

Statement

of the

Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia Human Rights Defender of Nagorno Karabakh Region

Azerbaijani military forces have committed gross human rights violations against civilians in the regions of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic since the April 1, 2016 and this is, of course, a matter of deep concern.

Reliable reports, including mass media publications suggest that Azerbaijani military forces had peaceful population and civilian objects as their targets. We are concerned by the information that civilian citizens of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic were treated inhumanly, without respect for the dignity of these people.

Namely, the secondary school of Martuny region was destroyed on the first day of these cruel operations; as a result one child was killed and two other children were heavily wounded. They are now at the hospital of the Stepanakert city. Many people had to leave their houses because of targeted danger to their lives; secondary schools, kindergartens, other objects of civilian life had to stop operating. The reliable media reports suggest that they are even targeting ambulance vehicles by shootings from tanks when wounded people are being transferred to hospitals.

We are concerned by the information that peaceful civilians living in Nagorno-Karabakh settlements have been killed through cruel and inhuman methods of execution by cutting different parts of bodies. These methods of treating people are strictly prohibited by all human rights norms. Moreover, the manner by which these activities are committed have characteristics attributable to hate crimes. According to the mass media reports, one of vivid examples suggests the case when the head of the soldier of Nagorno-Karabakh forces was executed and then was expressively demonstrated to the Azerbaijani public as a merit and an accomplishment of their activities. Another example is the case when an elderly Armenian couple, as well as one infirm lady was killed in their house in the village of Talish.

All these operations constitute gross violations of human rights; they are against European human rights values and gravely endanger the European system of protecting and promoting human rights. It goes without saying that protection of civilians, especially, children and elderly people against these brutal operations, as well as protection of secondary schools, kindergartens other civilian objects are at the core of the International and European Human Rights Law. They are strongly protected by the legal norms of International Humanitarian Law.

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