



Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations

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KHOJALY GENOCIDE – 16th ANNIVERSARY

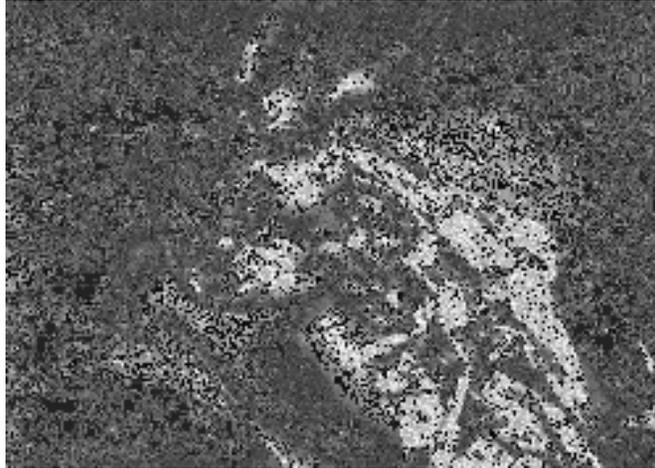
26 February 2008 will mark the sixteenth anniversary of Khojaly Genocide—a bloody crime against humanity committed by the Armenian aggressors. Khojaly is a town situated in the strategic point on the road Agdam-Shusha-Khankendi -Askeran near the only airport in Karabakh. Its population was 23,757, total area 0.94 sq. km.



Late on February 25 the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly was under the intensive fire from the town Khankendi and Askeran. The airport and neighboring houses was destroyed. More than 150 people defending the airport were killed by sporadic artillery shelling of regiment No 366. of the former USSR. The next day, on February 26 the fire shooting grew heavier and fiercer. After powerful artillery shelling Armenian bandits launched a massive attack. Armored vehicles of the former Soviet Army regiment No 366 were in the first row of the attackers. They were followed by Armenian armed forces.



Earlier, the Armenian nationalists with the support of their USSR leadership and guided by the idea of “Great Armenia-from the Sea to the Sea” began to expulse Azerbaijanis from Armenia. 216 Azerbaijanis were expelled from Armenia in 1987. Such policy of the Armenian authorities led to expulsion of 200 000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia in 1987-1989.



This bloody event also was continued from 1988 to 1990 in the territory of Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh) by the Armenian military troops. Armenian extremists began to expulse Azerbaijanis from Karabakh, the historical homeland of Azerbaijanis. On January 1990 Azerbaijani people rallied to the streets of Baku, to voice their protest against violation of the territorial integrity of their motherland. On 20 January 1990 ten thousands of Soviet troops, including Special Forces invaded the capital of Azerbaijan and brutally punished ordinary people, who wanted to be heard by the Soviet Regime and the International Community. The tragedy of Black January opened a new tragic chapter in the policy of genocide against Azerbaijanis, which has been executed by the Bolshevik regime and their proxies in the region- the Armenian nationalists and extremists.



The Khojaly Genocide was the continuation of the Armenian terror policy against Azerbaijanis.

Occupation of Khojaly was followed with unprecedented brutalities against the civilian population. In a few hours the aggressors killed 613 innocent and unarmed people. Among them were 106 women, 63 children, 70 elderly people. 56 people were killed

with special cruelty: by burning alive, scalping, beheading, going out of eyes, and scalping and bayoneting of pregnant women in the abdomen. 8 families were totally exterminated. 25 children were totally, and 130 children were partly orphaned. 476 people became disabled persons (of them 76 were minors). 1275 people were taken into hostage and the fates of 150 of them are still unknown.



Various witness reported horrifying details in details of massacre. The late Azerbaijani journalist Chingiz Mustafayev, who was the first to film the aftermath of the massacre, wrote an account of what he saw: “Some children were found with severed ears; the skin had been cut from the left side of an elderly woman’s face; and men had been scalped.”

The event had sparked the exodus of Azerbaijanis from their historic lands. Ten years on and the world is still oblivious to the suffering caused by the Armenian aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan. As the result of ethnic cleansing in Karabakh, and other territories occupied by Armenians, some 1,000,000 people have been expelled from their homes and forced to live in tent-camps and railway carriages

Pascal Privet and Steve Le Vine of “Newsweek” in the article “The face of massacre” reported: “Azerbaijan was charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refuges and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on 25-26 February. Many

were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped”¹.

Human Rights Watch called the tragedy at the time “the largest massacre to date in the conflict.”

“The New York Times” wrote about “truckloads of bodies” and described acts of “scalping.”



As despicable as it may sound, the reason behind this unseen savagery is revealed by Prime Minister of Armenia Serge Sarkissian in his interview to British journalist Tomas De Waal “Before Khojaly the Azerbaijanis thought that... the Armenians were people who could not raise their hands against the civilian population. We were able to break that stereotype”². No comments.

The moral consciousness of the world demands to adequately account for this massacre as an act of genocide and remember its victims just as those of Baby Yar, Khatyn, Srebrenica, Rwanda...

¹ Newsweek, 16 March 1992.

² Tomas de Waal. Black Garden, (NYU Press. 2003), p. 85.