



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

**REPORT**

**on the fact-finding mission carried out in connection with the human casualties and destructions as a result of heavy artillery and rocket fire by the Armenian armed forces on Ganja city - the densely populated second largest city of Azerbaijan**

**October 4-6, 2020**



**Baku - 2020**

## INTRODUCTION

Starting from September 27, 2020, the Armenian armed forces once again grossly violating the norms of international law are intensively firing on the settlements, historical and cultural buildings and other objects of strategic importance in the frontline and areas far from the frontline using heavy artillery, aircraft, special missile systems and prohibited weapons.<sup>1</sup>

The Armenian state, which has grossly violated the requirements of the UN Charter, which is the main guarantor of international peace and security, the provisions of international treaties to which it is a party, also the UN Security Council Resolutions #822<sup>2</sup>, #853<sup>3</sup>, #874<sup>4</sup> and #884<sup>5</sup> of 1993 defining the legal framework of the political process for the settlement of the conflict related to the military aggression of Armenia on the territories of Azerbaijan on the basis of norms and principles of international law, is not afraid to continue committing war crimes.

Thus, these resolutions condemned the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories and stressed the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory, as well as the territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of the borders of Azerbaijan were reaffirmed and the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan was demanded.<sup>6</sup>

The Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict adopted by the UN General Assembly on 14 December 1974, stresses that attacks and bombings on the civilian population, inflicting incalculable suffering, especially on women and children, who are the most vulnerable members of the population, shall be prohibited, and such acts shall be condemned.<sup>7</sup>

All States shall abide fully by their obligations under the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Geneva Conventions of 1949, as well as other instruments of international law relative to respect for human rights in armed conflicts, which offer important guarantees for the protection of women and children<sup>8</sup>.

Despite all these, starting from October 4, 2020, the armed forces of Armenia, which totally fails to fulfill its obligations arising from international agreements, continue subjecting to missile attacks and rocket fires from the territory of Armenia the densely populated second largest city of Azerbaijan, Ganja, located in more than 100 km away from the conflict zone.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>[https://azertag.az/en/xeber/Armenian\\_armed\\_forces\\_committed\\_large\\_scale\\_provocations\\_along\\_entire\\_length\\_of\\_the\\_front-1596171](https://azertag.az/en/xeber/Armenian_armed_forces_committed_large_scale_provocations_along_entire_length_of_the_front-1596171)

<sup>2</sup><http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/822>

<sup>3</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/853>

<sup>4</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/874>

<sup>5</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/884>

<sup>6</sup><https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/or/13508.htm>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/declaration-on-the-protection-of-women-and-children-in-emergency-and-armed-conflict/>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/declaration-on-the-protection-of-women-and-children-in-emergency-and-armed-conflict/>

<sup>9</sup>[https://azertag.az/en/xeber/AZERTAC\\_highlights\\_videos\\_and\\_photos\\_of\\_damages\\_caused\\_to\\_civilians\\_infrastructure\\_and\\_historical\\_buildings\\_as\\_a\\_result\\_of\\_Armenias\\_shelling\\_of\\_Ganja\\_city\\_VIDEO-1603419?fbclid=IwAR3xTE5LAWikoCUaUsPo6fTFftlxR9ZB0vRtG\\_QJbZJK5K1DTuI0DKkvAQo](https://azertag.az/en/xeber/AZERTAC_highlights_videos_and_photos_of_damages_caused_to_civilians_infrastructure_and_historical_buildings_as_a_result_of_Armenias_shelling_of_Ganja_city_VIDEO-1603419?fbclid=IwAR3xTE5LAWikoCUaUsPo6fTFftlxR9ZB0vRtG_QJbZJK5K1DTuI0DKkvAQo)

The occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian armed forces and shelling of other civilian settlements by heavy artillery are a gross violation of international law norms and principles, as well as international humanitarian law norms.

The present Report has been developed by the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ms. Sabina Aliyeva, with the purpose of investigating on the spot the facts of gross human rights violations as a result of the next military provocations by the Armenian armed forces and conveying the truth to relevant international organizations.

This report, prepared within the frames of the fact-finding mission of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman in Ganja city, covers the period from October 4 to 6, 2020, reflecting the real facts of human casualties and destructions as a result of heavy artillery and rocket attacks by the Armenian armed forces from the territory of the Republic of Armenia.



### **The fact-finding mission of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

Starting from October 4, 2020, heavy artillery and rocket fire from the territory of Armenia by the Armenian armed forces shelled Ganja, the densely populated second largest city in Azerbaijan, resulting in casualties, numerous injuries and destructions.

In this regard, the Azerbaijani Ombudsman immediately sent a statement of protest to international organizations, in which it was urgently demanded to ensure the life and

health, security of the civilian population and to prevent the military aggression of Armenia.<sup>10</sup> This statement was addressed by the Ombudsman of Azerbaijan 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, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 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, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, International Peace Bureau, different ombudsmen and national human rights institutions.

Beside these, the information about the aggressive military provocations of the occupying Armenian state against humanity was published on social networks - Twitter<sup>11</sup>, Facebook<sup>12</sup>, as well as highlighted in mass media, and the world community was once again called upon to undertake urgent measures in accordance with the norms and principles of international law.

