



Statement of the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the exercise of the right of reply to the Country Statement of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia

(UNEA5, Nairobi, February 28 – March 2, 2022)

The statement made by the Delegation of Armenia has become a yet failed attempt to deny the facts and mislead the international community hypocritically referring to so-called non-existing "Artsakh" and "Nagorno-Karabakh" and "aggression" against Armenia proving by that the meaning of a famous proverb - on the thief and the hat is on.

In reality, it was Armenia that put forward territorial claims and unleashed a war against Azerbaijan 30 years ago, occupied 20% of Azerbaijan's territories and conducted total ethnic cleansing against one million Azerbaijanis. It was Armenia that persistently ignored implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions [822](#), [853](#), [874](#) и [884](#) demanding complete, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian Armed Forces from the territories of Azerbaijan. It was Armenia that rejected all proposals for peaceful solution within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. It was Armenian leadership that scrapped the negotiation process by stating "Karabakh is Armenia" and "new war for new territories" followed by another large-scale military provocation against Azerbaijan in autumn 2020. In response, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan began counter-measures undertaken within the framework of the right to self-defense in accordance with Article 52 of the UN Charter, marking the beginning of the 44-day Patriotic War. They were in full compliance with the international humanitarian law in order to prevent another military aggression from Armenia and to provide for the security of the civilian population. It was Armenia that used prohibited white phosphorus bombs, ballistic missiles in attacks on the civilians and civilian settlements of Azerbaijan and these facts have already been proved.

The Patriotic War resulted in restoration by Azerbaijan of its territorial integrity and put an end to Armenia's nearly 30-year-long policy of aggression. Azerbaijan alone ensured the implementation of the above-said UN Security Council resolutions of 1993.

The end of the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories revealed the full extent of the ecocide, cuturecide, urbicide committed by Armenia for decades, such as extensive mining, the deliberate destruction and misappropriation of Azerbaijan's historical, cultural and religious heritage, plundering of natural resources, destruction of infrastructure, and other violations of international law. The 30 years-long occupation of Armenia has resulted in irrevocable damage to the unique ecosystems of not only Azerbaijan but the whole region and beyond. The acts of ecocide committed by the Republic of Armenia in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan were widely recognized by the international community, including in the documents of the numerous international organizations. On 7 September 2006, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution titled "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan", which emphasized the incidents of massive fires in the these territories. The Council of Europe in its resolution 2085 (2016) recognized the distressing level of water-related environmental problems in the occupied territories and alerted them as a major disaster leading to a great loss of human life and a fresh humanitarian crisis. The fact-finding mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) well documented the massive arsons

perpetrated by Armenia in the occupied territories and assessed the environmental damages of fires on environment and their threats to human health.

It is noteworthy that the 30 years-long occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan was one of the key factors seriously impeding the full-fledged implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the relevant targets in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The end of 30-year-long conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan provides a unique window of opportunities for effective regional cooperation in the South Caucasus. Having put an end to the armed conflict, Azerbaijan has declared its intention to build interstate relations with Armenia. Mutual recognition of and respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders constitute a prerequisite for that. The way forward for sustainable social-economic development in the Caucasus is to overcome a conflict legacy, and embark on building mutually beneficial good-neighborly relations in full respect for and compliance with universally agreed norms and principles of international law. This requires shared vision, joint efforts and responsible behavior and good faith implementation of commitments vis-à-vis each other.