

## ARMENIA'S LATEST ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS IN GANJA

October 16, 2020

Just minutes ago, Armenia launched another SCUD ballistic missile into a residential neighborhood in Azerbaijan's second largest city of Ganja. With numerous casualties, this is the second SCUD attack on civilian residents of Ganja some 40 kilometers away from the frontline. The first attack resulted in 10 deaths and many more injured. Just like any other desperate militaristic regime, Armenia continues to commit war crimes against civilians in order to distract from its battlefield losses and the illegal occupation of Azerbaijan.

The background is in the attached document.





**Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States of America  
Washington, D.C.**

**FACT SHEET**

**ARMENIA'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST AZERBAIJAN**

**Latest update:**

- Azerbaijan has expressed its readiness to resume substantive negotiations with Armenia, based on the basic principles, under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the Armenian side avoids the peace talks insisting on certain preconditions and continues to undermine the established negotiation format.
- Along with disregarding international appeals to engage in substantive and comprehensive negotiations, Armenia attempts to expand the scope of the conflict and destabilize the whole region by involving neighbor countries into the conflict. For this reason, Armenia fired multiple missiles from its territory inside Azerbaijani civilian centers calculated to provoke retaliation. After hitting Ganja, Mingachevir and even Absheron peninsula, on October 15, Armenian forces launched operational-tactical missile from the occupied Gubadli on Ordubad district of Autonomous Nakhchivan Republic.<sup>1</sup> On October 16, civilian settlements in Ganja and Mingachevir were hit for the third time during the last two weeks.<sup>2</sup>
- Over the last few weeks, Armenia has significantly intensified imports of weapons and ammunition, including through flights many of which are conducted under the disguise of humanitarian cargo planes. Moreover, credible information provides strong evidence that Armenia is actively recruiting foreign fighters and deploying mercenaries to the conflict area, mostly from the Middle East and CIS countries. During the last several days, four flights have been conducted from Suleymaniyah by Boeing-757 and Airbus-320 aircrafts carrying at least 1,200 mercenaries from Iraq only. Even flights have been conducted to Armenia from Cabo Verde, an island in the Atlantic. In most cases, the Government of Armenia and Diaspora organizations organize special campaigns, including fund raising and ticket sales and define assembly points for the mercenaries.
- Azerbaijani authorities have repeatedly stated the intention to observe the ceasefire and called on Armenia to stop its military actions. Azerbaijan fights within its own territory against the occupying forces to ensure a sustainable peace and security in the region. As President Aliyev stated<sup>3</sup> Azerbaijan will provide every condition for peaceful coexistence of Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Nagorno-Karabakh similarly to thousands of Armenians who currently live in other parts of Azerbaijan in peace and harmony.

<sup>1</sup> <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/armenian-armed-forces-launched-a-missile-attack-on-the-territory-of-the-ordubad-region-33003.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/armenian-army-launches-missile-attack-on-azerbajians-ganja-mingachevir>

