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**Armenian Terror: religious and
historical monuments of Azerbaijan**

2018



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Introduction

The book of “Armenian Terror: religious and historical monuments of Azerbaijan” is presenting a research on crimes and terror acts committed by Armenian armed forces against religious and historical monuments of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis in different period of times, particularly in 1980s and early 1990s. From perspective of violation of fundamental human rights and destroying cultural-historical properties, the acts of terror and crimes have been analysed having the different definitions and perceptions of them.

In order to give exact definition of terrorism, several international resolutions, declarations and acts are being explained here. Thus, terrorism originates from the statist system of structural violence and domination that perpetrates military aggression and overt or covert intervention directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of other states¹. Since Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan started, hundreds of religious and cultural sites were systematically destroyed in an attempt to eradicate the cultural heritage of Azerbaijan in the occupied territories by Armenian armed forces. It is widely acknowledged that crimes against cultural heritages are crimes against humanity² because the cultural heritage is an important symbol of the existence of a nation and a state or civilization in general. Culture preserves the identity of a specific community of people. Without the existence of cultural heritage, the link between generations is destroyed. Moreover, attacks on cultural values could potentially be used to destroy a specific ethnic or cultural community³. The following crimes against cultural property [red. Article

1 See: Geneva Declaration on Terrorism. 1987. UN General Assembly. Doc A/42/30, 29 May 1987.

2 See: United Nations Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Dubrovnik case). <http://www.icty.org/en/outreach/documentaries/dubrovnik-and-crimes-against-cultural-heritage> [accessed 03.08.20018]

3 See: Forrest C. (2010). *International law and the Protection of cultural values*. London– New-York, 2010.

1 of the 1954 Hague Convention defines 'cultural property as a 'movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history]'⁴ were committed by Armenian armed forces since Nagorno-Karabakh conflict launched have been included to this book: “*Yukahri Govhar aga*” mosque in Shusha, “Aghdam Juma” mosque (Ağdam Cümə Məscidi)⁵ in Aghdam district, Ganjasar Monastery in Kelbadjar district and etc.

It should be timely to add UNESCO's information on systematic actions aimed at the destruction of cultural heritage in the different parts of the world. For example, in 2013, the UNESCO was informed about the looting of the national museum of Malawi in El-Minya in Upper Egypt and the destruction of several religious monuments, including churches and mosques in Upper Egypt, El Fayoum and Cairo. In addition, destruction of cultural and religious heritages in Syria by ISIS has been echoed by international level with condemnations of such vandal and terror acts, while cultural heritages of Azerbaijan destroyed and vandalized by Armenian authority in the occupied territories are waiting for the protection of its century old life. The UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova declared that “all layers of Syria's rich culture, including religious heritage, must be protected referring in particular to the fact that Syria is host to highly significant monuments of Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths”⁶. Azerbaijan, also is host to eminently important monuments of Christian, Muslim and Jewish while members of different faiths are enjoying environment of tolerance and mutual understanding. However, Azerbaijani authority is unable to protect its cultural and religious heritages

4 See: Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention 1954. UNESCO. Available at: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. [Accessed on 3 August 2018]

5 See: Nahid Mammadov.2015. *Historical Monuments of Azerbaijan under occupation*. Published by SCRA. Baku: Azerbaijan

6 Statement of UNESCO's Director-General. Official web page: < <https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-director-general-calls-protection-all-religious-heritage-syria-after-destruction>> [Accessed on 20 August 2018]

in the occupied territories.

In 2018, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov met with the UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay and highlighted that our cultural monuments were purposefully targeted and destructed by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. During the meeting, it was noted that the OSCE monitoring mission also confirmed these facts. UNESCO, also was invited to join monitoring process in the future⁷. Despite the fact that cultural heritage of Azerbaijan has been destroyed, “armenianized” many of them or otherwise modify them in a way that would defy their historic and national identity Armenians, UNESCO failed to present a report on crime against cultural heritage.

The aim of this book is to demonstrate Armenian vandal acts against cultural and religious heritages of Azerbaijan in the occupied territories. Also, the book tries to illustrate a policy of Azerbaijan and Armenia on cultural diversity, multiculturalism and religious tolerance.

⁷ No:06/18, Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov met with the UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay. Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.az/en/news/909/5424>. Publishing date 17.01.2018. [Accessed on 5 August 2018]

From Terrorist Organizations to the State Formation

The chapter researches dimensions of Armenian terrorism while searching facts on racist movements carried out by Armenian authorities so far. In order to make the term of terrorism clear for the readers, the international legal acts and documents on explaining terror acts have been included to this paper, too.

“Terrorism originates from the statist system of structural violence and domination that perpetrates military aggression and overt or covert intervention directed against territorial integrity or political independence of other states”⁸. This definition explains that military aggression to occupy or interfere territorial integrity of independent state is one of the expressions of the terrorism. According to the Geneva Declaration, terrorism in the context of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as such the Armenian military aggression against territorial integrity of Azerbaijan perceived as an act of terror.

For the sake of objectivity and justice, the author described the itinerary of Armenian movement in the south of the Caucasus Mountains. Thus, Armenian settlement in this region started with the Kurakchay agreement signed in 1805 between Tscharist Russia and Karabakh khanate⁹. As the Russians acquired lands in the south of the Caucasus, they removed the Muslim populations that came under their control. The Muslims were replaced with Christians whom the Russians thought would be loyal to the Russian Christians. Christian Armenians were the focal point of this policy and were given lands the Russians obtained without paying any compensation. In the Erivan Province, which is the heart of the modern-day Armenia, the majority of the population was Muslim before they were

8 See: *The Geneva Declaration on Terrorism. Un General Assembly Doc.A/42/307, 29 May 1987*, Available at [<http://i-p-o.org/GDT.HTM>] [Accessed on 3 August 2018]

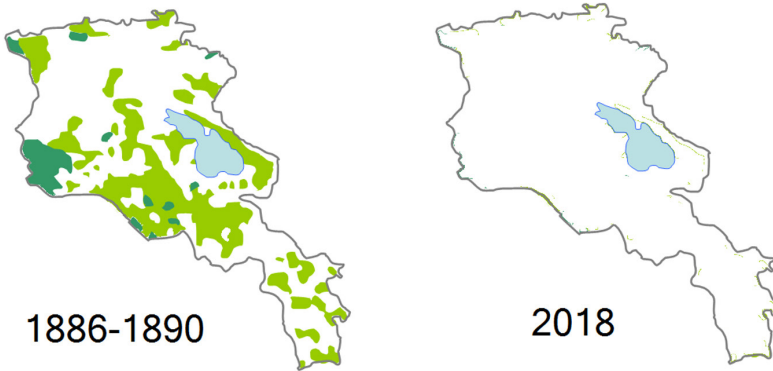
9 See: Q.Çaxmaqlı., 2014. *İşğal və “Məskunlaşdırma” fətinəkarlığı: İşğal olunmuş Azərbaycan ərazilərinə ermənilərin qanunsuz əhali yerləşdirmə siyasəti*. Bakı: Azərbaycan

removed. This is how Armenia acquired what it today calls its “historic homeland”, not as direct descendants from the biblical Noah, as many Armenians claim, but by Russians between 1827 and 1878¹⁰ (See map).

Settlement of Armenians in the Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding regions was a plan of Tscharist regime. The Armenians were mainly moved from Ottoman Empire. According to the well-known scholar N.Shavrov, “there were more than 1.3 million Armenians living in Transcaucasia in 1911 while one million of them were migrants there. Composition of population in Transcaucasia was as follows: 64, 4% were Muslim-Turks and 34, 8 were Armenians¹¹. From 1828 to 1920, more than two million Muslims were expelled from their motherland and uncertain number of them was brutally murdered in order to change demographic map of the region for the favour of Armenians¹².

MUSLIMS IN ARMENIA

Light green shia dark green sunni muslims



The map extracted from www.mapsontheweb.zoom-maps.com¹³

Namely, ethnic Azerbaijanis, Kurds and Meskhetian Turks [red. They

10 Samuel A. Weems., 2002. Armenia Secrets of “Christian” terrorist state. The Armenian Great Deception Series volume 1. [pdf].pp.13-14

11 Novaya uqroza ruskomu dilu v Zakavkaze; predstoyashaya rasprodajaya Muqani İnoradçamı.N.N.Shavrov, S.Peterburq, 1911, pp.63-64.

12 See Qafar Çaxmaqlı.2014. p.14.

13 Muslims in Armenia in 1886-90 and 2018. 2018. <https://mapsontheweb.zoom-maps.com/post/175875941652/muslims-in-armenia-in-1886-90-and-2018> [Accessed on 20 August 2018]

called Ahiska Türkleri in Turkish] were exiled from their traditional places of residence¹⁴.

“Nagorno-Karabakh, the scene of the first terrorist war in human history that began in 1988, was the epicentre of the destructive process carried out with the help of transnational Armenian terrorism”¹⁵.

It should be highlighted that there have never been any terrorist organisations of Azerbaijanis defined by the international organisations. However, Armenian terrorist organizations, being part of international terrorism, have existed more than 100 years. One of the radical Armenian organisations that aimed to establish “Greater Armenia” was “Hunchak” party used political terrorist acts widely in order to fulfil this plan¹⁶. The “Hunchak” leaders ordered loyal Armenian followers to exterminate whom they thought were “the most dangerous” of both Armenian and Ottoman Turks who could create problems in local villages and cities. These terrorists never hesitated to commit cold-blooded murder of Muslim Turks. They also killed wealthy Armenians whom they could not black mail and who refused to give them money. In the meantime, Armenians were creating violence between Christians and Muslims in places where Armenians were a very small minority. The Armenian terrorists killed several Muslims and stirred up those who remained alive. The purpose of such acts was to provoke the Muslims into attacking the minority Christians and terrorists would then cry out “fanatical Muslims” were massacring Armenian Christians. They used violence as their primary weapon not only against Muslims but also on their fellow Armenians if they didn’t support or cooperate with them¹⁷.

14 See: *The History of Transnational Armenian Terrorism in the Twentieth Century (A Historical-Criminological Study)*. Kuzentsov.O.2016. Published by Verlag Dr.Köster.Berlin

15 See: Kuzentsov.O. 2016.p.144.

16 Ministry of foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan., 2018. Armenian terrorist organisations. Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.az/en/content/846>. [Accessed on 12 August 2018]

17 See. Samuel A.Weems. pp.20-21.



Members of the “Hunchak” Armenian terrorist organization

Thanks to the history to unfold real face of Armenians who established tens of terrorist groups within a single century. That is, the second prominent Armenian terrorist organization, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), is a Marxist group. It was formed in January 1975 in Beirut, advocating armed struggle to achieve the liberation of Armenia, mainly with bombings and assassinations¹⁸. This organisation committed terrorist acts mainly against citizens of Turkey. There are many to name such as “Gegaron” was founded by ASALA in February 2001, “Armenian Liberation Movement” founded in France in 1991, “Apostol” founded by the Armenian Defence Union on April 19, 2001 and etc.¹⁹

These are the Armenian organizations recognized as terrorist structures by the international organizations and communities. To avoid unnecessary popularization and glorification of Armenian separatism, I will limit myself to a list of international terrorists that not only set up and headed armed units, but also consulted and helped to organize Soviet Armenians,

18 Central Intelligence Agency.1984. Release 2009/04/22: CIA-RDP85S00315R000200060002-3. [pdf] downloaded from the official web page of CIA.

19 See on the same source of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan’s list of Armenian terrorist organisations

some of them born in Georgia and Russia, into Yerkrpah²⁰ volunteer units. Thus, Khevork Guzelian, Monte Melkonian, Khara Kahkegian, and Jirayr Sefilian are the international terrorists²¹. These facts show that vast majority of nations in the region and beyond have been subjected to the Armenian terror. Among those nations, Azerbaijanis are not exception either. Unfortunately, today Azerbaijan is a country which suffers from the terror acts of Armenian military forces against its historical monuments such as mosques and other places of worship.



