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INTRODUCTION

After the signing of Gyulistan and Turkmanchai treaties in 1813 and 1828 respectively, a very rapid mass resettlement of the Armenians in the Azerbaijani lands and the subsequent artificial territorial division took place.

Between 1905 and 1907 the Armenians carried out a series of large-scale bloody actions against the Azerbaijanis. The atrocities began in Baku and then extended over the whole of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani villages in the territory of present-day Armenia. Hundreds of settlements were destroyed and wiped from the face of the earth, and thousands of civilians were barbarically killed.

Taking advantage of the situation following the First World War and the February and October 1917 revolutions in Russia, the Armenians began to pursue the implementation of their plans under the banner of Bolshevism. Thus, under the watchword of combating counter-revolutionary elements, in March 1918 the Baku commune began to implement a plan aimed at eliminating the Azerbaijanis from the whole of the Baku province. Apart from Baku, solely because of their ethnic affiliation, the thousands of Azerbaijanis were annihilated also in the Shemakha and Guba districts, as well as in Karabakh, Zangezur, Nakhchivan, Lenkoran and other regions of Azerbaijan. In these areas, the civilian population was exterminated en masse, villages were burned and national cultural monuments were destroyed and obliterated.

Following the establishment of the Soviet rule in Armenia in late 1920, the Armenians were presented with a real opportunity to fulfill their age-old dream of creating an Armenian State on the territories of other nations. Over the 70-years of Soviet rule, the Armenians succeeded in expanding their territory at the expense of Azerbaijan and using every possible means to

expel the Azerbaijanis from their lands. During this period, the aforementioned policy was implemented systematically and methodically. Thus, in 1920 the Armenians declared Zangezur and a number of other Azerbaijani lands to be part of the territory of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1923 they managed to secure the status of the autonomous province for the mountainous part of Karabakh within the Azerbaijan SSR. Thus, the artificial entity was created at the territory of Azerbaijan, while the Azerbaijani population living in the territory of Armenia at that time had not been granted similar rights.

On the pretext of resettling the Armenians coming from abroad, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted on 23 December 1947 and 10 March 1948 special decisions on the resettlement of collective farm workers and the other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Araks lowlands in the Azerbaijani SSR. Under these decisions, during the period between 1948 and 1953 more than 150,000 Azerbaijanis were forcibly resettled from their historical homelands – the mountainous regions of Armenia – to the then waterless steppes of Mugan and the Mil plateau.

The current stage of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan may be regarded as having formally begun on 20 February 1988, when the Soviet of the People's Deputies of the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Province adopted a decision to petition to the Supreme Soviets of the Azerbaijan SSR and the Armenian SSR for the transfer of the province from the former to the latter.

Before the adoption of this decision, namely already at the end of 1987, the Azerbaijanis became subject of attacks in Khankendi (during the Soviet period – Stepanakert) and Armenia resulted in a flood of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons.



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On 22 February 1988 near the settlement of Askeran on the Khankendi-Aghdam highway, the Armenians opened fire on a peaceful demonstration by the Azerbaijanis protesting against the above-mentioned decision of the Soviet of the People’s Deputies of the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Province. Two Azerbaijani youths lost their lives in consequence, becoming the first victims of the conflict.

On 26-28 February 1988 twenty-six Armenians and Azerbaijanis were killed as a result of the disturbances in Sumgait. It is notable that one of the leading figures in these events was a certain Edward Grigorian, an Armenian and native of Sumgait, who was directly involved in the killings and violence against the Armenians and the pogroms in the Armenian neighborhoods. By decision of the Criminal Division of the Supreme Court of the Azerbaijan SSR dated 22 December 1989, Grigorian was sentenced to 12 years’ imprisonment. The Court found Grigorian to be one of the organizers of unrest and massacres. Depositions by witnesses and victims show that he had a list of flats inhabited by the Armenians and, together with three other Armenians, called for reprisals against the Armenians, in which he took part personally. His victims (all Armenians) identified Grigorian as one of the organizers and active figures in the violence. In fact, events in Sumgait, being necessary to the Armenian leadership as a mean of launching an extensive anti-Azerbaijani campaign and justifying the ensuing aggressive actions against Azerbaijan, had been planned and prepared in advance.

In 1988-1989 more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to live Armenia. During the ethnic cleansing at least 216 Azerbaijanis were killed.

On 20 January 1990 the Soviet troops were brought into Baku to suppress the popular protests against the unjust and prejudiced policy pursued by the leadership of the former USSR, as well as the incompetent performance of the lo-

cal leadership. As a result, hundreds of the capital residents were killed or wounded, mutilated and subjected to various forms of physical pressure.

In 1991 central law-enforcement agencies of the then USSR apprehended dozens of the Armenian armed groups that operated outside Nagorny Karabakh. Thus, the Chaykend village of the Khanlar district of Azerbaijan was turned by the Armenian armed groups into a criminal hub from which they bombed and shelled surrounding villages and roads, terrorizing the local Azerbaijani population. From 1989 to 1991, in Chaykend and adjacent areas only 54 people fell victim to the Armenian armed groups. In 1992 Azerbaijan regained its control over the Goranboy district.