<sup>3</sup> <https://en.president.az/articles/42869>

## Background of the flare-up:

- On September 27, 2020 the armed forces of Armenia, by using large-caliber weapons, mortar launchers and artillery, launched attacks against positions of Azerbaijan causing human casualties and raising the tensions to a new dangerous level.<sup>4</sup>
- On October 10, 2020 the temporary ceasefire reached with the Russian mediation was violated by Armenia immediately after the truce came into effect. The Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan reported that Armenian forces attacked Azerbaijani positions in Aghdara-Tartar and Fizuli-Jabrail directions and continued shelling Azerbaijan's civilian settlements. Azerbaijani districts of Goranboy, Terter, Aghdam, Aghjabadi and Fizuli regions came under heavy fire. A medical worker was seriously injured as a result of the shooting of a sanitary medical vehicle, clearly marked with a white flag, retrieving the bodies of Armenian soldiers in the area of Sugovushan.<sup>5</sup>
- Towards the night time Armenia ramped up attacks on civilians. Ganja, the second largest city in Azerbaijan and far beyond the frontline, came under ballistic missile fire.<sup>6</sup> The missile hit a residential building killing at least nine people and injuring thirty-four others,<sup>7</sup> including minors.<sup>8</sup> Frustrated by loss of part of the Azerbaijani occupied territories, Armenia, by these missile attacks, mostly fired from Armenia's territory, aimed to provoke Azerbaijan for retaliation and consequently expand scope of the conflict by involving third countries (Russia and other CSTO members). For the same reason, on October 15, Armenian forces launched operational-tactical missile from the occupied Gubadli on Ordubad district of Autonomous Nakhchivan Republic.<sup>9</sup> Azerbaijan repeatedly stated that its current operations only cover the occupied territories and it does not have military objectives in the territory of Armenia. There are serious questions about continued delivery of weapons systems to Armenia under the guise of humanitarian assistance, including from Russia.
- Over the last two weeks Armenia's forces have shelled populated residential areas of Azerbaijan grossly violating its obligations under international humanitarian law. A targeted artillery fire in Naftalan region killed five members of the same family.<sup>10</sup> On October 4, 2020 Armenia ramped up the scale and intensity of its attacks by firing missiles at residential areas deep inside Azerbaijan. It fired at least four Smerch multiple-launch rocket systems at the second largest city of Azerbaijan – Ganja, subjected Mingachevir<sup>11</sup>, Terter and Horadiz<sup>12</sup> regions to rocket fire. Mingachevir is the fourth-largest city of Azerbaijan and hosts the largest water reservoir in the region. Armenia also fired two 300-km-range missiles at Khizi/Absheron region which includes the capital Baku. On October 6, 2020, Armenia's military used internationally prohibited cluster munitions to hit strategic Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline located nearly 50 kilometers away from the area of military operations.

<sup>4</sup> <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6876/view>; <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/armenian-armed-forces-committed-large-scale-provocations-along-the-entire-length-of-the-front-32311.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6943/view>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.azernews.az/karabakh/170459.html?\\_cf\\_chl\\_jschl\\_tk\\_=5ed7d1f6616de4bf6eefc8a01a190c5c9a4ff239-1602426165-0-AWd-1PrLteKbmGW49Shp458EJL-zqA3-s0pU26DrnnY4\\_p0cdeXkQe34eXGyf9Lq24BiIWxqdLdZ6Mh7uk-FpVf7pgwX9EI06pTt21AnuH\\_60M67FvCzV1HucdbEuFmc0wbONoagG3GZu-CTWQNOctTZ2y-ceTurO113Qr9wglYg7f7lXxDfx4rYEDBC\\_nDqW1UjclzHczuxqrR5bgxoguiWVr49472\\_9lkbIb90BShMQjgv9js311Mj4yjNzxtaU1ZX8IP1N1HWkIpkDS1EdpLr3redYPQVdLNVIKixKz7xbwBTZoVkerLqU6los-EwklrgOEcdNndg\\_SUMFFzkq2cuAApNn8wd6UAvRZjIRVWf](https://www.azernews.az/karabakh/170459.html?_cf_chl_jschl_tk_=5ed7d1f6616de4bf6eefc8a01a190c5c9a4ff239-1602426165-0-AWd-1PrLteKbmGW49Shp458EJL-zqA3-s0pU26DrnnY4_p0cdeXkQe34eXGyf9Lq24BiIWxqdLdZ6Mh7uk-FpVf7pgwX9EI06pTt21AnuH_60M67FvCzV1HucdbEuFmc0wbONoagG3GZu-CTWQNOctTZ2y-ceTurO113Qr9wglYg7f7lXxDfx4rYEDBC_nDqW1UjclzHczuxqrR5bgxoguiWVr49472_9lkbIb90BShMQjgv9js311Mj4yjNzxtaU1ZX8IP1N1HWkIpkDS1EdpLr3redYPQVdLNVIKixKz7xbwBTZoVkerLqU6los-EwklrgOEcdNndg_SUMFFzkq2cuAApNn8wd6UAvRZjIRVWf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zopcVDdBXE4&feature=youtu.be>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/azerbaijan-front-line/azerbaijan-9-die-34-injured-in-armenian-attack-on-civilians/2002551>

