against Artsakh, such as the deliberate and regular targeting of civilian population and infrastructure using missiles with cluster munition and incendiary weapons, systematic destruction, alteration and misappropriating of the Armenian cultural heritage in the territories under the control of Azerbaijani armed forces, inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners of war and extrajudicial killings and recruitment and transfer to

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1 ICJ Order of 7 December 2021 (Armenia v. Azerbaijan)
our region of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters from the conflict areas of the Middles East to engage in its aggression.

The delegation of the Republic of Armenia calls on Azerbaijan to stop its anti-Armenian propaganda both at home and in the international fora and cease the smear campaign targeting the Armenian diaspora organizations and famous people of Armenian descent.

The delegation of the Republic of Armenia urges the Member States, the international community and representatives of non-governmental organizations, to disregard and resolutely counter all attempts of Azerbaijan of spreading highly controversial and invented narratives about civil society and Armenian grassroots organizations. These are propaganda tricks and information manipulations with the sole purpose of harming Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian people worldwide.

Information note on Armenian organizations, which are targeted by Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan is targeting reputable Armenian grassroots organizations that have been playing a vital role in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Artsakh before, during and after Azerbaijan’s recent war of aggression.

HAYASTAN ALL-ARMENIAN FUND

Founded in 1992, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has been carrying out large number of projects to ensure sustainable development in Armenia and Artsakh. Since its inception in 1992, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has implemented over 1,300 major projects in Armenia and Artsakh in infrastructure, healthcare, social welfare, arts and sports.

In view of Azerbaijan’s aggression against the people of Artsakh, the Fund has launched a donation campaign “We Are Our Borders” aimed at carrying out humanitarian programs and support the people of Artsakh in their needs arising as a result of war and aggression against them.

The full information on the implemented and ongoing projects of the Fund is available on its website https://www.himnadram.org/en/projects

ARMENIAN RELIEF SOCIETY

Founded in 1910, the Armenian Relief Society, Inc. is an independent, nonsectarian, philanthropic society serving the humanitarian, social, and educational needs of Armenians and non-Armenians alike.

The Armenian Relief Society, true to its objectives “to make special appropriations for food, medicine, and clothing in the event of war, epidemics, or natural disaster, and to aid the disabled, the ill, the needy, prisoners of war and the deported,” provided immediate
relief efforts and assistance to the civilian population affected by the 44-day war, launched by Azerbaijan in September, 2020.

Considering the current status of the displaced families as a result of the 44-day war, the Society has launched the “Stand with an Artsakh Family” relief project.

The full information on other implemented and ongoing projects of the Society is available on its website https://ars1910.org/.