Members of the “Hunchak” and “Dashnaksutyun” Armenian terrorist organizations committed raids against peaceful Muslim population of Azerbaijan and Turkey²²

Thus, following chapter represents evidence on acts of cultural genocide²³ by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. In this case, Kelbadjar district chosen to illustrate these acts. It is a district where you might see cultural heritage of Caucasian Albania.

20 The word “yerkrpah”, made up artificially in the early 1990s, is literally translated as “country defender” or “country keeper” referred to the BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit. 2008. [online]. Available at: <https://findwords.info/term/yerkrpah> [Accessed on 12 August 2018]

21 Kuzentsov.O., 2016.*The History of Transnational Armenian Terrorism in the Twentieth Century*. Published by Verlag Dr.Köster. Berlin.

22 See. Samuel A.Weems.p.41

23 Douglas Irvin-Erickson.,2017. *Raphael Lemkin and the Concept of Genocide*. Published by University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Captive district: Kelbadjar (Kəlbəcər)

Kelbadjar as the administrative district of the Republic of Azerbaijan was founded on August 8, 1930. Its area is 1936 sq.km. It has 128 villages²⁴. The district was invaded by the Armenian armed forces on April 2, 1993. Despite the Resolution of UN Security Council demanding immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces of Armenia from the Kelbadjar district and other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijan²⁵, Armenia continues its policy of aggression. The fact of occupation once again shows that Armenian government does not respect international law [*red. Armenia takes responsibilities under the International law to respect internationally recognized territories of UN Member States where it is party to*] which requires the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States while it demands the inviolability of international borders and inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory of a State²⁶. Although, the territories of Azerbaijan have been occupied, Azerbaijani state remains faithful to the international law and norms for peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict²⁷.

There are more than fifty historical and religious monuments in the Kelbadjar district. One of them is “Ganjasar Monastery” (see Picture 2) located in Vangli village. It was a headquarter of the Caucasian Albanian Apostolic Church and constructed in the 13th century by the King Hasan Jalal Dovla, the grandson of Great Hasan.

From the 13th to the 19th century monastery had been the religious and cultural centre of Caucasian Albania²⁸. “Ganjasar Monastery” is an

24 Official web page of the State Committee of Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan: Available at: <http://scwra.gov.az/structure/165/?K%C9%99lb%C9%99c%C9%99r%20rayonunun%20%C9%99sir%20abid%C9%99l%C9%99ri> [Accessed on August 15, 2018]

25 Resolution /RES/822 (1993), 30 April 1993 of UN Security Council

26 Article 2 § 4 of the UN Charter entered into force on 24 October 1945.

27 Article 2 § 3 of the UN Charter entered into force on 24 October 1945.

28 See N.Mammadov.2015.p.39

architectural masterpiece of Turkish-Christian culture and it became headquarter of Albanian Catholicos in 1511. Later, historical mission of the monastery complex as headquarter was eliminated by the Armenians in 1837²⁹. In order to keep track of Armenian terror against cultural properties of Azerbaijan, detailed information about Caucasian Albania did not included to this chapter. The chapter titled “Azerbaijan-land of tolerance” represents some facts about Albanian Kingdom.



Picture 1

29 Aslanova, F. Gəncəsər Məbəd Kompleksi. Məqalə. 2017. Available at: <http://1905.az/g%C9%99nc%C9%99s%C9%99r-m%C9%99b%C9%99d-kompleksi/> [Accessed on 15 August 2018].

“Ganjasar Monastery” was renovated by the Azerbaijani government in 1985 and it included to the list of world heritage sites by UNESCO under the decision № 132 dated August 2, 2001 of Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan³⁰.

After the Armenian armed forces invaded Kelbadjar on April 3, 1993, wall inscriptions of the monastery were deliberately damaged, ornaments and symbols belonging to the Caucasian Albania were completely erased since several of them changed.

According to the report of the OSCE Fact-Finding Mission to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh in 2005, it was proved that construction and renovation works carried out illegally by the Armenian authorities in Kelbadjar.



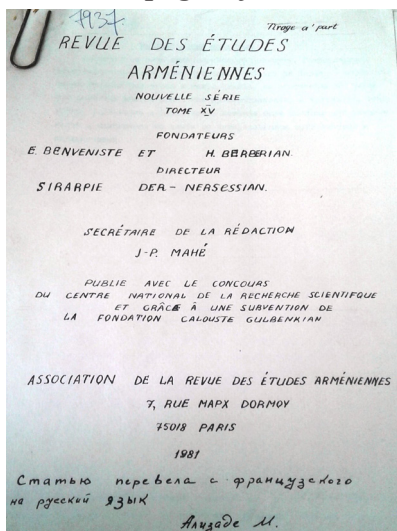
Picture 2. Ganjasar Monastery

30 Azərbaycan Respublikası Nazirlər Kabinetinin 2 avqust 2001-ci il tarixli 132 nömrəli Qərarı ilə təsdiq edilmiş 1 nömrəli əlavə. Dünya əhəmiyyətli daşınmaz tarix və mədəniyyət abidələrinin siyahısı. Bax: <<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/2847>>

The report also, released that Armenian Diasporas were playing an active role in financing reconstruction works in the district³¹. It has been internationally acknowledged that Armenian authorities is illegally constructing, rebuilding or repairing not only houses, schools, medical facilities and administration buildings, but also they are making an effort to establish a fake Armenian history having changed symbols, ornaments and designs of the religious-historical monuments located in the occupied territories.

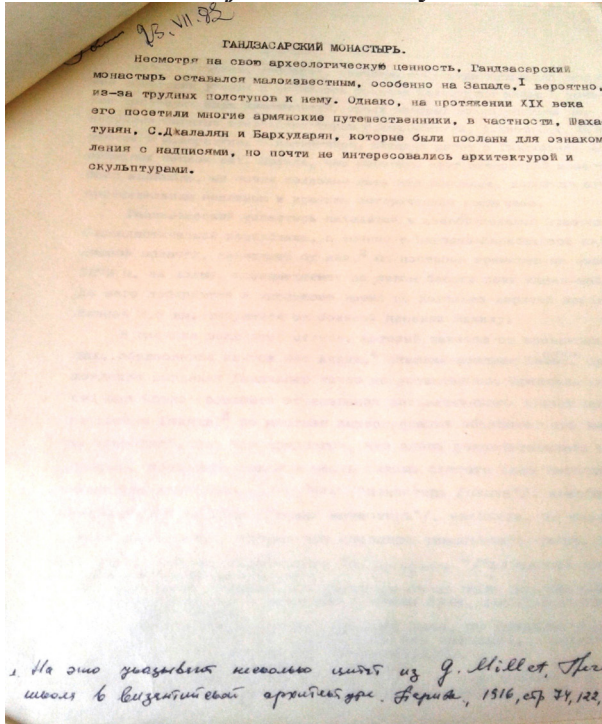
In response to the made up Armenian history of monastery, the archive material attached to the paragraph can be very right answer. So, the document confirming the true history of “Ganjasar Monastery” says that “Ganjasar Monastery” located in the Republic of Azerbaijan as well it describes its history and architectural style” (See attached archive materials below).

The archive materials of Institute of History of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Three pages of it included to the paragraph



31 Report of the OSCE Fact-Finding Mission to the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan Surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh 2005. Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/fd/dsca20050413_08/dsca20050413_08en.pdf> [Accessed on 15 August 2018].

Ganjasar Monastery



“Ganjasar Monastery located in the Republic of Azerbaijan”

Гандзасарский монастырь находится в Азербайджанской Советской Социалистической республике, а точнее в Нагорно-Карабахской автономной области, зависящей от нее.² Он построен примерно на высоте 1270 м, на холме, возвышающемся на левом берегу реки Капен-чай.³ До него добиваются в настоящее время по довольно хорошей дороге длиной 2,5 км, тянущейся от большой деревни Банклу.

The chapter concludes that Armenian authorities make an effort to propagate culture and history of Azerbaijan as an Armenian history. In order to prevent such propagations, the author tries to put facts, realities and documents on the table as many as possible. From the perspective of presenting factual information, the next paragraph includes examples of historical monuments terrorized by Armenia.

A Valley of Cultural Treasure: Shusha City (Şuşa şəhəri)

The Republic of Armenia is a state in the region carries out policy of aggression. Likely, four resolutions of UN Security Councils have not been fulfilled by Armenian government since 1993³².



Castle of Shusha before occupation



*Castel of Shusha
after occupation of Armenian
armed forces (1992)*

Territory of Shusha is 0.29 sq/km and it was established as an administrative district in 1930. Shusha district is deemed one of healing resort-recreation centres of Azerbaijan. The district was conquered by Armenian armed forces on May 8, 1992³³ having destroyed or changed historical importance of about 135 cultural, religious and historical monuments since then³⁴. One of them is “Yukhari (Upper) Govhar aga” mosque in the occupied district of Shusha. It became a victim of Armenian aggression. The “Yukhari Govhar aga” mosque was constructed in 1883-1884 by the architect Karbalayi Safikhan Sultanhuseyn oghly Garabaghi

32 Resolutions № 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 of UN Security Council on immediate withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/1993.shtml>. [Accessed on 2 November 2018]

33 Sevante E.Cornell., 2011. Azerbaijan since independence. Published by M.E. Sharpe, Inc: USA. p.339

34 Ahmadov.E., 2012. *Aggression of Armenia Against Azerbaijan: Analytical chronicle*. Published by LetterPress. Baku.pp.595-664

under the order of the Govhar Aga, daughter of Ibrahinkhalil khan. There was a thatched mosque in the place of “Govhar aga” built by Panahali khan. Later, the thatched mosque was replaced to the stoned mosque by Ibrahimkhalil khan in 1768. Due to poor design of the mosque, it was replaced to the new one with twin minarets under the order of the Govhar aga. It was called “Yukhari Govhar aga”. Later, a new second mosque named Shusha mosque –now called “Ashagi Govhar aga” was built under the order of the Govhar aga at the end of XIX century³⁵.



***“Yukhari Govhar aga Mosque”
before the occupation of Armenian armed forces***

35 A letter of Appeal by the State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the international authority on replacing Azerbaijani scripts of “Yukhari (Upper) Govhar aga” mosque by Armenia in the occupied city of Shusha. DK-400g, 25.07.2018.

During the occupation of Shusha city by the Armenian armed forces, the minarets of “Yukhari Govhar aga” mosque were destroyed. From May 8, 1992 up to the present day, this mosque is remaining destroyed. It is being tried to be exhibited as a Persian mosque by Armenia. Unfortunately, Armenia’s agents of influence in Iran were complicit in providing support for these acts of falsification. Thus, these type of “supports” undermine the facts about history of “Yukhari Govhar aga” mosque. The scripts (translation of the script: Ancient monument, “Yukhari Govhar aga” mosque, 1883, preserved by the state) in Azerbaijani language were engraved on a board in the “Yukhari Govhar aga” mosque located in Shusha city [red. Shusha city has been included to the list of world heritage site by UNESCO in 2001] has been deliberately replaced to the new one with the scripts in Armenian language under the name of “Cares of Islamic and Iranian monuments”³⁶. As result of replacement of the board, the following words “Ancient monument, Upper mosque, 1883, preserved by the state” (See picture below) have been written on the board having omitted the name of “Govhar aga”.



New board in the yard of “Yukhari Govhar aga Mosque”

36 Article on Artsakh cares of Islamic and Iranian monuments published by Armenperss news agency of the Armenia. Publishing date 31.03.2017 <<https://armenpress.am/eng/news/885003/artsakh-cares-of-islamic-and-iranian-monuments.html> [Accessed on 2 October 2018]

In so doing, the Armenian government tried to “armenianize” many of them or otherwise modify them in a way that would defy their historic and national identity



“Upper Govhar aga Mosque” after the occupation of Armenian troops³⁷

.Changing history and name of the “Upper Govhar aga” mosque under the cares of Islamic and Iranian monument³⁸ prove that Islamic heritages of Azerbaijan in the occupied territories have been assimilated under the Persian culture by Armenian authorities.



