

## **STATEMENT**

### **of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy**

The Khojaly genocide, which left a mark in history as one of the biggest tragedies of the last century, is one of the bloodiest pages of the policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide regularly carried out by Armenian nationalists against Azerbaijanis.

On the night of February 25-26, 1992, the Armenian armed forces launched an armed attack with the support of the 366th motorized rifle regiment of the Soviet army stationed in the city of Khankendi with the aim of mass killing of the peaceful population of the city of Khojaly. This city with a population of seven thousand people was razed to the ground, its inhabitants were subjected to genocide.

The main goal of the Armenian chauvinists in committing this genocide was also to wipe out Khojaly, a city with historical and cultural monuments belonging to the ancient times of Azerbaijan, in addition to brutal killing the population.

Neglecting the norms and principles of international law, including international humanitarian law, the most merciless killing methods were used against the civilian population, especially the older people, women, and children. As a result, 613 people, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 older people were killed with special cruelty, 8 families were completely wiped out, 25 children lost both parents, 132 children lost one of their parents, 487 people were seriously injured, 1275 people were taken hostage, and the fate of 150 of them is unknown. During the genocide, 56 people were killed with unprecedented cruelty, people were burned alive and subjected to terrible torture.

The rights and freedoms enshrined in the existing international documents in the field of protection of human rights and freedoms, including the right to life, have been grossly and massively violated as a result of the Khojaly genocide based on ethnic cleansing and hatred and other war crimes committed by the aggressor Armenia on our lands.

As a result of the Khojaly genocide, the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child were seriously violated.

For the first time, at the initiative of National Leader Heydar Aliyev the country's Parliament gave a political and legal assessment to the Khojaly Genocide, February 26 was declared "Khojaly Genocide Day", and actions were launched for bringing the committed crime to the attention of the international community and the culprits to justice.

International campaign "Justice for Khojaly" conducted by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation for bringing the truth about Khojaly to the attention of international community plays a very important role in the recognition of the Khojaly genocide by the world community, and giving legal and political assessment to it. As a result of this action, the legislative bodies of 17 countries, as well as 24 states of the United States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization of Turkic States, have adopted

numerous resolutions and decisions condemning the massacre of civilians in Khojaly and evaluating it as an act of genocide and a crime against humanity.

At present, Azerbaijan continues to take all necessary steps in order to convey the information to the world community about the terrorist policy continuously implemented by Armenia, especially the mines buried in our lands liberated from occupation as a result of which civilians have been killed or seriously injured.

In order to restore justice and prevent the recurrence of such acts of genocide against humanity, the world countries and international organizations should give international political and legal assessment to the Khojaly genocide and other war crimes committed by Armenia, the perpetrators of the committed genocide must be held accountable before the international court and decisive measures must be taken in this direction.

**Sabina Aliyeva**

**The Commissioner for Human Rights  
(Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

**23 February 2023**

This Statement is addressed to the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Human Rights Council, UNICEF, UNESCO, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International and European Ombudsman Institutions, Asian Ombudsman Association, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Ombudsman Association of its member states, Association of Ombudsmen and National Human Rights Institutions of Turkic States, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, ombudsmen and national human rights institutions of different countries, embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in foreign countries and the foreign embassies in Azerbaijan, as well as to the Azerbaijani Diasporas.