

Mr. Karen Andreasyan, Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia, addressed a letter to Ms. Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights with the following content:

“I express my deep concern with regard to the torture and killings of citizens of the Republic of Armenia held captive in Azerbaijan, particularly with regard to the case of RA citizen Karen Petrosyan, taken captive in Azerbaijan on August 7, 2014 and killed the following day.

The Azerbaijani side has publicly humiliated and tortured Karen Petrosyan, a person with obvious mental health issues, and presented him as a “saboteur”. A statement from Azerbaijan was released later, according to which Petrosyan unexpectedly died because of “heart failure”. Whereas Petrosyan’s medical records state that the latter did not have any physical health issues.

It has been 17 days since Karen Petrosyan’s murder, and the Azerbaijani side has still not returned Petrosyan’s body. I have substantial doubts and concern that the delay of returning Petrosyan’s body aims to conceal the evidence of torture. Similarly, Manvel Saribekyan, an RA citizen, was killed in captivity in Azerbaijan in 2010, and Mamikon Khojoyan, another RA citizen died after returning back to Armenia in 2014 because of previous torture in Azerbaijan.

Elmira Suleymanova, Azerbaijan’s Commissionaire for Human Rights, member of the International Ombudsman Institute, as well as of the European Ombudsman Institute, has not expressed any attitude so far regarding Karen Petrosyan’s murder.

Such behavior was not unexpected, since the same official had welcomed Gurgen Margaryan’s (an Armenian officer) decapitation with an ax by her compatriot Ramil Safarov, naming the criminal’s action as a “patriotic example for young people”.

Torture of captives is strongly in contrary to the norms established in the international humanitarian law, particularly, to the provisions stipulated by the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

I urge you to address this issue and to come up with a statement condemning Azerbaijan’s illegal actions, to promote the handover of Karen Petrosyan’s body and to push for implementation of comprehensive, impartial and transparent investigation of the murder”.

Staff of the Human Rights Defender