Excavations in the territory of Yukhari Govhar aga Mosque (in the news article written as Upper Mosque) are continuing³⁹

37 Azərbaycan Respublikasının İran İslam Respublikasındakı Baş Konsulluğunun rəsmi internet səhifəsi .2017. Available at: <<http://tabriz.mfa.gov.az/news/4/3041>> [Accessed on 24 August 2018]

38 Article on “Պարսկական «Վերին մզկիթ» հուշարձանի տարածքում պեղումները շարունակվում են” published by Armenpress news agency of Armenia on 30 march 2017. Available at: <<https://armenpress.am/arm/news/884776/parskakan-verin-mzkit-hushardzani-taratsqum-pexumnery.html>> [Accessed on 20 August 2018]

39 Article on “Պարսկական «Վերին մզկիթ» հուշարձանի տարածքում պեղումները շարունակվում են” published by Armenpress news agency of Armenia on 30 march 2017. Available

In conclusion, policy of Armenia on falsification of cultural and historical heritages of Azerbaijan as well as policy of aggression in the region are contrary to the international law and norms. Once again, these facts illustrate that monuments belonging to the Muslim religious identity, as well as other cultural sites under occupation destroyed and profaned are under threat unless international communities and organisations will strictly asked to stop vandal, illegal acts towards religious and historical monuments of Azerbaijan.

at:<<https://armenpress.am/arm/news/884776/parskakan-verin-mzkit-hushardzani-taratsqum-pexumnery.html>> [Accessed on 20 August 2018]

Hiroshima of Caucasus (Ağdam)

Ağdam district is an administrative region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. It was established in 1930. It is located on the north-eastern slopes of the Karabakh Mountains, in the south-western part of the Kura-Araxes Lowland⁴⁰. 77 percent or 842 km² of the 1,094 km² of Aghdam region was occupied by Armenian troops in 1993⁴¹. All infrastructures such as houses, hospitals, schools, mosques and historical monuments were fully destroyed during Nagorno-Karabakh war. Thomas De Waal describes “Aghdam as a small Hiroshima where fifty thousand inhabitants used to live. Armenians slowly stripped every street and house. Thistles and brambles swarmed over the wrecked houses. It was considered as a city of theatres, mosques and churches in the Caucasus but now the streets lined with devastated buildings”⁴². Before the invasion of Armenian troops, there were 130 historical, cultural and religious monuments, 598 public catering facilities in the area of Aghdam. One city and 83 villages are under Armenian occupation since July 23, 1993⁴³. “Aghdam Juma” mosque located in the occupied part of Aghdam district is one of the victims of Armenian intolerance and vandalism.

“Aghdam Juma” mosque was built by the Architect Karbalayi Safikhan Karabaghi from 1868 to 1870. The mosque was built in the typical style for mosques in Karabakh region, which included the division of stone columns on the two-story gallery and the use of domed ceilings.

Other mosques in this style include Barda Mosque, the Govharaga Mosque in Shusha, a mosque in Fizuli and one in the village of Goradiz⁴⁴.

40 Azerbaijan National Encyclopedia. 25 volumes, “Azerbaijan” volume, Baku, 2007, p.851. Available at: <http://1905.az/en/aghdam-district/> [Accessed on 24 August 2018]

41 Thomas de Waal., 2003. Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War. Published by New York University Press: USA. New York. p.286

42 See Thomas de Waal., 2003.pp.3-6

43 Ahmadov.E., 2012. Aggression of Armenia Against Azerbaijan: Analytical chronicle. Published by LetterPress. Baku p.714

44 Azərbaycan Respublikası Nazirlər Kabineti., 2001. *Azərbaycan Respublikası ərazisində dövlət mühafizəsinə götürülmüş daşınmaz tarix və mədəniyyət abidələrinin əhəmiyyət dərəcələrinə görə bölgüsü.*

The pictures belong to the “Aghdam Juma” mosque present the evidences of Armenian intolerance and vandal behaviour toward Islamic monuments⁴⁵.



Aghdam district before occupation



Aghdam district after occupation (1993)

According to the Abrahamic religions, destroying and desecrating monuments, place of worships is deemed as a big sin. However, Armenians break dogmatic assertions of Christians by destroying God`s temple. It is said in the Bible: “If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy...” (Bible, Letters:1, Corinthians 3:17).



“Aghdam Juma Mosque” before occupation

Azərbaycan Respublikası Nazirlər Kabinetinin 2 avqust 2001-ci il tarixli 132 nömrəli Qərarı ilə təsdiq edilmişdir. Bakı, Azərbaycan. səh.54. and see: www.beautifulmosque.com, 2016. *Aghdam Mosque in Azerbaijan*. Available at: <https://www.beautifulmosque.com/Aghdam-Mosque-in-Azerbaijan> [Accessed on 15 August 2018]

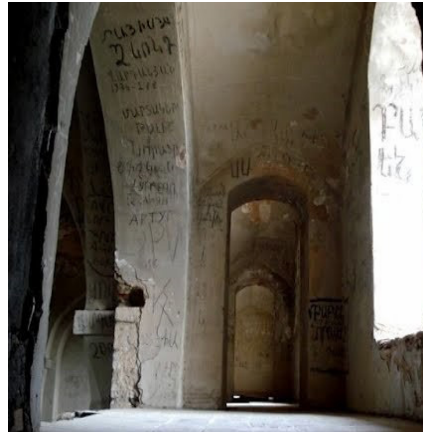
45 Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Iran., 2016. *Aghdam Juma Mosque*. Available at: <http://tehran.mfa.gov.az/news/4/3095> [Accessed on August 15, 2018]



“Aghdam Juma” mosque after occupation



Mihrab⁴⁶ of the “Aghdam Juma” mosque



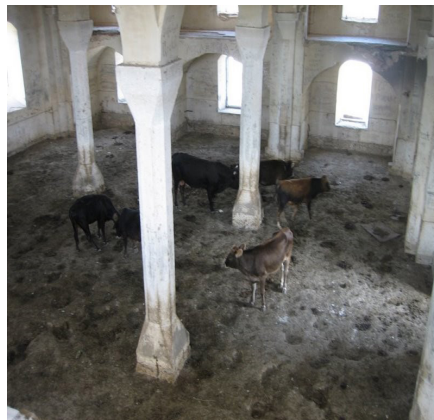
Inner view of the mosque

Meanwhile, the Holy Koran commands: “And who is more unjust than he who forbids that in places for the worship of Allah’s name should be celebrated? Whose zeal is (in fact) to ruin them? It was not fitting that such

⁴⁶ Mihrab is a semicircular niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the qibla; that is, the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca and hence the direction that Muslims should face when praying. Definition of the word “Mihrab” is available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mihrab>. Published by the editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. [Accessed on August 15, 2018]

should themselves enter them except in fear. For them there is nothing but disgrace in this world and in the world to come an exceeding torment”. (Quran, Al-Baqarah 2:114).

The chapter concludes that every single stones of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan have been subjected to the Armenian vandal acts.



“Aghdam Juma” mosque is used as an animal shelter



“Aghdam Juma” mosque is used as an animal shelter

The preservation of cultural and historical monuments belonging to a certain nation should be of state responsibility. It is an evidence of respect to the history. In contrary to the Armenian cultural terror, Armenian Church in the centre of Baku preserved by the Azerbaijani government and seen as a part of Azerbaijani tolerance, and multiculturalism.

Khojaly genocide is a benchmark of Armenian terrorism

Khojaly is a district located in the mountainous Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. It was one of the settlements of this administrative unit that was inhabited predominantly by Azerbaijanis. Khojaly has a total area of 940 square kilometres and a population before the conflict of 7,000. Khojaly is situated 10 kilometres to the northeast of Khankendi, on the crossroads of the Aghdam-Shusha and Askeran-Khankendi main roads. Having the only civil airport in the area, Khojaly was an important centre of communications and had become a refuge for Meskheti/ Ahiska Turks fleeing bloody inter-ethnic clashes in Central Asia, as well as for Azerbaijani refugees driven out of Armenia⁴⁷.



Khojaly district

47 About Khojaly District. 2016. Available at: <http://www.justiceforkhojaly.org/content/about-khojaly-district> [Accessed on August 18, 2018]

Khojaly region of Azerbaijan was occupied by Armenian troops on 18 February 1992. 25 historical monuments, six religious monuments and 112 cultural and educational centres were destroyed⁴⁸.

On the night of February 25-26 Armenian forces seized the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. As some of its residents, accompanied by retreating Azerbaijani militia and self-defense forces, fled Khojaly seeking to cross the border to reach Agdam, they approached Armenian military posts and were fired upon⁴⁹. As result, 613 civilians perished, including 106 women and 63 children.



These pictures were taken by the foreign journalists, namely Frederique Lengaigne and Victoria Ivleva in Khojaly during occupation by Armenian armed forces in 1992⁵⁰.

1,275 Khojaly residents were taken hostages, while 150 people to this day remain unaccounted for. In the course of the massacre, 487 inhabitants of Khojaly were severely dismembered, including 76 children. Six families were completely wiped out, 26 children lost both parents and 130 children lost one of their parents. 56 of those who were murdered with particular cruelty: most were slaughtered, some were burned alive, beheaded, some were mutilated, and others were scalped⁵¹.

48 Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly., Assembly-Working Papers. 2008. Ordinary Session (First part)., Volume II, Documents 11471-11478 and 11480-11512. (p.211). Available at: <www.book.coe.int/> [Accessed on August 15, 2018]

49 Human Right Watch (formerly Helsinki Watch) Report, pp.19-24 / September 1992. Available at: <<https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/1992%20Bloodshed%20in%20Cauc%20-%20Escalation%20in%20NK.pdf>> [Accessed on 15 August 2018]

50 Justice for Khojaly. 2008. *Photo and Video Facts on Khojaly Genocide*. Available at: <<http://www.justiceforkhojaly.org/photovideofacts>> [Accessed on 2 October 2018]

51 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Department for Analysis and Strategic

The crimes committed in Khojaly by the Republic of Armenia, its political and military leadership as well as subordinated local armed groups is approved by numerous facts, including investigative records, testimonies of the eyewitnesses and evidences from international media sources. In this regard, the European Court of Human Rights had made an important conclusion in consistent with the crime committed in Khojaly, qualifying the behaviour of those carrying out the incursion as “acts of particular gravity which may amount to war crimes or crime against humanity”. Likely, following observations have been made by the European Court which leaves no room for doubts as the question of qualification of the crime and ensuring responsibility for it:

“It appears that the reports available from independent sources indicate that at the time of the capture of Khojaly on the night of 25-26 February 1992 hundreds of civilians of Azerbaijani ethnic origin were reportedly killed, wounded or taken hostages during their attempt to flee the captured town by Armenian fighters attacking the town”⁵².

“The offenses committed against the civilians in Khojaly constitute a crime of genocide⁵³. Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948) defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Studies. 2018. Khojaly Genocide. Available at: <<http://mfa.gov.az/folder/media/Khojaly%20Genocide%2028.02.2018.pdf>> [Accessed on October 2, 2018]

52 Judgement of the European Court of Human Rights of 22 April 2010, para.87

53 Rabbi Israel Barouk., 2017. *Khojaly A Crime Against Humanity*. Published by Berkeley Press. California, USA. p.130

According to these criteria, “unlawful acts” and “specific intention” are the main elements of the crime of genocide”. Based upon the facts and evidences that the intentional massacre of the civilians in Khojaly was directed at their mass extermination solely because they were Azerbaijanis. In addition, there were some reports by international non-governmental organizations condemning the Khojaly massacre. Thus, Human Rights Watch noted in the Report of 1993 under the title of “The former Soviet Union: Azerbaijan” that during the winter of 1992, Armenian forces went on the offensive, forcing almost the entire Azerbaijani population of the enclave to flee, and committing unconscionable acts of violence against civilians as they fled. The most notorious of these attacks occurred on February 25 in the village of Khojaly. “A large column of residents, accompanied by a few dozen retreating fighters, fled the city as it fell to Armenian forces. They came across an Armenian military post and were cruelly fired upon. At least 161 civilians are known to have been murdered in this incident, although Azerbaijani officials estimate that about 800 perished. Armenian forces killed unarmed civilians and soldiers were *hors de combat*, and looted and sometimes burned homes...”⁵⁴. The facts illustrated by the international organizations and non-governmental organizations leave no doubts that Armenian terrorist authority is responsible for all.