<sup>9</sup> <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/armenian-armed-forces-launched-a-missile-attack-on-the-territory-of-the-ordubad-region-33003.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6882/view>; [https://apa.az/en/nagorno\\_garabagh/Five-members-of-a-family-killed-as-a-result-of-Armenian-shelling-coloredOFFICIALcolor-331354](https://apa.az/en/nagorno_garabagh/Five-members-of-a-family-killed-as-a-result-of-Armenian-shelling-coloredOFFICIALcolor-331354)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2020-10-04/azerbaijan-says-armenia-launched-missile-attack-against-azeri-city-of-mingachevir>

<sup>12</sup> <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6920/view>

- So far **47 Azerbaijani civilians, including 3 children<sup>13</sup>** were killed while more than **222** were **wounded** or hospitalized (see the attached information on civilian casualties). Extensive damage has been inflicted on many homes and other civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, medical centers, school buildings, kindergartens.<sup>14</sup> **One of the civilians injured during the recent attack on Ganja is a 77 years old ethnic Armenian citizen of Azerbaijan. President Aliyev has stated repeatedly that Azerbaijan doesn't target civilians and thousands of Armenians live in Azerbaijan safely as part of our society.** Azerbaijan stated that it has no military objectives on the territory of Armenia and its **all operations are taking place within the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan.** Moreover, while the Azerbaijani army made it clear it will follow rules of war and does not intend to target civilians, the Armenian army places its firing points inside the residential areas using civilians as a human shield.

- Targeting civilians is not an incident but a deliberate policy of the Armenian armed forces trying to expand the policy of total ethnic cleansing they used in 1990s. By attacking civilian targets Armenia doubles down on its earlier terror tactic of causing mass displacement of Azerbaijani population. Armenian military commanders openly state that they have given direct orders to attack civilian targets. **Armenian leaders are desperately trying to provoke an Azerbaijani response against the territory of the Republic of Armenia hoping to invoke treaty obligations of Russia within the Collective Security Treaty Organization.** This shows Armenia's intent to expand the scope of this conflict by dragging in Russia directly into this confrontation as well as total disregard to safety of its own population. **Along these lines, Prime Minister Pashinyan raised the possibility of inviting Russian peacekeepers in a recent interview.**<sup>15</sup>

- The Nagorno-Karabakh region and surrounding districts are not a **"disputed territory"** but an internationally recognized part of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The term "disputed" does not apply in this case.

- The latest provocation by Armenia follows the 12-14 July attacks against Azerbaijan across the international border in the Tovuz region, where Azerbaijan lost military servicemen, including one general, and a 76-year-old civilian.<sup>16</sup> Importantly, the area of the July attacks in Tovuz is in the vicinity of regional oil and gas pipelines, a vital part of Europe's energy security.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, the transportation infrastructure and the air corridor connecting Europe and Asia, including NATO transit to Afghanistan, pass through the same territory.



<sup>13</sup> <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/6959/view>

<sup>14</sup> <https://photo.azertag.az/post/-qurbanovlar-ailesi-ermeni-texribatinin-qurbani-oldu-aile-uzvlerinden-ikisi-mektebli-idi--dunya-ermeni-fasizmini-gorsun-foto--22842>; <https://photo.azertag.az/post/ermenistanin-dinc-ehaliye-xain-hucumlari-terterlileri-qorxutmur--azertacin-terterden-fotoreportaji-22830>; <https://photo.azertag.az/post/ermenistan-fasizminin-eybecer-sifeti-dusmen-mulki-sexsleri-hedefe-almagda-davam-edir-%E2%80%93-azertac-hadise-yerinden-xeber-verir--22836>

