



ԵԱՀԿ-ՈՒՄ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՇՏԱԿԱՆ ՆԵՐԿԱՅԱՑՈՒՑՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Statement

by Ambassador Armen Papikyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia

as delivered at the 1277th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

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Current issue N 6:

Turkey's aggressive policy and military posturing as destabilizing factor

in the South Caucasus

Right of Reply

Mr. Chairman,

This joint political exercise by Ambassadors of Turkey and Azerbaijan is very much indicative or, I would rather say, emblematic.

In his statement, among other things, the Turkish Ambassador fails to recognize the principles adopted by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group while making reference to its role in the Minsk Group. This country should, at least, be aware of the language and principles which constitute the basis for the peace process. I think it is already the second or third time that the Ambassador of Turkey, while seemingly expressing support to the Minsk Group Co-Chairs, at the same time puts conditionality as to the way in which the conflict should be resolved. So, this half-pregnant approach of Turkey is very much self-revealing.

I agree with the Ambassador of Turkey that the CSBMs are intended to increase transparency and trust among the participating States. However, as I have mentioned earlier, it is the Turkish side that failed to comply with the spirit of the Vienna Document as well as with the values mentioned by the Turkish Ambassador. In my remarks I have already recalled previous joint exercises during which the Armenian side, in the spirit of transparency, requested information which was never received. We will

distribute our statement and the Turkish Ambassador can familiarize himself with our requests which were made public during the FSC meetings.

As for the HLPG, I have done it before, and I am going to once again encourage the Turkish Ambassador to read the mandate of the HLPG. The Turkish Ambassador made references to “situational awareness”. It is quite obvious that the inspections carried out by this country in 2019 were fully aimed at the so-called “situational awareness” which resulted in Azerbaijani aggression. Secondly, in the mandate of the HLPG there is no clause, any reference that the HLPG should participate in any inspections or any visits conducted under the umbrella of the OSCE PRCiO.

The Turkish Ambassador becomes very much emotional whenever I refer to the Armenian Genocide. In response he referred to the black screen by saying that when he is listening to me, he recalls the victims of ASALA. Well, though we are not surprised that the Turkish side, by referring to ASALA tries to attribute their actions to the Republic of Armenia, it is nevertheless unclear for us the purpose of referring to this issue.

As far as I know, and most probably it is also well known to the Turkish Ambassador and many others, ASALA ceased to exist before Armenia regained its independence. And since then, there has been no single incident or attack reported against any consulate, any individual or any country, including Turkey. So, I urge the Turkish Ambassador to put an end to these attempts at attributing those actions to the Republic of Armenia, which has never justified violence committed some decades ago.

On the other hand, when the Turkish Ambassador in his speech is denying the Armenian Genocide, the grim pictures of those 1.5 million innocent people killed are popping up in my mind. I believe Turkey has no moral right to blame others for the glorification of violence. It is a well-known fact that Turkey has been justifying the annihilation of the entire nation and the Genocide of Armenians. I already mentioned the statement made by the Turkish president calling those who survived the Genocide as the “leftovers of sword”. Tallat Pasha and Enver Pasha, the masterminds of the Genocide and perpetrators of the crimes against humanity are still glorified and venerated by Turkey. There are monuments erected and streets named after them.

Mr. Chairman,

As to the usual repetitive and continuous allegations and statements of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan, as I have already said today, the violation of basic human rights is the basis of the conflicts that we have in the OSCE area.

Violations of fundamental human rights of the people of Artsakh, including attempts by the Azerbaijani authorities to suppress by force the exercise of their right to self-determination are the root causes of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As a result, the people of Artsakh have stood up to defend their collective and individual rights against

the military aggression of Azerbaijan. The population of Artsakh faced existential threats back in the beginning of the 90`s in the same way as it faces today, in 2020, since the policy of Azerbaijan aimed at extermination and ethnic cleansing of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh remains unchanged. Armenia resolutely stands behind the people of Artsakh as we clearly understand that Armenia is the sole, the only country that can ensure the safety and security of the people of Artsakh.

I will stop here in order not to prolong this debate anymore.

Thank you.

Second Right of Reply

Mr. Chairman,

I could not resist the temptation of taking the floor again because there were so many distorted facts presented in this room. Let me start with figures. Azerbaijani Ambassador claims that Armenians were a minority in Nagorno Karabakh. Well, let me disappoint the Ambassador of Azerbaijan. According to the last, Soviet period census of 1989, Armenians were constituting more than 76% of the population. Less than 23% were Azerbaijanis and the rest were Russians and other nationalities.

Another distortion related to figures. Azerbaijani Ambassador claimed that there were one million Azerbaijanis living in Nagorno Karabakh and 300 thousand in Armenia, and that there is no single Azerbaijani now living in Armenia. This is something new. This is a new figure for anyone who is more or less familiar with the conflict. Even the Azerbaijani official sources are more moderate with their distorted estimations used for propaganda reasons.

It should be recalled that the Republic of Artsakh gained its independence in the context of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and in full compliance with both international law and the then applicable legislation of the USSR. The law "On the procedure for resolving issues related to a Union Republic`s Secession from the USSR" of April 3, 1990, authorized autonomous entities and compact ethnic groups within a Soviet Republic to freely and independently decide their own legal status in case the Republic secedes from the USSR. And that is exactly what happened. Following Soviet Azerbaijan`s declaration of August 30, 1991 of the restoration of 1918-1920 state independence, Nagorno Karabakh initiated the same legal procedure by adopting its own declaration of independence and holding referendum on the issue. As I already said, the referendum, which was held at a time when Nagorno Karabakh was part of the USSR, was fully in line with the existing Soviet law. Hence, after the collapse of the Soviet Union two states emerged on the territory of the former Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic.

So, when Azerbaijan refers to the violation of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, I have to point that there is no violation of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Just on the contrary, it is Azerbaijan that violates the territorial integrity of Artsakh, whether you like it or not.

I do not want to go into more details and make a historical exposé here, but the point is that Nagorno Karabakh has never ever been part of independent Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan of 1918-1920 never exercised any sovereignty over the territory of Nagorno Karabakh, and in 1991 they restored their independence within the territory of 1918-1920 Republic.

Third Right of Reply

Mr. Chairman,

I will be extremely short. I understand the limitations that you are encountering.

One remark in reaction to the statement of the Azerbaijani Ambassador. We insist that Azerbaijan should stick to the OSCE language. This is already the second or the third time that I am encouraging the Delegation of Azerbaijan to use the adopted and agreed language of the OSCE on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. There is no such conflict as the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. We can continue this back and forth endlessly, but out of respect to you, Mr. Chairman, I will stop here.

Thank you.