For the sake of comprehensive representation of the Khojaly genocide to the English speaking readers, I would like to add some more facts which have been recorded by the international press. International press has always played a vital role in shedding light on crimes against humanity, sharing how they happen and who is responsible for massacred civilians and surviving refugees of inhumane wars.

Thomas Goltz is an American journalist with expertise in the history and politics of the region having personally witnessed the scene of the massacre. During his observation at the killing fields, Goltz described the carnage,

⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch. 1993. *The former Soviet Union: Azerbaijan*. Available at: < <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Hsw-07.htm> > [Accessed on October 2, 2018]

noting that “number of [victim`s] heads lacked hair, as if the corpses had been scalped.”⁵⁵ Another description by Pascal Privat and Steve Le Vine, the correspondent of “Newsweek” says “Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees 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 Feb. 25-26. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped. While the victims’ families mourned”⁵⁶. The list can be extended having analysed the articles from the “Washington Times” by Brian Killen, “The Boston Globe” by Paul Quinn-Judge, “The Times” by Anatol Lieven, “The Sunday Times” by Thomas Goltz and etc. These articles were published in 1992. It should be highlighted that this tragedy has not been gained its true price under the dominant campaign of denialism and revisionism. We, as an Azerbaijani people, believe that the day when perpetrators will answer before the international justice and bring to the court is not far from the reality.

55 See Barouk. I., 2017.p.93.

56 Privat.P and Vine Le.S, The Face of A Massacre. Published by Newsweek, on March 16, 1992. Moscow.

Theoretical background of right to religious freedom

The chapter reviews different theories on secularism, state-religion relations and religious freedom in order to lay ground for analysing religious situation, particularly state-religion relationships, religious freedom, religious tolerance in Azerbaijan and Armenia while different scholars` views on these issues have been outlined, too.

Belief or religion in different nations, communities and states have always been questioned as the idea that the right to religion inhered in the individual or the state. This question was answered for the first time in the history with the adoption of the Statute for religious freedom that Jefferson had originally drafted in 1779. Thus, it was officially agreed that individuals had a fundamental right to believe what they wished in a matter of faith, to convey those beliefs to others, and to be free from the legal obligation to contribute to the support of other institutional churches. Enactment of this statute was called Virginia article in the history of America⁵⁷. Because it is considered as an interior state of mind. In the early 18th century, state-church separation happened since faith had been considered as an individual manifestation. However, domination of church in the society gave privileges to the Christians other than non-Christians or non-believers. For example, the Spanish government has entered a concordat with the Catholic Church that provides to that religious body financial and other privileges and perquisites that are unavailable to other community of faith⁵⁸. It would be summarized that other religious communities, particularly non-Catholics, have no right to be treated equally to use financial aids from the government.

In this regard, ideology of secularism came front in which the state

57 F.Robert, and R.K.Ramazani., 2009.2nd ed. Religion, State and Society. Published by Palgrave Macmillan: USA.

58 See F.Robert and R.K.Ramazani., 2009.p.62

should never promote religious doctrines for their own sake, and should be most reluctant to do so as a Machiavellian means to secular ends. The state's officials should not, furthermore, promote the mortality of a particular religion for its own sake or attempt to enforce what they believe, all things considered, to be the "correct" system of morality. It should be clear enough that secular rulers or leaders cannot invoke religious grounds for banning consumption of alcohol⁵⁹. A better reason to ban alcohol consumption might be that it somehow undermines the public order, harm or risk that it might eventuate. However, it might be questioned, why should I want the state to protect me from a risk that I am prepared to take? Because the state is entitled to ensure safe and comfortable life of its citizen and to protect their civil interests. In order to understand contemporary thoughts on secularism or secularization, the system of secularization should be explained.

What are the parameters for secularization? Steve Bruce paraphrase secularization as follows:

- The decay of religious institutions;
- The displacement, in matters of behaviour, of religious rules and principles by demands that accord with strictly technical criteria;
- The sequestration by political powers of the property and facilities of religious agencies;
- The replacement of a specifically religious consciousness (which might range from dependence on charm, rites, spells, or prayers, to a broadly spiritually inspired ethical concern) by an empirical, rational, instrumental orientation;
- The shift from religious to secular control of a variety of social activities and functions;
- The decline in the proportion of their time, energy, and resources that people devote to supernatural concerns⁶⁰.

59 Blackford.R., 2012.*Freedom of Religion and the Secular State*. Published by Wiley-Blackwell & Sons, Inc.United Kingdom

60 B.Steve., 2013.*Secularization: In Defense of an Unfashionable Theory*. Published by OUP. Oxford.

From the approach of the B.Steve, it should be understood that religion cannot interfere social activities and functions of individuals where defenders of secularism claim that person may spend more time, energy and resources to the existential activities and functions. From the perspective of secularism, state-religion relations have been vastly debated in the academic discourse. Western scholars explain state-religion relations having researched the state's attitudes toward the religion(s). In this regard, constitution of a state defines the status of religion in life of its citizens. While political system and constitutional framework characterize the state-religion relations, historical journey of religion through the life of community members is playing important role.

Stephan C.Alphred claims that religious institutions should not have constitutionally privileged prerogatives that allow them to mandate public policy to democratically elected governments. At the same time, individuals and religious communities, consistent with our institutional definition of democracy, must have complete freedom to worship privately. In addition, as individuals and groups, they must be able to advance their values publicly in civil society and to sponsor organizations and movements in political society, as long as their actions do not impinge negatively on the liberties of other citizens or violate democracy and the law. This is called “twin toleration” in the understanding of state-religion relation⁶¹.

There are certain criteria for the classification of the relationship between state and religion. These are as following⁶²:

- Status of religion by constitution
- Integration level of religious rules in the legal system of the state
- Scope of legally recognition of the religious minorities or new religious movements

p.2

61 Alfred C.Stephan. *Religion, Democracy and the “Twin Tolerations”*. Journal of Democracy 11, no.4 (2000):39.

62 Mammadi.N., 2017. *State, Religion and Society: Comparative analyzes of state-religion relations*. Published by SCRA. Baku.Azerbaijan. p.23

- Public representation of religion
- Financing activities of religious organizations
- Property form of places of worship
- Imposition of tax on religious organizations and activities
- Establishment of chaplaincy in the public institutions (hospitals, prisons and military) and allocation of finance to the chaplains by the state
 - Teaching of religious subjects in the public schools or using religious rhetoric (religious rhetoric for oath)
 - Financing theological education by the state

State-religion relationship in Azerbaijan and Armenia researched according to the above mentioned criteria. The next chapter investigates religious situation and policy in Armenia.

Son of the Armenian People

The chapter researches state-religion relations, religious freedom and attitude of Armenians toward non-Christian religious organizations or religions. Three frameworks have been reviewed during the research. First, legal framework on religious freedom included to the descriptive analysis of the chapter. Second, institutional body which is implementing state policy on religious affairs tried to be illustrated here. Third, public discourse of Armenian identity, particularly view of the Armenian archbishops included to the chapter, as well.

The total population in Armenia is about 3 million (August 2018)⁶³. According to the 2011 census, approximately 98 percent of the population is ethnic Armenians while 92 percent of them identifies with Armenian Apostolic Church. Other religious groups, none representing more than 1 percent of the population, include Roman Catholics, Armenian Uniate (Mekhitarist) Catholics, Orthodox Christians, evangelical Christians, Pentecostals, Seventh-day Adventist, Baptists, charismatic Christians, Jehovah`s Witnesses, Yezidis and Shia Muslims [red. Shias from Iran]. Some representatives of religious minorities expressed that official recognition of AAC is restricting or undermining religious freedom of minority groups⁶⁴. Actually, religious demography highlights recognizable status of AAC.

There are three main legal frameworks, namely Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations and the Law regarding the relationship between Armenian state and Holy Apostolic Armenian Church on state-religion relations.

The Article 17 of Constitution of the Republic of Armenia on “The

63 Worldometer, Armenian Population., 2018. [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/armenia-population/>> [Accesses on August 24, 2018]

64 US Department of State Report on International Religious Freedom. *Religious Freedom in Armenia 2017*.

Armenian Apostolic Holy Church” recognizes exclusive mission in the preservation of its national identity⁶⁵. The constitution protects religious freedom; however, some laws and policies restrict religious freedom by providing special privileges only to the Armenian Apostolic Church (AAC) and limiting certain rights of minority religious groups, including their ability to obtain building permits for the construction of churches and other religious centres. The constitution and the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations establish separation of church and state but grant the Armenian Church official status as the national church.

The law grants certain privileges to the Armenian Church that are not available to other religious groups. It makes the Armenian Church’s marriage rite legally binding, but the supporting legal acts to enforce this are not in place. The Armenian Church is also allowed to have permanent representatives in hospitals, orphanages, boarding schools, military units, and all places of detention, while other religious organizations may have representatives in these places on demand only. In general, the law formally recognizes the moral as well as ethnic role the Armenian Church plays in society, since most citizens see it as an integral part of national identity and cultural heritage. Religious minorities and atheist continued to express concern over the government’s inclusion of the AAC in many areas of public life, and the public education system in particular, as well as its granting permission to the AAC to disseminate materials in schools with material equating AAC affiliation with the national identity. AAC affiliation of the religious educational materials undermines right to religious and conscious freedom of the non-believers since the attendance to religious classes is mandatory. This approach violates the secular nature of the education defined under the part of the Article 4 of the Law on Education of Armenia. Moreover, the religious teaching methods are aimed at indoctrinating the belief system of the AAC is prohibited under

65 Article 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia adopted in 1995.

Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights⁶⁶.

The law does not mandate registration of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including religious groups; however, only registered organizations have legal status. Unregistered groups may not publish more than 1,000 copies of newspapers or magazines, rent meeting places, broadcast programs on television or radio, or officially sponsor visitors' visas, although individual members may do so. To qualify for registration, religious organizations must "be free from materialism and of a purely spiritual nature," have at least 200 adult members⁶⁷, and subscribe to a doctrine based on "historically recognized holy scriptures." The registration requirements do not apply to the religious organizations of national minorities. The Office of the State Registrar registers religious entities. The Department of Religious Affairs and National Minorities oversees religious affairs and performs a consultative role in the registration process. Despite the fact that in Armenia, state and church separated, there is not central execute body to implement state policy on state-religion relations. The policy has been carried out by the AAC. Above mentioned laws ensured vast privileges to the AAC to do so.

Armenian identity under the Christianity lays ground for nationalism and discrimination. Policy of "Armenian Identity" brings once again attention to the non-Armenian cultural heritages in the occupied territories where Armenian authority implements terrorism policy against cultural and historical monuments. In order to understand public discourse in Armenia about different cultures and nations, several researches on nationalism and pluralism were analysed.

I would like to add survey results of Pew Research Centre on "Religious

66 Issues of religious education at public schools of the republic of Armenia published by Stepan Danielyan, Ara Ghazaryan, Hovhannes Hovhannisyanyan, Arthur Avtandilyan, available at:<http://www.v1.religions.am/eng/library/issues-of-religious-education-at-public-schools-of-the-republic-of-armenia/> [Accessed on October 15, 2018]

67 Fautre, W., 2015. Human Rights Without Frontiers. *Freedom of Religion or Belief in Armenia*. [online]. Available at:< <http://hrwf.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Freedom-of-Religion-or-Belief-in-Armenia.pdf>> [Accessed on 24 August 2018]

Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe”. In the part of “Democracy, nationalism and pluralism” of the report writes: “In Armenia, dominant view is that “it is better for us if society consists of people from the same nationality, and who have the same religion and culture” while in Russia and about half a dozen other countries, majorities say “it is better for us if society consists of people from different nationalities, religions and culture”. It is understood that two thirds or more, 70 percent of population, in Armenia prefer a more culturally and religiously homogeneous society. According to the report, also 84 percent of respondents in Armenia say their culture is superior to others⁶⁸.

The facts determining public discourse on multiculturalism and religious tolerance are leading to the xenophobic attitudes of Armenians. We see that religion is politicized rather than nurturing peaceful mindset of the people in Armenia. Thus, Armenian Church legitimized the use of violence, especially during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (1988-1994). However, the Armenian Apostolic Church started to develop the ideologies of “Fatherland War” and “Holy War”. But how is it possible to legitimize theologically any military conflict and glorify the fallen fighters “martyrs”?⁶⁹.

