



**AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI
VƏKİLLƏR KOLLEGİYASININ
RƏYASƏT HEYƏTİ**

**BOARD OF THE
BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

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**THE CALL OF THE AZERBAIJANI BAR ASSOCIATION
TO ITS INTERNATIONAL COLLEAGUES**



Dear Colleagues,

Shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991 and the recognition of the independence of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the international arena, military operations and attacks by Armenia against Azerbaijan intensified. Armenia started a war against Azerbaijan, occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions by force, expelled up to a million people from their ancestral lands, pursued a policy of ethnic cleansing in the occupied territories, committed other serious crimes during the conflict and established a separatist organization in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Over the past 27 years, the ceasefire has been repeatedly violated by the Armenian armed forces, and dozens of civilians and children, including a two-year-old toddler, have been killed as a result of the shots fired from the occupied territories.

After a long-lasting invasion, the Armenian armed forces violated the ceasefire again on 27th of September 2020 and tried to occupy new territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a result of which military clashes broke out between the armed forces of the two countries. The second Nagorno-Karabakh War ended on 10th of November 2020 in a victory for the Azerbaijani Army when the Tripartite Declaration was signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation¹.

The Azerbaijani side has been demanding maps and schemes of mines, that have been planted in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan during the invasion period, from the Armenian side since the signing of the Tripartite Declaration. Despite this, the Republic of Armenia has not been providing the Azerbaijani side with the maps of minefields planted in territories of Azerbaijan subjected to its military occupation and armed forces of Armenia have been continuing criminal actions against Azerbaijani citizens by grossly violating the basic norms and principles of international humanitarian law, including the requirements of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-54882564>

In spite of Armenia's refusal to release the maps of minefields, Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) has been demining liberated territories. According to the official statement of Idris Ismayilov, the head of the operation carried out by ANAMA, only between 27th of September 2020 and 30th of November 2020 at least 4,500 anti-personnel mines and 2,000 anti-tank mines have been found and destroyed². According to some estimations, the process of demining the entire liberated territories could take more than twenty years and is further complicated by the mountainous nature of the region³.

As a result of the failure of the Armenian side to provide maps and schemes which is the continuation of the provocative acts committed by the Republic of Armenia against Azerbaijani people, on 4th of June, at 11 o'clock, 2 media workers and 1 employee of a state organization were killed when an anti-tank mine fell on the bus outside the Susuzluq district, where the employees of TV channels and news agencies sent to Kalbajar region which was newly released from Armenian invasion. Moreover, 4 people were hospitalized with high injuries as a result of this explosion.

Armenia's refusal to provide these maps and other necessary information has several times ended up in injury and death of Azerbaijani citizens, violating their rights enshrined in the light of Articles 2 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Article 1 of Protocol No. 1, and Articles 2 (1) and 3 (2) of Protocol No. 4. More precisely, up to 20 civilians had been killed and over 70 had been injured since the signing of the Tripartite Declaration by March, 2021⁴; however, this would not happen if Armenia compels with its obligations arising from the aforementioned provisions of international law.

Armenia's refusal to abide by the international law and co-operate on this sensitive issue in spite of a mounting number of the victims outrages the Azerbaijani side, further strains the regional situation, continuing to impede realization of the vision of peace, security, and cooperation in the region, and averts the emergence of a co-operative environment between the two countries. With this in mind, we demand the Armenian side be forced to fulfill its obligations arising from the requirements of international law by providing maps and schemes of planted mines.

The Azerbaijani Bar Association appeals to human rights organizations, foreign bar associations, legal societies, and international organizations not to ignore these human rights violations, and by approaching their mandate responsibly to make the political and military leadership of Armenia refrain from committing criminal acts and to make Armenia fulfill its obligations related to the provision of maps and schemes of minefields.

Sincerely,



Anar Baghirov, Ph.D

Chairman

² <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/azerbaijan-clearing-mines-in-areas-newly-liberated-from-armenian-occupation/news>

³ <https://karabakhspace.commonspace.eu/opinion/opinion-why-should-armenia-hand-over-mine-maps-azerbaijan>

⁴ <https://karabakhspace.commonspace.eu/opinion/opinion-why-should-armenia-hand-over-mine-maps-azerbaijan>

Appendix:



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



Image 4