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Seventy-seventh year**

Letter dated 24 August 2022 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter from Jeyhun Bayramov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, in connection with the continued illegal military activities of Armenia, including the planting of mines on the territory of Azerbaijan, in clear violation of international law and the Trilateral Statement of 10 November 2020 (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 20, 35, 51, 65, 66, 72, 74, 85, 100 and 134, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tofiq **Musayev**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



Annex to the letter dated 24 August 2022 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Letter dated 23 August 2022 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to my previous letter on the serious threat emanating from the massive contamination of recently liberated territories of Azerbaijan with mines and other explosive devices deployed by Armenia, I am writing to inform you of Armenia's continued illegal military activities, including laying mines in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

A large number of anti-personnel mines marked Э-001М were discovered by the engineering and fortification forces of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the territory of the Lachin district of the Republic of Azerbaijan (coordinates x=4401180, y=8635076). The number of anti-personnel landmines identified in said area in only one week, namely from 15 to 22 August 2022, amounts to 1,318 pieces, which in itself speaks of the scale and gravity of the threat.

It is of particular importance to note that all these recently identified mines were produced in the Republic of Armenia in 2021. It should also be emphasized that military operations were not carried out in the indicated area before the signing of the Trilateral Statement by the leaders of Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and Armenia on 10 November 2020, which envisaged the cessation of all military activities between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Thus, the above-mentioned information provides additional proof that, contrary to paragraph 4 of the aforementioned Trilateral Statement, Armenia has not withdrawn its armed forces from the territory of Azerbaijan, nor has it ceased military activities against Azerbaijan. On the contrary, Armenia continues to form new combat positions in the territory of Azerbaijan where the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation has been temporarily deployed under the aforementioned Trilateral Statement, engages in engineering fortification works and, in this context, intensively lays mines.

The transfer of anti-personnel mines produced in Armenia in 2021 into the territory of Azerbaijan also demonstrates that the road, which under paragraph 6 of said Statement was designated exclusively for the movement of citizens, goods and vehicles for humanitarian purposes, continues to be abused for illegal military activities of Armenia.

At a time when large-scale rehabilitation and reconstruction works, including intensive demining activities, are being carried out by Azerbaijan in order to ensure peaceful life in the territories liberated from the military occupation of Armenia, and for the return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin, the transfer of newly produced mines from Armenia into the territory of Azerbaijan and their deployment therein presents a serious blow to the efforts to eliminate the consequences of the almost 30-year-long armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and to ensure peace and stability in the region.

This, in essence, constitutes a war crime by Armenia, which must be stopped and punished.

The above-mentioned information demonstrates the urgent necessity for the soonest-possible withdrawal of all Armenian armed forces from the territory of

Azerbaijan, as required by general international law as well as the Trilateral Statement.

The type of mines found by the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan also demonstrates that Armenia misleads the international community by falsely announcing that “it has never produced or exported antipersonnel mines”.

Armenia indiscriminately planted landmines in the territories of Azerbaijan that it had illegally occupied for nearly three decades and rendered them one of the most contaminated areas in the world. Armenia has long rejected having any maps of the minefields, calling Azerbaijan’s demand a “fake agenda”, and it then refused to hand over them but ultimately had to release these records in piecemeal fashion once it faced international pressure. To make matters worse, once examined by field specialists, it turned out that the mine formularies were incomplete, covering only part of the liberated territories, and a significant part of them were unreliable, while others contained no information pertinent to demining. The practical utility of the records of the minefield maps handed over by Armenia is around 25 per cent, while the records cover around 5 per cent of all the territory liberated from Armenia’s occupation.

Mines are indiscriminately deployed in the conflict-affected territories of Azerbaijan. There is neither marking nor fencing. Around 3,300 persons became mine victims during the last 30 years. Since the signing of the Trilateral Statement of 10 November 2020, 232 persons have become mine victims, with 40 killed and 192 maimed by landmines. In a latest incident, on 20 and 21 August 2022, two Azerbaijani military servicemen received injuries from mine explosions in the liberated Lachin region.

According to the Prosecutor General’s Office of Azerbaijan, 134 persons became mine victims as a result of mine explosions in areas not covered by minefield records released by Armenia, which confirms the indiscriminate use of landmines. Such indiscriminate use of mines continues to cause superfluous injuries and unnecessary suffering to civilians. The humanitarian threat caused by mines creates humanitarian urgency that needs the utmost attention.

Indiscriminately deployed mines are the major impediment to the return of internally displaced persons to areas from which they have been forcibly expelled, as well as a barrier to the realization of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction plans.

It is with this understanding that I appeal to you once again to mobilize all resources and expertise available at the United Nations and the broader international community to render assistance to humanitarian demining in Azerbaijan.

Your Excellency’s active engagement with Armenia to persuade it to finally honour its obligations under international law, abandon all its activities against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and engage in good faith for the establishment of good-neighbourly relations on the basis of the mutual recognition of and respect for each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and the inviolability of State borders is also of utmost necessity in this regard.

(Signed) Jeyhun **Bayramov**