<sup>15</sup> <https://tass.com/world/1208265>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/azerbaijan-covid-pompeo/2020/08/05/id/980732/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2020/07/17/armenia-azerbaijan-conflict-energy-security/>

- Armenia’s leaders have been actively undermining the ongoing peace process led by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chaired by France, Russia and the U.S., and continue to ignore international calls for substantive peace talks.<sup>18</sup> It is clear that Armenia is already set to pursue the realization of its Defense Minister’s pledge in early 2019 to wage “new wars for new territories” and to “prepare for new offensive operations.”<sup>19</sup>
- The ongoing large-scale deliveries of weapons from Russia over the Iranian territory have intensified over the last several months and further contribute to the rising tensions.<sup>20</sup>
- Armenia attempted to expand the scope of the conflict during the cross-border attacks in July by involving its treaty allies within the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Currently, the Armenian side conducts a coordinated disinformation campaign, including completely fabricated allegations about Syrian fighters traveling to Azerbaijan or an Armenian fighter jet being shot by the Turkish air force.<sup>21</sup> **None of these falsehoods have been verified or proven.** This propaganda campaign by Armenia aims to distract attention from atrocities against the civilian population of Azerbaijan as well as to provoke a third-party involvement in the current hostilities. **There are no foreign fighters on the Azerbaijani side.** On the contrary, Armenia has long been involved with Middle Eastern terrorism, sets up illegal settlements of Lebanese Armenians in the occupied Azerbaijani territories and sent a military contingent to participate in the Syrian civil war on behalf of the official Damascus.
- Armenia’s leaders promote the false narrative of Turkey’s involvement in the conflict. While Azerbaijan appreciates Turkey’s moral and diplomatic support as well as its clear demand to end Armenia’s illegal occupation in full accordance with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions and its membership in the Minsk Group, **Turkey is not directly involved and is not a party to the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.**
- Azerbaijan has been consistent in urging substantive and result-oriented negotiations to achieve a breakthrough in the conflict for the benefit of the whole region.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/may/19/pandemic-highlights-the-protracted-azerbaijan-arme/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://mediamax.am/en/news/armypolice/38503/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://eurasianet.org/aliyev-airs-grievances-to-putin-over-arms-shipments-to-armenia>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.aneas.com.tr/turkey/2020/09/29/azerbaijan-turkey-not-involved-in-armenia-conflict;>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haXztEdW2rg;](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haXztEdW2rg) <https://www.reuters.com/article/armenia-azerbaijan-turkey-denial-int-idUSKBN26J16K>

## UPDATED FACT SHEET

### **Civilian casualties and damage inflicted upon civilian infrastructure as a result of Armenia's act of aggression against Azerbaijan**

*(as of 16 October 2020, 17:00 Baku time)<sup>22</sup>*

Since September 27, 2020 the Armed Forces of Armenia have been indiscriminately targeting the civilian population, private houses and other civilian infrastructure along the line of contact and in the regions located far away from the conflict zone in a gross violation of its obligations under international humanitarian law, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions and its Additional Protocols.

Moreover, despite the humanitarian ceasefire agreed during the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Moscow with the mediation of the Russian Federation, the Armed Forces of Armenia continues to attack the residential areas and civilian infrastructure in Azerbaijan.

On October 16, Armed Forces of Armenia in gross violation of the humanitarian ceasefire regime used heavy artillery and shelled the territories of Aghdam, Aghjabadi, Fuzuli, Goranboy and Tartar. One of the shells hit the cemetery in Ahmadagali village, Aghdam.

An operational-tactical missile fired on October 15 at 10:44 by the Armed Forces of Armenia from the territory of the occupied Gubadli region exploded in the territory of Ordubad region of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. A peaceful population and civilian facilities were not affected.