On October 6, 2020, during the monitoring within the frames of a fact-finding mission in Ganja, the Azerbaijani Ombudsman inspected civilian houses, historical and cultural buildings, large shopping centers and other public facilities destroyed and severely damaged by missiles heavy artillery and rocket fire.<sup>13</sup>

During the fact-finding mission, there have been identified the facts of gross violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens enshrined in international legal acts, as a result of the Armenian armed forces deliberately firing heavy artillery and rockets at Ganja city, killing and injuring civilians, causing serious damage to homes, historic buildings, large shopping malls and other civilian objects.<sup>14</sup>

During the fact-finding mission in Ganja city, the Ombudsman visited the civilians wounded as a result of shelling by Armenia's military attacks on the densely populated areas from the territory of the Republic of Armenia and also met with the local residents affected by the collateral damage.<sup>15</sup>

This should be stressed that as a result of rocket and artillery strikes from the territory of Armenia on Ganja, a large amount of damage was caused to residential buildings, civil facilities, historical buildings, and 32 civilians, including children, women and the elderly, were injured and one was killed.<sup>16</sup>

As a result of one of the shells fired by the Armenian armed forces, that hit a large shopping center in Ganja, covering an area of about 30 hectares, 20 2-storey buildings, as well as six 1-storey buildings with 108 shops were destroyed, at the same time numerous

<sup>10</sup><http://ombudsman.az/en/view/news/2092/statement-of-the-commissioner-for-human-rights-ombudsman-of-the-republic-of-azerbaijan-on-the-loss-of-life-and-destructions-caused-by-the-shelling-of-ganja-city-and-other-territories-of-azerbaijan-by->

<sup>11</sup>[https://twitter.com/az\\_ombudsman](https://twitter.com/az_ombudsman)

<sup>12</sup>[https://www.facebook.com/ombudsman.az/?epa=SEARCH\\_BOX](https://www.facebook.com/ombudsman.az/?epa=SEARCH_BOX)

<sup>13</sup><https://ombudsman.az/en/view/news/2099/azerbaijani-ombudsman-had-the-next-fact-finding-mission-to-ganja-city-subjected-to-artillery-attacks>

<sup>14</sup> <https://qafqazinfo.az/news/detail/sebine-eliyeva-ermenilerin-gencede-dagitdigi-yerlerde-fotolar-300833>

<sup>15</sup><https://www.facebook.com/ombudsman.az/photos/pcb.199355388270192/199354364936961/?type=3&theater>

<sup>16</sup> <https://genprosecutor.gov.az/az/post/2874>

vehicles in the parking lot in this area have become unusable, and, thus, property rights were violated, causing significant damage to more than 200 citizens.

Below are photos of civilian houses, historical and cultural monuments, large shopping centers and other public facilities destroyed in Ganja, as well as civilian injured as a result of heavy artillery and rocket fire:



*A child (b.2019) (11 months) seriously injured as a result of a shell explosion -  
Photo 1*



*Destroyed private house – Photo 2.*



*Destroyed private house – Photo 3.*



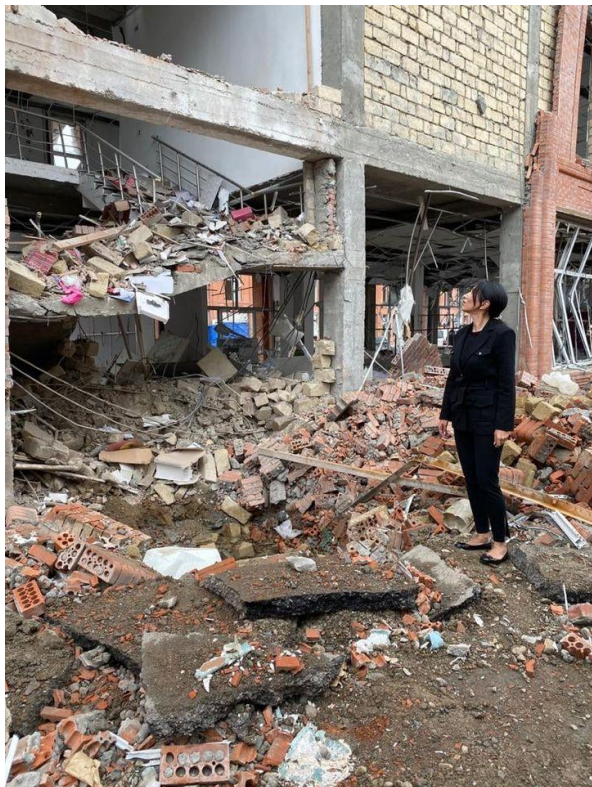
*Destroyed private house – Photo 4.*



*Destroyed private house – Photo 5.*



*Destroyed shopping center-Photo 6.*



*Destroyed shopping center - Photo 7.*



*A car that has fallen into disrepair – Photo 8*



*A car in which one civilian was killed - Photo 9*



***Meeting with city residents suffered severe material damages - Photos 10-11***

The human casualties and destructions as a result of regular shelling of residential areas in Ganja, the densely populated second largest city of Azerbaijan by the Armenian armed forces, with heavy artillery and missiles prove once again that the Armenian state has not given up its aggressive actions and wants to occupy new territories once again.

Such war crimes committed by Armenia that are a serious threat to the life and health of the civilian population, and this act of aggression deeply worry me, as the Ombudsman of the country.<sup>17</sup>

These military provocations of Armenia against our country pose a serious threat to the life and health of the civilian Azerbaijani population, cause people to be in a difficult and risky situation not only physically and materially, but also morally and psychologically, and are a blatant violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the right of people to live in a safe and healthy environment.

Therefore, we call on international organizations and influential world states to demand from the Republic of Armenia, which undermines the efforts to achieve just peace, to unconditionally put an end to war crimes, the criminal actions that cause to gross violation of rights and freedoms of civilian population, to the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas that are historical lands of Azerbaijan, and to undertake urgent actions to establish international legal responsibility for the aggressor Armenia.

<sup>17</sup><https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=341252567298178>




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


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