Statement of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia on the Azerbaijani provocation in the Lachin Corridor

Republic of Armenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs · 13 December 2022

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In the morning of December 12, 2022, a group from the Republic of Azerbaijan, presenting themselves as environmental activists, set up tents near Shushi, blocking the normal and unhindered movement in the Lachin Corridor, which was created by the trilateral statement of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the President of the Russian Federation on November 9, 2020, in order to ensure the connection between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia.

The propagandistic preparations for closing the Lachin Corridor started months ago and it is obvious that this provocation was organised by the state bodies of Azerbaijan, aiming to cut off Nagorno-Karabakh from the Republic of Armenia and thus from the outside world.

As a result of this operation, the residents of Nagorno-Karabakh have been deprived of the right to free movement, Nagorno-Karabakh is facing the imminent threat of a food and humanitarian crisis.

The unfolded situation is in direct contrast with the point 6 of the Trilateral Statement of November 9, 2020, according to which:

> a) the Lachin Corridor shall remain under the control of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation,
>
> b) the Republic of Azerbaijan shall guarantee safe movement of citizens, vehicles, and cargo in both directions along the Lachin corridor.

Therefore, Azerbaijan grossly violates the international obligation assumed by it. This behaviour of Azerbaijan not only demonstrates its lack of intention to address the issues of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh and to hold a dialogue with Stepanakert for this purpose, but also once again testifies to the fact that official Baku continues pursuing the policy of ethnic cleansing towards Nagorno-Karabakh.

The blockage of the Lachin Corridor is the practical manifestation of many alarms that Azerbaijan has adopted a policy of genocide against the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh. The regular violations of the ceasefire regime and the provocations by the Azerbaijani armed forces on the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh make the existential threat to Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh more tangible.

We underscore that international commitments, including the strict fulfilment of the commitments undertaken by the Trilateral Statement of November 9, the refusal of the use of force or the threat of the use of force, the strict observance of the ceasefire regime, the ensuring of uninterrupted movement in the Lachin Corridor under the supervision of Russian peacekeepers are of key importance for the political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the region, and for the peaceful coexistence of peoples.

We call the urgent attention of the entire international community, including the UN Security Council, OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairing and member states, that Azerbaijan's actions may lead to a large-scale humanitarian disaster. We emphasise the necessity of launching or restarting the international mechanisms for ensuring the rights and security of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, and for this purpose we shall soon start consultations with international partners.

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