As of 16<sup>th</sup> of October, totally 47 civilians, including children and elderly were killed, 222 civilians have been hospitalized with serious injuries. 1669 private houses, 84 apartment buildings and 301 civilian infrastructures were damaged and became unserviceable as a result of Armenia's indiscriminate armed attacks.

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<sup>22</sup> Please check for website updates on human casualties and damaged civilian infrastructure: <https://genprosecutor.gov.az/az>, <https://mod.gov.az/en>, <http://minenergy.gov.az/en/>, <https://azertag.az/en/>

**Photo 1-3:** Operational-tactical missile exploded in the territory of Ordubad region of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan



**Photo 4-5:** Ahmadagali village cemetery, Aghdam





**Photo 1-2:** Destroyed residential buildings, Ganja, Azerbaijan





**Photo 3-4:** Destroyed residential buildings, Ganja, Azerbaijan



**Photo 5-6:** Destroyed residential buildings, Ganja, Azerbaijan



**Photo 7-8:** Wounded children, Ganja, Azerbaijan



**Photo 9:** Ballistic missile in the area of Mingachevir Water Hydropower Complex

**Civilian properties destroyed by missile attack in Fuzuli:**



**The Smerch 9M525 fragmentation missiles fired by the Armenian armed forces**



**School building in Terter district damaged by artillery shelling:**



**Market building in Aghdam region destroyed by artillery shelling:**



**Civilian properties destroyed by missile attack in Ganja:**











**Damaged civilian properties in the Alibayli village of Aghdam region:**





**Photo 1-3: Private house burned down after shelling (Aghdam)**



Photos 4-6: Results of shelling on Hasangaya village (Barda)



STAT  
on behalf

EMENT  
of the  
Prosecutor

**General's Office  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

Starting from September 27th 2020, the military-political leadership of the aggressor Armenia continues its provocative actions, flagrantly violating its obligations under the Geneva Conventions and international law in general.

Densely populated areas of Azerbaijan, where strategic facilities are located or passing, including the cities of Mingachevir (Hydro Power Station) and Yevlakh (Baku-Tbilisi-Jeyhan oil pipeline), Ganja, Absheron and Khizi districts situated far away from the war zones, have been subjected to heavy artillery bombardment.

As a result of the Armenian military aggression, 31 civilians, including 3 children and 9 women were killed, 164 civilians were seriously injured, a total of 1054 houses, 45 apartment buildings and 142 civilian objects were destroyed so far. In order to prevent the Armenian aggression and ensure the security of the civilian population, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan are carrying out effective counter-offensive operations and adequate response measures in full compliance with international humanitarian law.

Due to the significant loss of manpower in the Armenian armed forces as a result of effective response measures of the Azerbaijani Army, the Armenian diaspora living abroad at the behest of the country's military and political leadership organizes the transportation of mercenaries to Nagorno-Karabakh region to fight against the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan. These actions jeopardizing international security are inconsistent with international law, and are considered a crime under either Azerbaijani or national legislation of foreign countries.

I state that upon two facts criminal cases have already been initiated by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code. Relevant investigative operational measures are ongoing. Mutual legal assistance requests were submitted to competent authorities of countries of their citizenship.

Furthermore, the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan continues to apply resolute criminal measures against individuals and legal entities engaged in illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of our country.

In the light of the foregoing, on behalf of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan I once again state and warn that within the framework of international law norms and criminal legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, resolute measures will be taken in relation to mercenaries who upon the calls of the military-political leadership of Armenia, its armed forces, diaspora organizations operating abroad, as well as of the so-called regime travel to Nagorno-Karabakh and take part in the hostilities. Adequate measures will also be taken against individuals and legal entities engaged in illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I vigorously call on the competent authorities of foreign countries to take effective, preventive and urgent measures to prevent such illegal actions.

**Kamran Aliyev, Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

**Baku, 9 October 2020**