



Right of reply by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
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As delivered by Fidan Mahmudova

In reply to the Armenian Delegation, we wish to underline once again that the aim of Dilgam Askarov and Shahbaz Guliyev was simply to visit the graves of their parents located in the Nagorno Karabakh region located within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani civilians Dilgam Askarov and Shahbaz Guliyev have been illegally captured on the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia, beaten and are subject to torture and degrading behavior by the occupying forces of Armenia. These persons are kept under inhumane conditions.

The question is not what Dilgam and Shahbaz were doing in Nagorno Karabakh, but the question is what Armenian armed forces are doing on the Azerbaijani territories.

Moreover, Armenia periodically makes different provocations to make the negotiations process eternal. One of these provocations took place in April 2016. Azerbaijani civilians were shelled from the Armenian artillery, nearly 10 civilians, including children, were killed. Armenia's offensive actions also caused casualties and injuries among the servicemen of the armed forces of Azerbaijan. The International Committee of the Red Cross facilitated the handover, between the sides, of the bodies of those killed in action following the escalation in 2016. Subsequently performed forensic medical examination registered numerous signs of post-mortem mutilation of the bodies of Azerbaijani servicemen by the Armenian armed forces. Photos and videos of Azerbaijani servicemen subjected to **torture** (post-mortal mutilation) and other inhumane and degrading behavior by Armenian occupying forces were published in the Armenian social networks, as well as media outlets.

Armenia's direct and deliberate attacks against the Azerbaijani civilian population and civilian objects, as well as inhuman acts against Azerbaijani militaries constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The Azerbaijani side once again reminds the Armenian side of its obligations under international humanitarian law to respect the rights of civilians during the armed conflicts. We reiterate once again that taking hostages, as well as torture, cruel, inhumane and other degrading behavior against the civilian population of the territories under occupation is prohibited under international humanitarian law.