Many regiments used religious nicknames and other symbols. Most of them drew the sign of the white cross on their uniforms and vehicles. Priests who were with the soldiers claimed after the battle that the fighters had drawn the crosses in order to secure God`s protection⁷⁰. Religion was exploited in order to make the acts of killings and dying more tolerable. It is widely accepted that clergymen have become warrior-priests during the war of Nagorno-Karabakh.

68 Pew Research Centre. Religious belief and national belonging in central and eastern Europe: Democracy, nationalism and Pluralism. 2017. Available at: < <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/democracy-nationalism-and-pluralism/>> [Accessed on August 24, 2018]

69 Charles.R. and et.al, 2010. *Religion in the South Caucasus*. Caucasian Analytical Digest, no 20, pp. 1-18

70 See Charles.R and et.al, 2010,p.8

In this regard, I would like to add meeting of prof. Thomas De Waal with Father Koryun, a tall, young priest with a thick black beard and bright enthusiastic eyes during his visit to Shusha in 1996, four years after occupation of Shusha by Armenian troops. He describes: Koryun said he had come to Karabakh “on the summons of the blood of my ancestors.” He had not only taken services but fought as well. “I would kiss my cross and put my cross and gospel aside,” he related, acting this out with gestures. “I would take off my cassock, put on my uniform, take up my gun and go into battle. We must have looked surprised. Unabashed, the priest explained that he was not only a priest but a “son of the Armenian people.” “All of our territories will be liberated,” he said. “Look at the map.” He pointed to a map of “Greater Armenia” on the wall, in which landlocked Armenia had burst its bounds and spread out across Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan to three seas. “I don’t know if I’ll see it or not, if my son will see it or not. It will be up to my grandson⁷¹”.

In order to change policy on promoting intolerance having established special status for AAC and to propagate religion as a respect toward different cultures, religions and nations among Armenian society, a complete separation of between politics and religion would be the best solution.

71 See Thomas De Waal. 2003.p.193

Azerbaijan-land of tolerance

The chapter describes religious situation and researches state-religion relations, as well as religious freedom in Azerbaijan. In order to give a comprehensive, analyse on religious freedom and state-religion relations in the country, three structures have been included here. Firstly, legal structure on religious freedom analysed in terms of individual and collective exercise of rights in religious affairs. Secondly, functions of institutional body and/or bodies included to illustrate implementation of policy on religious freedom in Azerbaijan. Lastly, religion itself investigated as a way of peaceful coexistence in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is located in the Caucasus region of Eurasia and has always been at the crossroads of the West and the East. The total population at 9,898 million (September 2018 estimate).⁷² According to 2017 data from SCRA (The State Committee on Religious Associations), 96 percent of the population is Muslim, of which approximately 65 percent is Shia and 35 percent Sunni. Remaining 4 percent of the population includes the Russian Orthodox Church, Georgian Orthodox Church, Armenian Apostolic Church, Seventh-day Adventists, Molokans, Roman Catholic Church, other Christians, including evangelical Christians and Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews and Bahais. Other groups include the International Society of Krishna Consciousness and those professing no religion. There are 2166 mosques (except occupied territories), 14 churches and 7 synagogues in the country.⁷³

For centuries, representatives of different religions, cultures lived in peace and dignity in Azerbaijan. Thus, in separate periods Judaism, Christianity, Islam and other religious beliefs have spread in the country

72 The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. 2018. *Azerbaijan-Facts and Figures*. Available at: https://www.stat.gov.az/menu/6/buklet/azerbaycan_faktlar_ve_reqemler_2018.pdf [Accessed on May 18, 2018]

73 The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan. 2018. *Religious Communities*. Available at: <http://www.scwra.gov.az/> [Accessed on May 18, 2018]

and have a mutual influence on each other. And today many of religions which have been spread in the country historically continue to maintain their existence.

The Christianisation of the northern part of present-day Azerbaijan started from 4th century BCE until the Arab Muslim invasion at the beginning of the 8th century.

“The Apostle Bartholomew, one of the twelve early followers of Christ, is said to have laid the foundations of Christianity in the Albanian Kingdom⁷⁴. Later, he carried out missionary activities in the Albanian Kingdom, established a church in modern-day Ordubad, preached Christianity in Albana (now Baku) and managed to convert the local king and his family. However, the king’s brother, incited by pagan priest, ordered the capture of Bartholomew and then had him crucified on a cross with his head down, allegedly at the well-known Maiden Tower in Baku where a chapel was built later on”⁷⁵.

King Urnair in 313, declared that Christianity would be the religion of the Albanian Apostolic Church was at first independent from any other Church and remained autocephalous until 1836. Its clergy was appointed by the Albanian kings. The Bible was translated into their language, which had its own alphabet.

In the 5th – 8th centuries, there were twelve episcopacies in the kingdom, including regions of Azerbaijan, namely Karabakh, Ganja and Shaki, etc. At that time, there were disputes between Byzantium and Arab Caliphate. Arab Caliphate started to invade the region Nestorian and Chalcedonian Christianity was popular among Caucasian Albania which was close to

74 The Albanian Kingdom is not synonym of modern Albania in Europe. The Udis are one of the most ancient native peoples of the Caucasus. They were first mentioned in Herodotus’ Histories (5th century BCE). They are considered to be the descendant of the people of Caucasian Albania and one of the ancestor of Azerbaijani people. According to the classical authors, the Udi inhabited the area of the eastern Caucasus along the coast of the Caspian Sea in a territory extending to the Kura River in the north as well as the ancient province of Utik. Both capitals of Caucasian Albanian Kingdom-Kabala (today Gabala) and Partav (Barda)- were located in the historical territory of the Udi.

75 Fature.W., 2013.*Non-muslim religious minorities in Azerbaijan*. Published by Human Rights Without Frontiers Int’l. Belgium:Brussel.

the ideology of Byzantine. “Using this tensions between two empires, Armenian Catholicos sent a letter to the Caliph telling him about rebellion ideology in Caucasian Albania and as a result the Caliph ordered that the Albanian Church should be subordinated to the Armenian Church”⁷⁶.



Kish Temple (Shaki, 1 century)

According to the number of followers, Orthodox Christianity is the largest religious community, approximately 2 percent, in Azerbaijan after Islam. Followers of the Orthodox Christianity are from Russia, Belorussia, Greece, Georgia, Ukraine and the like.

In 705, the Albanian Kingdom collapsed and Arabs began to rule the country. From that time, Albanians began to convert to Islam⁷⁷.

76 See Fature W. 2013

77 A.Əlizadə., 2016. *Azərbaycanda Xristianlıq:keçmişdən bu günə*. Published by Shans LTD. Azerbaijan.Baku. p.19.



Holy Myrrhbearers Cathedral (Baku, 1909)

As it was discussed above that Christianity was propagated in some parts of the historical areas of Azerbaijan, mainly in the northern part, but Islam spread to the whole areas since 8th century.

It became dominant religion in the territories of Azerbaijan since then. Today, Azerbaijan as a Muslim majority country plays an important role in the Muslim world while it is a common platform of the Western and the Eastern countries to share their experiences on interfaith dialogue and religious tolerance. More than two thousand mosques are serving to the believers today.⁷⁸

According to the Article 8 of the Law On “Freedom Religious Beliefs”, Islamic religious communities subordinate to the Caucasus Muslims Board (CMB) for the organizational issues in Azerbaijan while non-Islamic religious communities in the country subordinate to their centres either those centres are operating in Azerbaijan or abroad.

⁷⁸ Ismayilov.G., 2016. *Azərbaycanda Dini Məsələ: təhdidlər və hədəflər*. Published by Nəşriyyat MMC. Azərbaycan. Bakı.



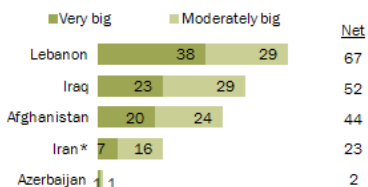
Haydar Mosque (Baku, 2014)



Shamakhi Juma mosque (Shamakhi, 743-44), renovated in 2013

Sunni-Shia Tensions

% of all Muslims who say Sunni-Shia tensions are a very or moderately big problem in their country



* Question modified in Iran to ask how prevalent tensions are between Sunnis and Shias.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Global Survey of Muslims Q87, Q871RN.

Also, Islamic religious institutions unite in the CMB. CMB is a non-commercial legal person and was established in 1959.⁷⁹ According to the Pew Research Centre’s report on “Many Sunnis and Shias worry about Religious Conflict”, Azerbaijan is one of rare Muslim countries where no any tensions or sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia have been occurred.⁸⁰ Unlike many other countries in the world, there is no discrimination, no social hostility and no organized manifestation of anti-Semitism in Azerbaijan. Jews have been peacefully lived for more than two thousand years among Muslims.

The history of the Jews in Azerbaijan dates back to the Late Antiquity. Statistics about the current Jewish population in Azerbaijan vary between 8,800 and 30,000 according to the resources. There are three major Jewish communities, namely Mountain Jews, European (Ashkenazi) Jews and Georgian Jews in demographic order in Azerbaijan. They mainly reside in the cities of Baku, Sumgait, Guba, Oguz, Goychay and Krasnaya Sloboda (the so-called Red Town). “The Krasnaya Sloboda is the only town in the country where they constitute the majority of the inhabitants. First settlers of Jews in Azerbaijan have been Mountain Jews. Different theory suggests that they sometimes called themselves Juhuro and they are what remains of the mighty Khazar nation, an indigenous Caucasian people who converted en masse to Judaism in the 8th century in an attempt to fend off Christian Russians and Islamic Arabs”.⁸¹

79 Qafqaz Müsəlmanları İdarəsinin rəsmi internet səhifəsi. 2012. Ümumi məlumat. Available at: < <http://www.qafqazislam.com/index.php?lang=az§ionid=100&id=164> > [Accessed on October 9, 2018]

80 Pew Research Centre. 2013. *Many Sunnis and Shias Worry About Religious Conflict*. Available at: < <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/11/07/many-sunnis-and-shias-worry-about-religious-conflict/> > [Accessed on October 9, 2018]

81 See: Fature W. 2013

The first European Jews settled in Baku in 1811. In 1832, other Jews facing persecution in Tsarist Russia sought asylum in what is now Azerbaijan and were welcomed by the local population. “However, their mass immigration started in 1870s when oil reserves were discovered in Baku. The Caspian Black Sea Company, one of the leading oil companies in the Russian empire, was established in Baku by a wealthy Rothschild of German Jewish origin.



Mountain Jews Synagogue (Baku, 2010)



Six Dome Synagogue of Mountain Jews (Guba, 1888)

By 1912, around one-third of Baku`s registered lawyers and physicians were also European Jews”⁸².

Early in 19th century, Jews began to migrate from Georgia to Azerbaijan, where they settled in central Baku. Here they engaged in trading houses, stock exchanges, commercial banks and joint stock companies. They did not forget basic precepts of Judaism and were actively involved in charity work. For example, a shelter for the poor was built in Baku by the philanthropist Elikashvili. Currently, the synagogue of the European Jews in Baku is shared with the Georgian Jews.

The Abrahamic religions have played very crucial role in the strengthening of the religious tolerance in Azerbaijan. They have their own contributions to the multicultural life of Azerbaijanis.



Synagogue of European and Georgian Jews (Baku, 2003)

Thus, to protect and preserve religious and cultural diversity as a treasure of Azerbaijani people, Azerbaijani government developed solid legal frameworks. It became one of the priorities to ensure religious freedom in the country after regaining its independence in 1991.

82 See Fature W.2013

Development of religious freedom is an essential thing in a free society, because religious belief, or non-belief is such an important part of every person`s life, freedom of religion affects every individual.⁸³More recently, religious freedom was declared in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966.

Today, religious freedom is universally recognized principles of democracy. No state could be regarded as democratic unless it guaranteed freedom of religious belief and practice, include the freedom of religious minorities. Azerbaijan as a secular and democratic country adopted Law On “Freedom of Religious Belief” in 1992, even before the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1995.