At the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992 the conflict turned into a military phase. Taking advantage of the political instability as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and internal squabbles in Azerbaijan, Armenia initiated with the external military assistance combat operations in Nagorny Karabakh.

In February 1992, an unprecedented massacre was committed against the Azerbaijani population in the town of Khojaly. This bloody tragedy, which became known as the Khojaly genocide, involved the extermination or capture of the thousands of Azerbaijanis; the town was razed to the ground. Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenian armed forces with the help of the infantry guards regiment No. 366 of the former USSR implemented the seizure of Khojaly - a small town situated in the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the total area of 0.94 sq. km. and the population before the conflict of 23,757.

The inhabitants of Khojaly remained in the town before the tragic night (about 2500 people) tried to leave their houses after the beginning of the assault in the hope to find the way to the nearest



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place populated by the Azerbaijanis. But these plans have failed. Invaders destroyed Khojaly and with particular brutality implemented carnage over its peaceful population.

Brutal annihilation of hundreds of blameless inhabitants of Khojaly was one of the most heinous crimes during the armed conflict in and around the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Armenian armed forces and foreign military units spared virtually none of those who had been unable to flee Khojaly and the surrounding area. As a result, 613 persons were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly people. 1,275 inhabitants were taken hos-

tage, while the fate of 150 persons remains unknown to this day. In the course of the tragedy 487 inhabitants of Khojaly were severely maimed, including 76 children not yet of age. 6 families were completely wiped out, 26 children lost both parents, and 130 children one of their parents. Of those who perished, 56 persons were killed with especial cruelty: by burning alive, scalping, beheading, gouging out of eyes, and bayoneting of pregnant women in the abdomen.

Armenian officials deny their responsibility for the crimes committed during the conflict, including against the population of Khojaly, airily falsifying facts and sharing own interpretations of them, which deviate not only from reality but also from elementary logic. Nevertheless, even the subtlest propaganda will never manage to disprove the facts that speak of a situation diametrically opposite to that represented by the Armenian side.

Apart from the considerable information in possession of the law-enforcement agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the responsibility of Armenia is documented also by numerous independent sources and eyewitnesses of this tragedy.



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EVIDENCE FROM INDEPENDENT SOURCES

MASS MEDIA REPORTS

Azerbaijan Publishing House, Baku, 1992

“KHOJALY – THE LAST DAY”

In the words of the journalist Chingiz Mustafaev, among the dead were “dozens upon dozens of children between 2 and 15 years old, women and old people, in most cases shot at pointblank range in the head. The position of the bodies indicated that the people had been killed in cold blood, calculatedly, without any sign of a struggle or of having tried to escape. Some had been taken aside and shot singly; many had been killed as whole families at once. Some corpses displayed several wounds, one of which was invariably in the head, suggesting that the wounded had been finished off. Some children were found with severed ears; the skin had been cut from the left side of an elderly woman’s face; and men had been scalped. There were corpses that had clearly been robbed. The first time we arrived at the scene of the shootings of 28 February, accompanied by two military helicopters, we saw from the air an open area about one kilometre across which was strewn with corpses almost everywhere”.

An inhabitant of Khojaly, Djanan Orudjev, also provided information on the many victims, chiefly women and children. His 16-years-old son was shot, and his 23-years-old daughter with her twin children and another, 18-years-old daughter who was pregnant, were taken hostage.

Saria Talybova, who witnessed the bloody tragedy as it unfolded, watched as four Meskhetian Turks, refugees from Central Asia, and three Azerbaijanis were beheaded on the grave of an Armenian soldier, and children were tortured

and killed before their parents’ eyes; two Azerbaijanis in national army uniform had their eyes put out with screwdrivers.

The organized nature of the extermination of the people of Khojaly was further evident from the fact that the peaceful inhabitants who fled the town in desperation to save their lives were killed outside it in previously prepared ambushes. For example, Elman Mamedov, chief of administration in Khojaly, reported that a large group of people who had left Khojaly came under heavy fire from Armenian light and heavy machine-guns and armoured personnel carriers near the village of Nakhichevanik. Another resident of Khojaly, Sanubar Alekperova, said she would never forget the mountains of corpses of women, children and old people near Nakhichevanik, where they fell into an ambush: in the carnage, her mother and her two daughters, Sevinzh and Khidzhran, were killed and she herself was wounded. Faced with this mass shooting-down of unarmed people, some of the group made for the village of Gyulably, but there the Armenians took some 200 people hostage. Among them was Dzhamil Mamedov; the Armenians tore out his nails, beat him about the legs and head and took away his grandson, and his wife and daughter vanished without trace. “had heard a lot about wars, about the cruelty of the Fascists, but the Armenians were worse, killing five- and six-years-old children, killing innocent civilians” said a French journalist, Jean-Yves Junet, who visited the scene of this mass murder of women, old people, children and defenders of Khojaly.

One of the French journalist’s Russian colleagues, V.Belykh, a correspondent for the newspaper Izvestia, reported seeing bodies with their eyes gouged out or ears cut off and bodies that had been scalped or beheaded.

The head of the Azerbaijan Defence Ministry’s medical service, Khanlar Hajiyev, was horrified by the evidence of savage reprisals against the



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Evidence from independent sources

inhabitants of Khojaly brought before him: a guardsman with his intestines hanging out, people with frostbite, a child whose leg had been tom off by heavy machine-gun fire, a girl whose face had been slashed with a knife.

Major Leonid Kravets reported that he had “personally seen about 200 bodies» and that with him had been a local policeman who, «when he saw his four-years-old son lying among the dead with his head split open, went out of his mind with grief”.

The Washington Post, 28 February 1992

**“NAGORNO-KARABAKH VICTIMS
BURIED IN AZERBAIJANI TOWN -
REFUGEES CLAIM HUNDREDS DIED IN
ARMENIAN ATTACK”**

By Thomas Goltz, Agdam, Azerbaijan, 27 February

Officials of the main mosque in this town just east of the embattled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh said they buried 27 bodies today, brought from an Azerbaijani town inside the enclave that was captured Wednesday by Armenian militiamen.

Refugees fleeing the fighting in Khojaly, a town of 6,000 northeast of the enclave’s capital, Stepanakert, claimed that up to 500 people, including women and children, were killed in the attack. No independent estimate of deaths was available here. The Agdam mosque’s director, Said Sadikov Muan, said refugees from Khojaly had registered the names of 477 victims with his mosque since Wednesday.

Officials in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, estimated the deaths in Khojaly at 100, while Armenian officials in their capital, Yerevan, said only two Azerbaijanis were killed in the attack. An official from Baku said here that his government fears Azerbaijanis would turn against it if they

knew how many had been killed.

Of seven bodies seen here today, two were children and three were women, one shot through the chest at what appeared to be close range. Another 120 refugees being treated at Agdam’s hospital include many with multiple stab wounds.

The Armenians who attacked Khojaly Tuesday night “were shooting, shooting, shooting”, said Raisa Aslanova, who reached Agdam Wednesday night. She said her husband and a son-in-law were killed and her daughter was missing.

Among the refugees who fled here over the mountains from Nagorno-Karabakh were two Turkmen soldiers from former Soviet Interior Ministry forces who had taken refuge in Khojaly after deserting from their unit last Friday because, they said, Armenian non-commissioned officers had beaten them «for being Muslims».

The two deserters claimed their former unit, the 366th Division, was supporting the Armenian militiamen who captured Khojaly. They said they tried to help women and children escape. “We were bringing a group through the mountains when the Armenians found us and opened fire”, said Agamehmet Mutif, one of the deserters. “Twelve were killed”.

The Independent, 29 February 1992

By Helen Womack

Elif Kaban, a Reuter correspondent in Agdam, reported that after a massacre on Wednesday, Azeris were burying scores of people who died when Armenians overran the town of Khojaly, the second-biggest Azeri settlement in the area. “The world is turning its back on what’s happening here. We are dying and you are just watching”, one mourner shouted at a group of journalists.



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The Sunday Times, 1 March 1992

“ARMENIAN SOLDIERS MASSACRE HUNDREDS OF FLEEING FAMILIES”

By Thomas Goltz, Agdam, Azerbaijan

Survivors reported that Armenian soldiers shot and bayoneted more than 450 Azeris, many of them women and children. Hundreds, possibly thousands, were missing and feared dead.

The attackers killed most of the soldiers and volunteers defending the women and children. They then turned their guns on the terrified refugees. The few survivors later described what happened: “That’s when the real slaughter began”, said Azer Hajiev, one of three soldiers to survive. “The Armenians just shot and shot. And then they came in and started carving up people with their bayonets and knives”.

“They were shooting, shooting, shooting”, echoed Rasia Aslanova, who arrived in Agdam with other women and children who made their way through Armenian lines. She said her husband, Kayun, and a son-in-law were massacred in front of her. Her daughter was still missing.

One boy who arrived in Agdam had an ear sliced off.

The survivors said 2000 others, some of whom had fled separately, were still missing in the grueling terrain; many could perish from their wounds or the cold.

By late yesterday, 479 deaths had been registered at the morgue in Agdam, and 29 bodies had been buried in the cemetery. Of the seven corpses I saw awaiting burial, two were children and three were women, one shot through the chest at point blank range.

Agdam hospital was a scene of carnage and terror. Doctors said they had 140 patients who es-

aped slaughter, most with bullet injuries or deep stab wounds.

Nor were they safe in Agdam. On Friday night rockets fell on the city which has a population of 150,000, destroying several buildings and killing one person.

The Times, 2 March 1992

“CORPSES LITTER HILLS IN KARABAKH”

Anatol Lieven comes under fire while flying to investigate the mass killings of refugees by Armenian troops

As we swooped low over the snow-covered hills of Nagorno-Karabagh we saw the scattered corpses. Apparently, the refugees had been shot down as they ran. An Azerbaijani film of the places we flew over, shown to journalists afterwards, showed dozens of corpses lying in various parts of the hills.

The Azerbaijanis claim that as many as 1000 have died in a mass killing of Azerbaijanis fleeing from the town of Khodjaly, seized by Armenians last week. A further 4,000 are believed to be wounded, frozen to death or missing.

The civilian helicopter’s job was to land in the mountains and pick up bodies at sites of the mass killings.

The civilian helicopter picked up four corpses, and it was during this and a previous mission that an Azerbaijani cameraman filmed the several dozen bodies on the hillsides.

Back at the airfield in Agdam, we took a look at the bodies the civilian helicopter had picked up. Two old men and small girl were covered with blood, their limbs contorted by the cold and rigor mortis. They had been shot.



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Evidence from independent sources

The Washington Times, 2 March 1992

“ARMENIAN RAID LEAVES AZERIS DEAD OR FLEEING”

About 1,000 of Khojaly’s 10,000 people were massacred by the Armenian Army in Tuesday’s attack. Azerbaijani television showed truckloads of corpses being evacuated from the Khojaly area.

The New York Times, 3 March 1992

“MASSACRE BY ARMENIANS BEING REPORTED”

Agdam, Azerbaijan, March 2 (Reuters) – The last of the former Soviet troops in the Caucasus enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh began pulling out today as fresh evidence emerged of a massacre of civilians by Armenian militants.

The Itar-Tass press agency said the 366th Motorized Infantry Regiment had started its withdrawal, in effect removing the last frail buffer separating the region’s two warring ethnic groups, Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

The two sides made no attempt to interfere, it added.

Nagorno-Karabakh is within the Republic of Azerbaijan, but most of its population is Armenian.

Shelling in town reported

The Azerbaijani press agency Azerinform reported fresh Armenian missile fire on the Azerbaijani-populated town of Shusha in Nagorno-Karabakh on Sunday night. It said several people had been wounded in another attack, on the settlement of Venjali, early today.

The Republic of Armenia reiterated denials that

its militants had killed 1,000 people in the Azerbaijani-populated town of Khojaly last week and had massacred men, women and children fleeing the carnage across snow-covered mountain passes.

But dozens of bodies scattered over the area lent credence to Azerbaijani reports of a massacre.

Azerbaijani officials and journalists who flew briefly to the region by helicopter brought back three dead children with the backs of their heads blown off. They said shooting by Armenians had prevented them from retrieving more bodies.

“Women and children had been scalped”, said Assad Faradzhev, an aide to Nagorno-Karabakh’s Azerbaijani Governor.

“When we began to pick up bodies, they began firing at us”.

The Azerbaijani militia chief in Agdam, Rashid Mamedov, said: “The bodies are lying there like flocks of sheep. Even the fascists did nothing like this”.

Two trucks filled with bodies

Near Agdam on the outskirts of Nagorno-Karabakh, a Reuters photographer, Frederique Lengaigne, said she had seen two trucks filled with Azerbaijani bodies.

“In the first one I counted 35, and it looked as though there were almost as many in the second”, she said. “Some had their heads cut off, and many had been burned. They were all men, and a few had been wearing khaki uniforms”.

Ethnic violence and economic crisis threaten to tear apart the Commonwealth of Independent States, created by 11 former Soviet republics in December. The commonwealth has been powerless in the face of the ethnic hatred rekindled in



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Evidence from independent sources

the age-old dispute between Christian Armenia and Muslim Azerbaijan, which are members.

Four years of fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh have killed 1,500 to 2,000 people. The last week’s fighting has been the most savage yet.

The 366th Regiment, based in Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, has been caught at the center of fighting in which at least three of its soldiers were killed late last month.

Speaking to his Parliament in Yerevan, the Armenian capital, President Levon Ter-Petrosyan criticized the withdrawal from the enclave of the commonwealth’s last troops.

“This regiment, though not involved in military operations, was a stabilizing factor”, Mr. Ter-Petrosyan said.

The Times, 3 March 1992

“MASSACRE UNCOVERED”

By Anatol Lieven

More than sixty bodies, including those of women and children, have been spotted on hillsides in Nagorno-Karabakh, confirming claims that Armenian troops massacred Azeri refugees. Hundreds are missing.

Scattered amid the withered grass and bushes along a small valley and across the hillside beyond are the bodies of last Wednesday’s massacre by Armenian forces of Azerbaijani refugees.

In all, 31 bodies could be counted at the scene. At least another 31 have been taken into Agdam over the past five days. These figures do not include civilians reported killed when the Armenians stormed the Azerbaijani town of Khodjaly on Tuesday night. The figures also do not include other as yet undiscovered bodies Zahid Jabarov,

a survivor of the massacre, said he saw up to 200 people shot down at the point we visited, and refugees who came by different routes have also told of being shot at repeatedly and of leaving a trail of bodies along their path. Around the bodies we saw were scattered possessions, clothing and personnel documents. The bodies themselves have been preserved by the bitter cold which killed others as they hid in the hills and forest after the massacre. All are the bodies of ordinary people, dressed in the poor, ugly clothing of workers.

Of the 31 we saw, only one policeman and two apparent national volunteers were wearing uniform. All the rest were civilians, including eight women and three small children. Two groups, apparently families, had fallen together, the children cradled in the women’s arms.

Several of them, including one small girl, had terrible head injuries: only her face was left. Survivors have told how they saw Armenians shooting them point blank as they lay on the ground.

The Times, 3 March 1992

“BODIES MARK SITE OF KARABAGH MASSACRE”

A local truce was enforced to allow the Azerbaijanis to collect their dead and any refugees still hiding in the hills and forest. All are the bodies of ordinary people, dressed in the poor, ugly clothing of workers. All the rest were civilians, including eight women and three small children. Two groups, apparently families, had fallen together, the children cradled in the women’s arms. Several of them, including one small girl, had terrible head injuries: only her face was left. Survivors have told how they saw Armenians shooting them point blank as they lay on the ground.



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Evidence from independent sources

BBCI Morning News at 07:37, Tuesday, 3 March 1992

BBC reporter was live on line and he claimed that he saw more than 100 bodies of Azeri men, women and children as well as a baby who are shot dead from their heads from a very short distance.

BBCI Morning News at 08:12, Tuesday, 3 March 1992

Very disturbing picture has shown that many civilian corpses who were picked up from mountain. Reporter said he, cameraman and Western Journalists have seen more than 100 corpses, who are men, women, children, massacred by Armenians. They have been shot dead from their heads as close as 1 meter. Picture also has shown nearly ten bodies (mainly women and children) are shot dead from their heads. Azerbaijan claimed that more than 1000 civilians massacred by Armenian forces.

The Washington Times, 3 March 1992

“ATROCITY REPORTS HORRIFY AZERBAIJAN”

By Brian Killen, Agdam, Azerbaijan

Dozens of bodies lay scattered around the killing fields of Nagorno-Karabakh yesterday, evidence of the worst massacre in four years of fighting over the disputed territory.

Azeri officials who returned from the scene to this town about nine miles away brought back three dead children, the backs of their heads blown off.

At the local mosque, six other bodies lay stretched out, fully clothed, with their limbs frozen in the positions in which they were killed. Their faces were black from the cold.

“Telman!” screamed one woman, beating her breast furiously over the body of her dead father, who lay on his back with his stiff right arm jutting into the air.

Those who returned from a brief visit by helicopter to Khojaly, captured by the Armenians last week, said they had seen similar sights - only more. One Russian journalist said he had counted about 30 bodies within a radius of 50 yards from where the helicopter landed.

Armenia has denied atrocities or mass killings of Azeris after its well-armed irregulars captured Khojaly, the second-biggest Azeri town in Nagorno-Karabakh, last Wednesday. Azerbaijan says 1,000 people were killed.

“Women and children had been scalped”, said Assad Faradzhev, an aide to Karabakh’s Azeri governor.

Mr. Faradzhev said the helicopter, bearing Red Cross markings and escorted by two MI-24 helicopters of the former Soviet army, succeeded in picking up only the three children before Armenian militants opened fire. “When we began to pick up bodies, they started firing at us”, he said.

Mr. Faradzhev said they were on the ground for only 15 minutes.

“The combat helicopters fired red flares to signal that Armenians were approaching and it was time to leave. I was ready to blow myself up if we were captured”, he said pointing to a grenade in his coat pocket.

Reuters photographer Frederique Lengaigne saw two trucks full of Azeri corpses near Agdam.

“In the first one, I counted 35, and it looked as though there were almost as many in the second. Some had their heads cut off and many had been burned. They were all men, and a few had been



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Evidence from independent sources

wearing khaki uniforms”, she said.

In Agdam’s mosque, the dead bodies lay on mattresses under a naked light bulb. People screamed insults at Azerbaijan’s president, Ayaz Mutalibov, saying he had not done enough to protect Karabakh’s Azeri population.

Hundreds of people crowded outside chanting Islamic prayers. Some wept uncontrollably and collapsed near their dead relatives, brought to the town by truck only minutes earlier.

Chilling film of dozens of stiffened corpses scattered over a snowy hillside backed accounts of the slaughter of women and children sobbed out by refugees who made it safely out of the disputed Caucasus enclave.

Azerbaijani television showed pictures of one truckload of bodies brought to the Azeri town of Agdam, some with their faces apparently scratched with knives or their eyes gouged out. One little girl had her arms stretched out as if crying for help.

“The bodies are lying there like flocks of sheep. Even the fascists did nothing like this”, said Agdam militia commander Rashid Mamedov, referring to the Nazi invaders in World War II.

“Give us help to bring back the bodies and show people what happened”, Karabakh Gov. Musa Mamedov pleaded by telephone to the Soviet army base in Gyandzha, Azerbaijan’s second-largest city.

A helicopter pilot who took cameramen and Western correspondents over the area reported seeing some corpses lying around Khojaly and dozens more near the Askeran Gap, a mountain pass only a few miles from Agdam.

The Boston Globe, 3 March 1992

By Paul Quinn-Judge, Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan charged yesterday that Armenian militants massacred men, women and children after forcing them from a town in Nagorno-Karabagh last week.

Azerbaijani officials said 1000 Azeris had been killed in town of Khojaly and that Armenian fighters then slaughtered men, women and children fleeing across snow-covered mountain passes.

Armenian officials disputed the death toll and denied the massacre report.

Journalists on the scene said it was difficult to say exactly how many people had been killed in surrounding areas. But a Reuters photographer said he saw two trucks filled with Azeri corpses, and a Russian journalist reported massacre sites elsewhere in the area.

Azeri officials and journalists who flew briefly to the region by helicopter recovered the bodies of three dead children who had been shot in the head, Reuters said, but Armenians prevented them from retrieving more bodies.

There were growing signs that many civilians were killed during the capture of Khojaly.

Footage shot by Azerbaijan Television Sunday showed about 10 dead bodies, including several women and children, in an improvised morgue in Agdam. An editor at the main television station in Baku said 180 bodies had been recovered so far. A helicopter flying over the vicinity is reported to have seen other corpses, while the BBC quoted a French photographer who said that he had counted 31 dead, including women and children, some who appeared as though they were shot in the head at close range.



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Evidence from independent sources

Meanwhile, the mayor of Khojaly, Elmar Mamedov, said at a news conference in Baku that 1000 people had died in the attack, 200 more were missing, 300 had been taken hostage, and 200 were injured. Armored personnel carriers of the 366th spearheaded the attack, Mamedov charged, and cleared the way for Armenian irregulars.

The Age (Melbourne), 6 March 1992

By Helen Womack, Agdam, Azerbaijan, Thursday

The exact number of victims is still unclear, but there can be little doubt that Azeri civilians were massacred by Armenian Army in the snowy mountains of Nagorno-Karabakh last week.

Refugees from the enclave town of Khojaly, sheltering in the Azeri border town of Agdam, give largely consistent accounts of how Armenians attacked their homes on the night of 25 February, chased those who fled and shot them in the surrounding forests. Yesterday, I saw 75 freshly dug graves in one cemetery in addition to four mutilated corpses we were shown in the mosque when we arrived in Agdam late on Tuesday. I also saw women and children with bullet wounds in a makeshift hospital in a string of railway carriages.

Khojaly, an Azeri settlement in the enclave mostly populated by Armenians, had a population of about 6000. Mr. Rashid Mamedov, Commander of Police in Agdam, said only about 500 escaped to his town. “So where are the rest?” Some might have taken prisoner, he said, or fled. Many bodies were still lying in the mountains because the Azeris were short of helicopters to retrieve them. He believed more than 1000 had perished, some of cold in temperatures as low as minus 10 degrees.

When Azeris saw the Armenians with a convoy

of armoured personnel carriers, they realized they could not hope to defend themselves, and fled into the forests. In the small hours, the massacre started.

Mr. Nasiru, who believes his wife and two children were taken prisoner, repeated what many other refugees have said - that troops of the former Soviet army helped the Armenians to attack Khojaly. “It is not my opinion, I saw it with my own eyes”.

The Sunday Times, 8 March 1992

Thomas Goltz, the first to report the massacre by Armenian soldiers, reports from Agdam

Khojaly used to be a barren Azeri town, with empty shops and treeless dirt roads. Yet it was still home to thousands of Azeri people who, in happier times, tended fields and flocks of geese. Last week it was wiped off the map.

As sickening reports trickled in to the Azerbaijani border town of Agdam, and the bodies piled up in the morgues, there was little doubt that Khojaly and the stark foothills and gullies around it had been the site of the most terrible massacre since the Soviet Union broke apart.

I was the last Westerner to visit Khojaly. That was in January and people were predicting their fate with grim resignation. Zumrut Ezoya, a mother of four on board the helicopter that ferried us into the town, called her community “sitting ducks, ready to get shot”. She and her family were among the victims of the massacre by the Armenians on February 26.

“The Armenians have taken all the outlying villages, one by one, and the government does nothing”, Balakisi Sakikov, 55, a father of five, said. “Next they will drive us out or kill us all”, said Dilbar, his wife. The couple, their three sons and three daughters were killed in the massacre, as



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Evidence from independent sources

were many other people I had spoken to.

“It was close to the Armenian lines we knew we would have to cross. There was a road, and the first units of the column ran across then all hell broke loose. Bullets were raining down from all sides. We had just entered their trap”.

The Azeri defenders picked off one by one. Survivors say that Armenian forces then began a pitiless slaughter, firing at anything moved in the gullies. A video taken by an Azeri cameraman, wailing and crying as he filmed body after body, showed a grizzly trail of death leading towards higher, forested ground where the villagers had sought refuge from the Armenians.

“The Armenians just shot and shot and shot”, said Omar Veyselov, lying in hospital in Agdam “I saw my wife and daughter fall right by me”, he said.

People wandered through the hospital corridors looking for news of the loved ones. Some vented their fury on foreigners: “Where is my daughter, where is my son?” wailed a mother. “Raped. Butchered. Lost”.

Le Mond, 14 March 1992

The foreign journalist in Aghdam saw the women and three scalped children with the pulled off nails among the killed people. This is not “Azerbaijani propaganda”, but reality.

Newsweek, 16 March 1992

“THE FACE OF A MASSACRE”

By Pascal Privat with Steve Le Vine in Moscow

Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary

Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on Feb. 25-26. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped. While the victims’ families mourned.

Time, 16 March 1992

“MASSACRE IN KHOJALY”

By Jill Smolowe

Reported by Yuri Zarakhovich/Moscow

While the details are argued, this much is plain: something grim and unconscionable happened in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly two weeks ago. So far, some 200 dead Azerbaijanis, many of them mutilated, have been transported out of the town tucked inside the Armenian-dominated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for burial in neighboring Azerbaijan. The total number of deaths - the Azerbaijanis claim 1,324 civilians have been slaughtered, most of them women and children - is unknown.

Videotapes circulated by the Azerbaijanis include images of defaced civilians, some of them scalped, others shot in the head...

Svoboda, 12 June 1992

“A TRAGEDY WHOSE PERPETRATORS CANNOT BE VINDICATED”

A report by Memorial, the Moscow-based human rights group, on the massive violations of human rights committed in the taking of Khojaly on the night of 25-26 February 1992 by armed units

The report of Memorial on the massive violations of human rights committed in the taking of Khojaly says of the civilians’ flight from the



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town: “The fugitives fell into ambushes set by the Armenians and came under fire. Some of them nonetheless managed to get into Agdam; others, mostly women and children (exactly how many it is impossible to say), froze to death while lost in the mountains; others still, according to testimony from those who reached Agdam, were taken prisoner near the villages of Pirdzhamal and Nakhichevanik. There is evidence from inhabitants of Khojaly who have already been exchanged that some of the prisoners were shot. Around 200 bodies were brought into Agdam in the space of four days. Scores of the corpses bore traces of profanation. Doctors on a hospital train in Agdam noted no less than four corpses that had been scalped and one that had been beheaded. State forensic examinations were carried out in Agdam on 181 corpses (130 male and 51 female, including 13 children): the findings were that 151 people had died from gunshot wounds, 20 from shrapnel wounds and 10 from blows inflicted with a blunt instrument. The records of the hospital train in Agdam, through which almost all the injured inhabitants or defenders of Khojaly passed, refer to 598 cases of wounds or frostbite (cases of frostbite being in the majority) and one case of live scalping”.

The Independent (London), 12 June 1992

By Frederique Lengaigne/Reuter

Aref Sadikov sat quietly in the shade of a cafe-bar on the Caspian Sea esplanade of Baku and showed a line of stitches in his trousers, torn by an Armenian bullet as he fled the town of Hojaly just over three months ago, writes Hugh Pope.

“I’m still wearing the same clothes, I don’t have any others”, the 51-years-old carpenter said, beginning his account of the Hojaly disaster. “I was wounded in five places, but I am lucky to be alive”.

Mr. Sadikov and his wife were short of food, without electricity for more than a month, and cut off from helicopter flights for 12 days. They sensed the Armenian noose was tightening around the 2,000 to 3,000 people left in the straggling Azeri town on the edge of Karabakh.

“At about 11pm a bombardment started such as we had never heard before, eight or nine kinds of weapons, artillery, heavy machine-guns, the lot”, Mr. Sadikov said.

Soon neighbours were pouring down the street from the direction of the attack. Some huddled in shelters but others started fleeing the town, down a hill, through a stream and through the snow into a forest on the other side.

To escape, the townspeople had to reach the Azeri town of Agdam about 15 miles away. They thought they were going to make it, until at about dawn they reached a bottleneck between the two Azeri villages of Nakhchivanik and Saderak.

“None of my group was hurt up to then... Then we were spotted by a car on the road, and the Armenian outposts started opening fire”, Mr. Sadikov said. Mr. Sadikov said only 10 people from his group of 80 made it through, including his wife and militiaman son. Seven of his immediate relations died, including his 67-years-old elder brother.

“I only had time to reach down and cover his face with his hat”, he said, pulling his own big flat Turkish cap over his eyes. “We have never got any of the bodies back”.

The first groups were lucky to have the benefit of covering fire. One hero of the evacuation, Alif Hajief, was shot dead as he struggled to change a magazine while covering the third group’s crossing, Mr Sadikov said.

Another hero, Elman Memmedov, the mayor of



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Hojali, said he and several others spent the whole day of 26 February in the bushy hillside, surrounded by dead bodies as they tried to keep three Armenian armoured personnel carriers at bay.

As the survivors staggered the last mile into Agdam, there was little comfort in a town from which most of the population was soon to flee.

“The night after we reached the town there was a big Armenian rocket attack. Some people just kept going”, Mr. Sadikov said. “I had to get to the hospital for treatment. I was in a bad way. They even found a bullet in my sock”.

Victims of massacre: An Azeri woman mourns her son, killed in the Hojali massacre in February (left). Nurses struggle in primitive conditions (centre) to save a wounded man in a makeshift operating theatre set up in a train carriage. Grief-stricken relatives in the town of Agdam (right) weep over the coffin of another of the massacre victims. Calculating the final death toll has been complicated because Muslims bury their dead within 24 hours.

The Independent (London), 12 June 1992

“PAINFUL SEARCH”

The gruesome extent of February’s killings of Azeris by Armenians in the town of Hojali is at last emerging in Azerbaijan - about 600 men, women and children dead.

The State Prosecutor, Aydin Rasulov, the chief investigator of a 15-man team looking into what Azerbaijan calls the “Hojali Massacre”, said his figure of 600 people dead was a minimum on preliminary findings. A similar estimate was given by Elman Memmedov, the mayor of Hojali. An even higher one was printed in the Baku newspaper Ordu in May - 479 dead people named and more than 200 bodies reported un-

identified. This figure of nearly 700 dead is quoted as official by Leila Yunusova, the new spokeswoman of the Azeri Ministry of Defence.

Francois Zen Ruffinen, head of delegation of the International Red Cross in Baku, said the Muslim imam of the nearby city of Agdam had reported a figure of 580 bodies received at his mosque from Hojali, most of them civilians. “We did not count the bodies. But the figure seems reasonable. It is no fantasy”, Mr. Zen Ruffinen said. “We have some idea since we gave the body bags and products to wash the dead”.

Mr. Rasulov endeavours to give an unemotional estimate of the number of dead in the massacre. “Don’t get worked up. It will take several months to get a final figure”, the 43-years-old lawyer said at his small office.

Mr. Rasulov knows about these things. It took him two years to reach a firm conclusion that 131 people were killed and 714 wounded when Soviet troops and tanks crushed a nationalist uprising in Baku in January 1990.

Officially, 184 people have so far been certified as dead, being the number of people that could be medically examined by the republic’s forensic department. “This is just a small percentage of the dead”, said Rafiq Youssifov, the republic’s chief forensic scientist. “They were the only bodies brought to us. Remember the chaos and the fact that we are Muslims and have to wash and bury our dead within 24 hours”.

Of these 184 people, 51 were women, and 13 were children under 14 years old.

Gunshots killed 151 people, shrapnel killed 20 and axes or blunt instruments killed 10. Exposure in the highland snows killed the last three. Thirty-three people showed signs of deliberate mutilation, including ears, noses, breasts or pe-



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nises cut off and eyes gouged out, according to Professor Youssifov’s report. Those 184 bodies examined were less than a third of those believed to have been killed, Mr. Rasulov said.

“There were too many bodies of dead and wounded on the ground to count properly: 470-500 in Hojali, 650-700 people by the stream and the road and 85-100 visible around Nakhchivanik village”, Mr. Manafov wrote in a statement countersigned by the helicopter pilot.

“People waved up to us for help. We saw three dead children and one two-years-old alive by one dead woman. The live one was pulling at her arm for the mother to get up. We tried to land but Armenians started a barrage against our helicopter and we had to return”.

There has been no consolidation of the lists and figures in circulation because of the political upheavals of the last few months and the fact that nobody knows exactly who was in Hojali at the time - many inhabitants were displaced from other villages taken over by Armenian forces.

Коммерсантъ (Moscow),
27 February 2002

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Khojaly town (Nagorny Karabakh), inhabited mainly by Azerbaijanis, was subjected to the massive attack from the Armenian side. The units of the Russian 366th infantry guards regiment took part in the attack. As a result, 613 persons dead, 487 wounded, 1275 imprisoned, 150 persons are missing. The Khojaly events have radically changed the nature of the conflict – afterwards the military operations from both sides have actually turned into ethnic cleansings.



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Evidence from independent sources

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1993

“THE FORMER SOVIET UNION: AZERBAIJAN”

...During the winter of 1992, Armenian forces went on the offensive, forcing almost the entire Azerbaijani population of the enclave to flee, and committing unconscionable acts of violence against civilians as they fled. The most notorious of these attacks occurred on February 25 in the village of Khojaly. A large column of residents, accompanied by a few dozen retreating fighters, fled the city as it fell to Armenian forces. As they approached the border with Azerbaijan, they came across an Armenian military post and were cruelly fired upon. At least 161 civilians are known to have been murdered in this incident, although Azerbaijani officials estimate that about 800 perished. Armenian forces killed unarmed civilians and soldiers who were hors de combat, and looted and sometimes burned homes...

*Human Rights Watch/Helsinki,
December 1994*

“AZERBAIJAN: SEVEN YEARS OF CONFLICT IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH”

The massacre of hundreds of Azeri civilians in Khojali, NKAO, by Karabakh forces with alleged support of the 366th Regiment of the Russian army» was one of the major events characterized the war in 1992.

In February 1992, Karabakh Armenian forces – reportedly backed by soldiers from the 366th Motor Rifle Regiment of the Russian Army – seized the Azeri-populated town of Khojali. More than 200 civilians were killed in the attack, the largest massacre to date in the conflict. