

**General Assembly
Security Council**Distr.: General
24 February 2021

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-fifth session**

Agenda items 34, 35, 40, 63, 64, 68, 72 and 86

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Seventy-sixth year****Letter dated 23 February 2021 from the Permanent
Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from Jeyhun Bayramov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in connection with the serious threat emanating from the massive contamination of the recently liberated territories of Azerbaijan with mines and other explosive devices by Armenia, and the latter's refusal to release information regarding the minefields in these territories (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 34, 35, 40, 63, 64, 68, 72 and 86, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 23 February 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Letter dated 22 February 2021 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to the serious threat emanating from the massive contamination of the recently liberated territories of Azerbaijan with mines and other explosive devices deployed by Armenia, and the latter's refusal to release information regarding the minefields in these territories.

During the almost three decades of occupation of the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan, Armenia massively laid mines in these territories, as a result of which there were numerous casualties among the Azerbaijani military and civilians.

With a view to inflicting as much damage as possible, as well as creating additional obstacles for the return of civilians, Armenia has also deliberately planted mines on a massive scale during its forced withdrawal as a result of the counteroffensive operation of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan, in blatant violation of international humanitarian law.

The mines and other explosive devices in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan pose a serious threat to the life and safety of Azerbaijani military and civilians in the post-conflict period. Since the signing of the trilateral statement by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia on 10 November 2020, which announced an end to all military activities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, 15 citizens of Azerbaijan, including 9 civilians, have been killed and 65 citizens, including 8 civilians, have been seriously wounded as a result of mine explosions in the recently liberated territories.

The massive mine contamination of the liberated territories also seriously impedes the realization of the wide-ranging rehabilitation and reconstruction plans that the Government of Azerbaijan has embarked on. Most importantly, it affects the realization of the inalienable right of the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons to return to their homes in safety and dignity.

Although Armenia and Azerbaijan signed the document on cessation of military activities on 10 November 2020, Armenia refuses to release information concerning the location of the minefields. This is a blatant violation of Armenia's obligation under customary international humanitarian law. The human costs inflicted by the Armenian-planted mines cannot but constitute a war crime.

The release of information by Armenia on the location of the minefields is an absolute necessity so as to avoid further loss of innocent lives and to move forward towards a speedy post-conflict reconstruction and thereby help a lasting peace.

Armenia's consistent disregard of our repeated appeals to release information on the location of the minefields seriously questions that country's sincerity for a normalization of relations with Azerbaijan on the basis of mutual recognition of and respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders.

This destructive stance of Armenia is not an isolated case. As I informed you previously, Armenia has also resorted to other destabilizing actions and statements aimed at undermining the emerging perspectives of regional peace and security, such

as the deployment of a sabotage group into the territories of Azerbaijan to commit terror acts against Azerbaijan almost two weeks after the signing of the trilateral statement, and whom it cynically requests to release.

In the light of the above, I appeal to you with an urgent request to take all measures at your disposal to persuade Armenia to live up to its obligation under customary international law by releasing information regarding the location of the minefields, and cease all actions and statements impeding the realization of the vision of peace, security and cooperation envisaged in the trilateral statement.

(Signed) Jeyhun **Bayramov**