After regaining independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Law On “Freedom of Religious Belief” was the first legal document declares Azerbaijan as a secular state. Thus, the Article 5 of the law claims that “religion and religious institutions shall be separate from the state in the Republic of Azerbaijan”. Meanwhile, it ensures guarantees for religious freedom within country in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and international treaties wherein Azerbaijan is party to. In addition, it establishes the status, rights and responsibilities of religious entities. Religious communities have been granted the right to use some privileges provided such as allocation of financial aids to them by the government after they registered by the State Committee. According to the Article 12 of the of Law of Religious Freedom, at least fifty persons of mature age or their representatives shall address the religious centre or department with an application of the community for the registration of the religious community. 861 religious organizations have been registered since 2009. 830 of which are Islamic and 31 of them are non-Islamic (20 Christian, 8 Jewish, 2 Bahai and 1 Krishna denominations) religious

83 Thomas Jefferson, third president of USA, 1808.

communities. Ten religious educational institutions have been registered from 2017.⁸⁴

Within the baselines of respecting religious freedom outlined above, the relations between the state and one or more religious groups may be structured in various ways, depending on the states in which they accommodate pluralism or recognize a religious basis to the nation or to public authority. Before to highlight constitutional separation of state and religion in Azerbaijan, I would like to clarify the reasons for not establishing or recognizing religion in a Constitution. It is widely acknowledged that a deep constitutional commitment to religion is sometimes said to be potentially incompatible with the pursuit of human rights, especially if the constitution proclaims that human rights are to be limited by overriding religious commitments. There may be tensions between religious establishment and the civil rights of people of different faiths or of no faith. This is especially true if citizens not belonging to the established religion are excluded from certain public offices, are subject to discriminatory rules or are assigned a lower social status. For example, in 15 Muslim countries constitutionally required that the head of state or government be Muslim.⁸⁵In this regard, constitutional separation of state and religion is important for culturally and religiously diversified communities and/or countries. Furthermore, constitutions of Muslim-majority countries vary greatly in terms of just how Islamic the state is, regardless of how the state defines itself. Azerbaijan is one of these countries describes itself as secular country together with Turkey, Mali and the like.

The Article 7 of the Constitution of Azerbaijan declares that Azerbaijani state is democratic, legal, secular and unitary republic while Article 18 separates religion and state proclaiming that all religions are equal before

84 Dini sahə ilə bağlı rəqəmlər. 2018. Available at: <http://scwra.gov.az/az/view/pages/284> [Accessed on October 17, 2018]

85 International IDEA. *Religion-State Relations*. September, 2014. Available at: < <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/religion-state-relations-primer.pdf>> [Accessed on October 9, 2018]

the law. No religion has been officially recognized by the Azerbaijani Constitution while Armenia and Georgia have constitutionally recognized status of religion.

Another legal framework for protection of religious diversity and ensuring freedom of religious beliefs in the country is Law on “Combating Religious Extremism”. It was adopted in 2015. According to the geographical location, Azerbaijan is always under the pressure of different harmful ideologies that are coming from abroad. The greatest danger is posed by different types of missionaries, which is incorporated in people’s minds the poisonous seeds of religious extremism. At its definition, their activity is the ideological basis of terrorism. The extremist minds pose a threat to the constitutional system, lead to violations of constitutional rights and freedom of citizens, undermining public safety and order of the Azerbaijan. In this regard, the law aims to define extremist activities and prevent these types hazardous activities along with eliminating financial sources of extremists groups legally. These legal frameworks are core of preserving religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence in the country.

Institutional framework is necessary to implement state policy on state-religion relation along with the legal structures. There are institutional structures to control observance of the legislative acts on religious freedom in Azerbaijan, namely the Department of Interethnic Relations, Multiculturalism and Religious Affairs of the Presidential Administration and the State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SCRA). The state policy on religion is implemented by SCRA in coordination with the Department of Interethnic Relations, Multiculturalism and Religious Affairs. SCRA in 2001 and the department in 2017 were established by the decree of the president of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The registration of the religious communities is being carried out by the State Committee while it coordinates and controls works of the executive bodies in regard with religion, provides assistance for arranging

organizational activities of the commissions on religious affairs established under executive powers of regions and cities. All these developments are results of the state policy on state-religion relation. In addition, Azerbaijani government observes multiculturalism as a state policy. Mutual cooperation of nations, tradition of tolerance and condemnation of all sorts of conflicts are core principle of this policy. As a part of the multiculturalism policy, in 2014, Baku International Multiculturalism Centre (BIMC) and in 2017 Moral Values Promotion Foundation (MVPF) under SCRA were established. Establishment of these centres is serving to promote multicultural values in the direction of the culture, language and tradition of minorities. It is widely believed that traditions of religious tolerance and multicultural values should be propagated among youths in order to pass them over the future generations. The government of the Azerbaijan understands that without culture of religious tolerance and interfaith solidarity, peace cannot be observed for a long time. That is why, Azerbaijani people celebrated “Year of Multiculturalism” and “Islamic Solidarity” in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

By the decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2016 was declared as the “Year of Multiculturalism” for preservation, further development and wide range of promotion of the values of multiculturalism.⁸⁶ In addition, 2017 was declared as a “Year of Islamic Solidarity” in the country by the decree of the president to strengthen solidarity among different faiths in Azerbaijan.⁸⁷ It is believed that these initiatives are the best examples to promote ideas of peace, mutual understanding and tolerance among communities. As a result of successful implementation of policy on managing cultural and religious diversity,

86 Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on declaration of 2016 as a year of Multiculturalism in Azerbaijan. January 11, 2016. Available at: <<https://president.az/articles/17437>> [Accessed on 10 October 2018]

87 Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on declaration of 2017 as a Year of Islamic Solidarity in Azerbaijan. January 10, 2017. Available at:<<https://president.az/articles/22420>> [Accessed 10 October 2018]

Azerbaijan becomes home of international humanitarian conferences. Every second year the intercultural dialogue forum in which brought up to 600 delegates from 94 countries is taking place in Azerbaijan while Baku International Humanitarian Forum regularly hosted. A main idea is how to bring representatives of different religions together and how to establish more understanding between us.

Despite the fact that Azerbaijan is a secular state, government always cares religions and believers. Almost every year, state allocates financial aids to the religious communities. For example, by the decree of the President dated November 27, 2014, 2,5 million AZN from the President's Reserve Fund was allocated to further enhancement of the religious awareness rising projects, promotion of national and moral values.⁸⁸ 1,8 and 2,5 million AZN in 2016 and 2017 were allocated respectively to the religious communities operating in the country, too. Of course, these are top down approaches to the state-religion relations in the country. All of them is aimed at strengthening environment of peaceful coexistence and religious tolerance environment among different religions and cultures. On the other hand, it is important to investigate public discourse on religion and interfaith dialogue for going through bottom-up developments of them.

Multiculturalism in Azerbaijan has been formed as a political system on the basis of societal demands. Policy of the state on diversity management is in consistent with the David Easton's Political System theory. David defines that political life is "A system of behaviour embedded in an environment to the influence of which the political system itself is exposed and in turn reacts"⁸⁹ (See chart 1). According to Easton, demands always arise from the very nature of human personality and society. Thus, there are two types of inputs and outputs demand and support. In this case, inputs demand is analysing in

88 Decree on allocation of financial aids to the religious communities signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2014. Available at: <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/28812> [Accessed on October 10, 2018]

89 Easton.D., 1965. *A system Analysis of Political Life*. Published by Wiley: New York. USA. p.32

the political system and decision made accordingly. Decisions are output, which come out of the conversion box in the form of general policies. These general policies should be fulfilled by support of the communities.

In Azerbaijani case, history long traditions of tolerance and multicultural values formed as demands of the society. Taken Azerbaijani case into account, these demands are considered in the political system as inputs in which it requires an action for it. These inputs demand analysed in the political system of the government and policy of multiculturalism emerged as an output. The policy of government on diversity management supported by the society. From the context of Azerbaijani multiculturalism, it is clearly understood that multiculturalism is not a phenomenon from top to down, it is applied vice versa.

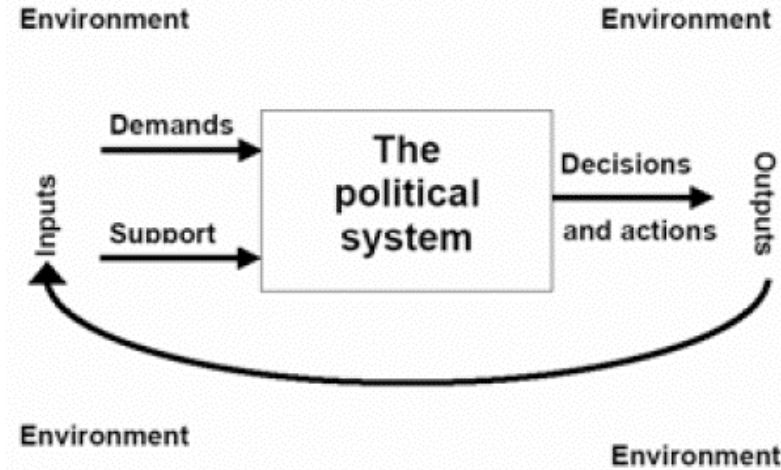
So, socio-cultural harmony is based on policy of the state since it aims to protect cultural and religious identities rather than assimilate them. Having mentioned above stated approaches to the Azerbaijani case, it should be asked that what is the place of religion in the public discourse? Because religion(s) also played an important role in the formation of national identity in most cases elsewhere.

The definition of the religious structure of the population living in Azerbaijan seems rather complicated. Because of the issues related to the religious affiliation of people are not included in the census conducted in the country every ten years, this or that religious affiliation of people, expressed in statistical data, is conditional and is determined for the most part on the basis of ethnicity.

As it mentioned in the introduction part of this chapter, Shiites constitute 60-65 percent of Muslim population, and Sunnis-35-35 percent. However, during 70 years of the Soviet regime, religion in all forms was forced out of public life, and the intellectual religious elite was subjected to repression. This was one of the reasons for the weakening of religious movements

in Azerbaijan.⁹⁰ Early years of the independence [red. Year of 1990s] in Azerbaijan were marked by the emergence of the national ideology, based on dominance of the titular ethnos and the acquisition by religion of the relevance among different groups of society.

Chart 1



However, awakening of Azerbaijanis after the collapsing the atheistic and collectivist ideology manifested itself not only in the revival of the religious values of Islam, to which the majority of the population belongs to. On the one hand, non-Islamic denominations, which historically existed in the territory of the country, became more active, and on the other hand “non-traditional” denominations alien to this geographical territory began to spread due to the opening of the country’s borders.⁹¹

“At the beginning of the 20th century, people living in this region identified themselves primarily with Muslim identity, then language, ethnicity, geography of residence etc. (the sequence is conditional)”. One of the facts conforming the mass massacres committed by Armenians against Azerbaijanis in 1905-1906 remained in collective memory as “Armenian-

90 Mammadli.N. 2017.*Islam and Youth in Azerbaijan*. Bakur Research Institute: Available at: <https://bakuresearchinstitute.org/islam-and-youth-in-azerbaijan/> > [Accessed on October 11, 2018]

91 See Mammadli.N.2017

Muslim war”. Today, citizenship is at the top of identity hierarchy. The notion of citizenship brought members of different nations together during Nagorno-Karabakh war to protect their motherland. Modern day young generation of Azerbaijan visits Martyr’s Lane in Baku where Muslim, Jewish and Christian heroes of our country sleep next to each other. Based on results of a poll conducted by Centre for Strategic Studies in 2011, citizenship, ethnicity, religion, regional (place of birth) membership is of great importance in the identity hierarchy for respondents. In addition, the separatist actions of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, followed by the expulsion of Azerbaijanis from Armenia and the beginning of military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh, were again those events that gave impetus to the national liberation leading to independence. During this period, the forces leading to the national liberation movement put forward nationalism⁹², rather than religious rhetoric in which it was core layer of Armenian soldiers` ideology during Nagorno-Karabakh war. Even the Armenian Apostolic Church started to develop the ideologies of “Fatherland War” and “Holy War”.

Another important reason behind the lagging of the religious identity in Azerbaijan from other identities is that the institutionalized religion does not occupy a special place in the formation of social identity. According to the World Values Survey was conducted in Azerbaijan among 1002 respondents (male and female) in 2011-2012, majority of respondents (70%) claimed that religion is a way of establishing peaceful coexistence and to do good to other people rather than following religious norms and ceremonies.⁹³ This fact proves again that national identity is formed on the ideology of “it is better for us if society consists of people from different nationalities, religions and cultures”. The analysis shows that cultural diversity in Azerbaijan has been preserved and promoted among communities.

92 See: Mammadli.N. 2017

93 World Values Survey Wave 6. 2011-2012. *Azerbaijan*. Available at: <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp>> [Accessed on 11 October, 2018]

Conclusion

It could be concluded that Azerbaijan is the only country in the South Caucasus observes multiculturalism as a state policy. Mutual cooperation of nations, cultures and religions as well as tradition of tolerance and condemnation of all sorts of conflicts are core principle of this policy.

In Addition, Azerbaijanis are one of the nations subjected [red. Armenian authority four times in a century- in the years of 1905-1907, 1918, 1948-53 and 1988-1992- committed terror against Azerbaijanis] to the Armenian terror. Azerbaijani government and Azerbaijanis are always promoting peace, religious solidarity and multicultural values. Despite the fact that Armenians destroy and desecrate religious and historical monuments in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Armenian Church still stands not only undamaged in central Baku but, also renovated by Azerbaijani government.

The facts prove that cultural heritage of Azerbaijan in the occupied territories are deliberately wiped out or otherwise modified them in a way that would defy their historic and national identity. For the sake of objectivity and justice, it should be asked from the international communities, mediators and other actors are party to peaceful resolution of the conflict to restore territorial integrity of Azerbaijan while it became member of United Nations in 1992 with its territories in which they are under occupation now.

Documents on Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict adopted by International Organizations

UN Statements, Resolutions and Documents

1. Statement by President of UN Security Council, May 12, 1992 on “The Situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh
2. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, August 26, 1992 on “The Situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh”
3. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, October 27, 1992 on “The Situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh”
4. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, January 29, 1993 on “Interruption of Armenia to the Nakhichevan region of Azerbaijan”
5. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, April 6, 1993 on “The situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh”
6. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, August 18, 1993 on “The situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh”
7. Statement by the President of UN Security Council, April 26, 1995 on “The situation relating to Nagorno-Karabakh”

Resolutions on unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan by the UN Security Council

Resolution S/RES/822 adopted by the UN Security Council at its 3205th meeting on April 30, 1993.

The Security Council,

Recalling the statements of the President of the Security Council of 29 January 1993 (s/25199) and of 6 April 1993 (s/25539) concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General dated 14 April 1993 (s/25600),

Expressing its serious concern at the deterioration of the relations between the Republic of Armenia and the republic of Azerbaijan,

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities and, in particular, the latest invasion of the Kelbadjar district of the Republic of Azerbaijan by local Armenian forces,

Concerned that this situation endangers peace and security in the region,

Expressing grave concern at the displacement of a large number of civilians and the humanitarian emergency in the region, in particular in the Kelbadjar district, **Reaffirming** the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region,

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing its support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

and deeply concerned at the disruptive effect that the escalation in armed hostilities can have on that process,

1. **Demands** the immediate cessation of all hostilities and hostile acts with a view to establishing a durable cease-fire, as well as immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces from the Kelbadjar district and other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijan;

2. **Urges** the parties concerned immediately to resume negotiations for the resolution of the conflict within the framework of the peace process of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and refrain from any action that will obstruct a peaceful solution of the problem;

3. **Calls** for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in the region, in particular in all areas affected by the conflict in order to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population and reaffirms that all parties are bound to comply with the principles and rules of international humanitarian law;

4. **Requests** the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as the Chairman of the Minsk Group of the Conference to assess the situation in the region, in particular in the Kelbadjar district of Azerbaijan, and to submit a further report to the Council;

5. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

The Resolution was adopted unanimously at meeting 3205 of the Security Council.

Resolution S/RES/853 adopted by the UN Security Council at its 3259th meeting on July 29, 1993.

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolution 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993, Having considered the report issued on 27 July 1993 by the Chairman of the Minsk Group of the

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (S/26184),
Expressing its serious concern at the deterioration of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic and at the tensions between them,

Welcoming acceptance by the parties concerned of the timetable of urgent steps to implement its resolution 822 (1993), Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities and, in particular, the seizure of the district of Agdam in the Azerbaijani Republic,

Concerned that this situation continues to endanger peace and security in the region,

Expressing once again its grave concern at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Azerbaijani Republic and at the serious humanitarian emergency in the region,

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region, Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

1. **Condemns** the seizure of the district of Agdam and of all other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic;

2. **Further condemns** all hostile actions in the region, in particular attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas;

3. **Demands** the immediate cessation of all hostilities and the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces involved from the district of Agdam and all other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic;

4. **Calls** on the parties concerned to reach and maintain durable cease-fire arrangements;

5. **Reiterates** in the context of paragraphs 3 and 4 above its earlier calls for the restoration of economic, transport and energy links in the region;

6. **Endorses** the continuing efforts by the Minsk Group of the CSCE to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict, including efforts to implement

resolution 822 (1993), and expresses its grave concern at the disruptive effect that the escalation of armed hostilities has had on these efforts;

7. **Welcomes** the preparations for a CSCE monitor mission with a timetable for its deployment, as well as consideration within the CSCE of the proposal for a CSCE presence in the region;

8. **Urges** the parties concerned to refrain from any action that will obstruct a peaceful solution to the conflict, and to pursue negotiations within the Minsk Group of the CSCE, as well as through direct contacts between them, towards a final settlement;

9. **Urges** the Government of the Republic of Armenia to continue to exert its influence to achieve compliance by the Armenians of the Nagorny-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic with its resolution 822 (1993) and the present resolution, and the acceptance by this party of the proposals of the

Minsk Group of the CSCE;

10. **Urges** States to refrain from the supply of any weapons and munitions which might lead to an intensification of the conflict or the continued occupation of territory;

11. **Calls** once again for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in the region, in particular in all areas affected by the conflict, in order to alleviate the increased suffering of the civilian population and reaffirms that all parties are bound to comply with the principles and rules of international

humanitarian law;

12. **Requests** the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population and to assist displaced persons to return to their homes;

13. **Requests** the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office of the CSCE as well as the Chairman of the Minsk Group, to continue to report to the Council on the situation;

14. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

Resolution S/RES/874 adopted by the UN Security Council at its 3292nd meeting on October 14, 1993.

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993 and 853 (1993) of 29 July 1993, and recalling the statement read by the President of the Council, on behalf of the Council, on 18 August 1993 (S/26326), Having considered the letter dated 1 October 1993 from the Chairman of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Minsk Conference on Nagorny Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/26522),

Expressing its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic, and of the tensions between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic, would endanger peace and security in the region,

Taking note of the high-level meetings which took place in Moscow on 8 October 1993 and expressing the hope that they will contribute to the improvement of the situation and the peaceful settlement of the conflict,

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region,

Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing once again its grave concern at the human suffering the conflict has caused and at the serious humanitarian emergency in the region and expressing in particular its grave concern at the displacement of large numbers of civilians in the Azerbaijani Republic,

1. **Calls upon** the parties concerned to make effective and permanent the cease-fire established as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the CSCE Minsk Group;

2. **Reiterates** again its full support for the peace process being pursued

within the framework of the CSCE, and for the tireless efforts of the CSCE Minsk Group;

3. **Welcomes** and commends to the parties the “Adjusted timetable of urgent steps to implement Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993)” set out on 28 September 1993 at the meeting of the CSCE Minsk Group and submitted to the parties concerned by the Chairman of the Group with the full support of nine other members of the Group, and calls on the parties to accept it;

4. **Expresses** the conviction that all other pending questions arising from the conflict and not directly addressed in the “Adjusted timetable” should be settled expeditiously through peaceful negotiations in the context of the CSCE Minsk process;

5. **Calls for** the immediate implementation of the reciprocal and urgent steps provided for in the CSCE Minsk Group’s “Adjusted timetable”, including the withdrawal of forces from recently occupied territories and the removal of all obstacles to communications and transportation;

6. **Calls also for** an early convening of the CSCE Minsk Conference for the purpose of arriving at a negotiated settlement to the conflict as provided for in the timetable, in conformity with the 24 March 1992 mandate of the CSCE Council of Ministers;

7. **Requests** the Secretary-General to respond favourably to an invitation to send a representative to attend the CSCE Minsk Conference and to provide all possible assistance for the substantive negotiations that will follow the opening of the Conference;

8. **Supports** the monitoring mission developed by the CSCE;

9. **Calls on** all parties to refrain from all violations of international humanitarian law and renews its call in resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993) for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in all areas affected by the conflict;

10. **Urges** all States in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and

from any interference or intervention which would lead to the widening of the conflict and undermine peace and security in the region;

11. **Requests** the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population and to assist refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in security and dignity;

12. **Requests** also the Secretary-General, the Chairman-in-Office of the CSCE and the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference to continue to report to the Council on the progress of the Minsk process and on all aspects of the situation on the ground, and on present and future cooperation between the CSCE and the United Nations in this regard;

13. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

The Resolution was adopted unanimously at meeting 3292 of the Security Council.

Resolution S/RES/874 adopted by the UN Security Council at its 3313rd meeting on November 11, 1993

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3313th meeting, on 12 November 1993 The Security Council, Reaffirming its resolutions 822 (1993) of 30 April 1993, 853 (1993) of 29 July 1993 and 874 (1993) of 14 October 1993,

Reaffirming its full support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and for the tireless efforts of the CSCE Minsk Group,

Taking note of the letter dated 9 November 1993 from the Chairman-in-Office of the Minsk Conference on Nagorny Karabakh addressed to the President of the Security Council and its enclosures (S/26718, annex),

Expressing its serious concern that a continuation of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic, and of the tensions between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani

Republic, would endanger peace and security in the region,

Noting with alarm the escalation in armed hostilities as consequence of the violations of the cease-fire and excesses in the use of force in response to those violations, in particular the occupation of the Zangelan district and the city of Goradiz in the Azerbaijani Republic,

Reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region, Reaffirming also the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory,

Expressing grave concern at the latest displacement of a large number of civilians and the humanitarian emergency in the Zangelan district and the city of Goradiz and on Azerbaijan's southern frontier,

1. **Condemns** the recent violations of the cease-fire established between the parties, which resulted in a resumption of hostilities, and particularly condemns the occupation of the Zangelan district and the city of Goradiz, attacks on civilians and bombardments of the territory of the Azerbaijani Republic;

2. **Calls upon** the Government of Armenia to use its influence to achieve compliance by the Armenians of the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic with resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993) and 874 (1993), and to ensure that the forces involved are not provided with the means to extend their military campaign further;

3. **Welcomes** the Declaration of 4 November 1993 of the nine members of the CSCE Minsk Group (S/26718) and commends the proposals contained therein for unilateral cease-fire declarations;

4. **Demands** from the parties concerned the immediate cessation of armed hostilities and hostile acts, the unilateral withdrawal of occupying forces from the Zangelan district and the city of Goradiz, and the withdrawal of occupying forces from other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani

Republic in accordance with the “Adjusted timetable of urgent steps to implement Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993)” (S/26522, appendix) as amended by the CSCE Minsk Group meeting in Vienna of 2 to 8 November 1993;

5. **Strongly urges** the parties concerned to resume promptly and to make effective and permanent the cease-fire established as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the CSCE Minsk Group, and to continue to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict within the context of the CSCE Minsk process and the “Adjusted timetable” as amended by the CSCE Minsk Group meeting in Vienna of 2 to 8 November 1993;

6. **Urges** again all States in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and from any interference or intervention, which would lead to the widening of the conflict and undermine peace and security in the region;

7. **Requests** the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population, including that in the Zangelan district and the city of Goradiz and on Azerbaijan’s southern frontier, and to assist refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in security and dignity;

8. **Reiterates** its request that the Secretary-General, the Chairman-in-Office of the CSCE and the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference continue to report to the Council on the progress of the Minsk process and on all aspects of the situation on the ground, in particular on the implementation of its relevant resolutions, and on present and future cooperation between the CSCE and the United Nations in this regard;

9. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

The Resolution was adopted unanimously at meeting 3313 of the Security Council.

Resolutions on the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan Adopted by UN General Assembly

1. A/res/60/285 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on September 7, 2006, on “The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan
2. A/res/62/243 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on April 25, 2008, on “The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Documents adopted by Council of Europe on conflict between Azerbaijan-Armenia

Recommendation 1251 (1994 on Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

Author(s): Parliamentary Assembly

Adopted: November 10, 1994

1. The Assembly notes that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict broke out in 1988 and that it has already resulted in almost 20 000 deaths and more than one million refugees

2. Its Committee on Relations with European Non-Member Countries has organized a series of hearings since 1992 which delegations from the Armenian and Azerbaijani Parliaments, the “leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh” and the “Azerbaijani interested party of Nagorno-Karabakh” attended.

3. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that the ceasefire which came into force on 12 May 1994 has been relatively well complied with, and hopes that it will be followed up as soon as possible with a peace agreement signed by all the interested parties.

4. It welcomes the efforts of the CSCE’s Minsk Group, the United Nations Security Council, the Government of the Russian Federation and the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the CIS to encourage the warring parties to sign a peace agreement, as well as the agreement signed on 26 July 1994 by the Ministers of Defense of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the commander of the army of Nagorno-Karabakh, in which they affirm their commitment to observe the ceasefire and their eagerness to accelerate the signing of a political agreement.

5. The Assembly consequently recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

5.1 call on the governments of Council of Europe member states to

make the necessary resources available to the CSCE's Minsk Group so that it can achieve its objectives, particularly the deployment of international observers in the war zone;

5.2 renew political dialogue with the authorities of Armenia and Azerbaijan;

5.3 as soon as the conditions are met, open its co-operation programmes to Armenia and Azerbaijan and, if these parties so wish, place experts at their disposal who could help draw up a political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Resolution 1047 (1994) adopted by Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe on Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

Author(s): Parliamentary Assembly

Adopted: November 10, 1994

1. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, which came into force on 12 May 1994, has been relatively well complied with and hopes that it will be followed up as soon as possible by a peace agreement between the warring parties.

2. This conflict, which broke out in 1988, has already resulted in almost 20 000 deaths and more than one million refugees.

3. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the efforts of the CSCE's Minsk Group, the Government of the Russian Federation, the United Nations Security Council, the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS and its own Committee on Relations with European Non-Member Countries to encourage the warring parties to sign a peace agreement.

4. It welcomes the agreement signed on 26 July 1994 by the Ministers of Defence of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the commander of the army of Nagorno-Karabakh, in which they affirm their commitment to observe the ceasefire and their eagerness to accelerate the signing of a political agreement, and calls urgently on all the warring parties to refrain from any

hostile act which might jeopardise the fragile ceasefire that has been in force since 12 May 1994.

5. It declares its readiness to help promote the conclusion of a peace agreement to the best of its abilities, particularly by encouraging dialogue between parliamentarians from the parties concerned.

6. Finally, it calls on the warring parties to organise the return home of refugees on an urgent basis and to respect minority rights as advocated in its Recommendation 1201, and urgently calls on Azerbaijan and Turkey to immediately end the blockade of their means of communication with Armenia.

Written Statement titled “The recognition of genocide committed by Armenians to the Azerbaijani population” by Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, Doc/№ 9066, April 26, 2001, Strasbourg

24-27 April, 2001 - There was held the plenary session of the PACE. For the first time, the Azerbaijani delegation to the PACE participated in the session as a full member. During the session, the written statement titled “The recognition of genocide committed by Armenians to the Azerbaijani population” signed by 29 representatives of 9 countries represented in 5 political groups of the PACE, and proposals for the recommendation titled “The prisoners and hostages of war kept in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh” signed by 20 representatives of 14 countries were disseminated as the official documents of the PACE. In the mentioned documents were particularly emphasized such issues as the massacre of Khodjaly inhabitants by Armenians, the occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan’s territory by Armenia, the fact of holding 783 Azerbaijanis, including children, women and elderly as hostages in Armenia and occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Documents on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by the European Union

Statement on Nagorno-Karabagh by European Political Cooperation

Brussels, 22 May 1992

The Community and its member States express their deepest concern at the latest escalation of the fighting in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and strongly condemn the use of force by whatever side. The Community and its member states deplore the renewed sufferings inflicted on populations and the loss of human life resulting from the continuing fighting. All inhabitants of both Armenia and Azerbaijan including the Armenian and Azerbaijani populations of Nagorno-Karabakh are entitled to the same levels of protection afforded by their government's acceptance of CSCE principles and commitments. Therefore, the Community and its member States condemn in particular as contrary to these principles and commitments any actions against territorial integrity or designed to achieve political goals by force, including the driving out of civilian populations. Fundamental rights of Armenian and Azerbaijani populations should be fully restored, in the context of existing

borders. The Community and its member States appeal to Armenia and Azerbaijan to show maximum restraint and to contribute constructively to the CSCE process. In this context they also urge all parties to work towards the early convening of the CSCE Peace Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh and to find a solution regarding the modalities of a representation of the communities of Nagorno-Karabakh, without which no lasting peace can be established.

Statement on Nagorno-Karabagh by European Political Cooperation

Brussels, 18 June 1992

The Community and its member States are deeply concerned about the continued fighting in Nagorno Karabagh. They strongly condemn any use of force which will in no way help to resolve the crisis. They call upon the parties involved to show restraint and avoid inflicting further suffering or loss of human life. The Community and its member States urge the Governments concerned to use all their influence to end the vicious circle of violence and to bring about an effective cease-fire. They renew their call to Azerbaijan and Armenia to respect human rights, to which they have committed themselves at their admission into the CSCE. They urge them to contribute to the efforts underway in the framework of the preliminary emergency meeting in Rome to create the necessary conditions to hold the Minsk Conference at the earliest moment under the auspices of the CSCE, which offers the best hope of seeing peace restored to this region.

***Statement On Nagorno-Karabakh by European Political Cooperation
Brussels, 7 April 1993***

The Community and its member States are seriously concerned about the latest degradation of the relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The Community and its member States regret the enlargement of the combat zone to Kelbajar and the Fizuli area. The Armenian government is strongly urged to use its influence on the Nagorno-Karabakh forces for an immediate withdrawal from the Azerbaijani territory and to stop the fighting in the area. All parties are requested not to withdraw from the ongoing negotiations in the Minsk group of the CSCE due to the recent events.

***Statement On Nagorno-Karabakh by European Political Cooperation
Brussels, 24 June 1993***

The Community and its member States welcome the acceptance by all the parties to the Nagorno- Karabakh dispute of the CSCE plan put to them by Signor Raffaelli. They believe that this plan represents the best hope for a comprehensive ceasefire in the region, for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 822 of 30 April and for real progress towards a negotiated settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. They pay tribute in particular to President Ter Petrossian of Armenia for his successful personal intervention to secure the agreement of representatives of the Armenian community in Nagorno-Karabakh to this plan. The Community and its member States hope that the Armenian government will continue to urge full acceptance of the peace plan on those elements in Nagorno-Karabakh who have not yet accepted it and that those elements in Nagorno-Karabakh will refrain from exploiting the present internal difficulties in Azerbaijan on the ground in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. They warn that in the present circumstances any offensive operation by whatever side may jeopardize the peace plan.

The Community and its member States urge the parties to the conflict to continue to lend their full support to the plan, thus facilitating the deployment of the first phase of the CSCE monitoring mission. They also urge the parties to agree to accept the withdrawal of troops from occupied territories and guarantee the security of CSCE observers on the ground as soon as they are deployed.

***Statement On Nagorno-Karabakh by European Political Cooperation
Brussels, 3 September 1993***

The Community and its member States condemn the recent offensives by local Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh, which are making deeper and deeper incursions into Azerbaijani territory. They note with regret that

such actions are extending the area of armed conflict to encompass more and more of Azerbaijani territory and are creating a very serious refugee problem in Azerbaijan and one already involving neighbouring countries, with a concomitant increased threat to regional security.

The Community and its member States reaffirm their support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the States in the region. The Community and its member States fully support the efforts being made by the Minsk Group within the framework of the CSCE to consolidate the provisional ceasefire decided on 31 August 1993 between the Nagorno-Karabakh Authorities and the Azerbaijan Government. They urge both parties to embark on any form of additional dialogue which would make it possible to implement the timetable on which there was agreement in principle by all parties at the end of June. The Community and its member States also hope to see local Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh fully respect United Nations Security Council Resolutions No. 822 and No. 853, and withdraw from the regions of Kelbadjar, Agdam, Fizouli and Djebail. The Community and its member States have no evidence that Azerbaijan would be capable of initiating major attacks from these regions.

The Community and its member States call on the Government of the Republic of Armenia to use its decisive influence over the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh to see that they comply with Security Council Resolutions No. 822 and No. 853 and the proposals of the CSCE Minsk Group. The Community and its member States call upon Armenia to ensure that the local Armenian forces carrying out offensives in Azerbaijan territory are not given the material means of further extending such offensives.

***Statement on Nagorno-Karabakh by European Union
Brussels, 9 November 1993***

The European Union condemns the breach of the ceasefire agreement

reached on 24 October 1993 in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh and calls upon all forces to withdraw from the recently occupied territories. The European Union reiterates the importance it attaches to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in accordance with the principles of the CSCE. The European Union is particularly concerned at the fate of tens of thousands of civilians who are fleeing the fighting. Receiving and protecting these refugees must be a priority for the international community. Moreover, the presence of these refugees increases the risk of the conflict becoming an international one and threatens the stability of the whole region. The European Union will continue its humanitarian aid to the affected population and would call upon all States in the region to facilitate the conveying of the aid. The European Union reaffirms its total support for the efforts undertaken by the CSCE Minsk Group in order to find a lasting political solution to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. It prevails upon the parties to the conflict to restore the ceasefire broken on 24 October 1993.

Position of the EU on Nagorno-Garabagh conflict

Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on condemning the “Presidential elections” in Nagorno Garabagh and confirming the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan as the basis for peaceful settlement of Nagorno Garabagh conflict

Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on forthcoming “Presidential elections” in Nagorno Karabakh, Brussels, 2 August 2002

The European Union confirms its support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and recalls that it does not recognise the independence of Nagorno Karabakh. The EU has always emphasised the need to establish a stable political agreement concerning Nagorno Karabakh, which should

be acceptable to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. The EU cannot consider legitimate the “presidential elections” that are scheduled to take place on 11 August 2002 in Nagorno Karabakh. The EU does not believe that these elections should have an impact on the peace process.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

Recognition of Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

The international organization that first time openly recognized and condemned Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan is the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Republic of Azerbaijan since December 8, 1991 is a member of the OIC.

In June 1992, 5th Conference of the Urgent Meeting of OIC's Foreign Ministers held in Istanbul condemned the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia and the recent attacks against Azerbaijan and asked Chairman of the Security Council of the United Nations and its Secretary General to adopt the resolution on withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied lands of Azerbaijan.

April 25-29, 1993, at the 21st conference of the OIC Foreign Ministers held in Karachi, Pakistan, the resolution was adopted in regard of Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The first paragraph of the resolution reads that the OIC condemns the aggression of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan. The second paragraph of the resolution demanded from Armenia strictly the urgent withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied Azerbaijani territories and immediate respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Further the OIC demonstrates unanimous support to the Azerbaijani government and people in the efforts to defend the country, the Islamic Development Bank and other Islamic organizations were asked to provide emergency financial assistance and humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan.

The principal position of condemning the aggression of Armenia by the OIC was reflected in the following documents, as well as in resolution of **7th summit of the organization which took place on December 13, 1994, in Casablanca.**

Note: on 28th June of 2011 by the decision of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of member-countries the name of the organization has been changed to Organization of Islamic Cooperation (ICO).

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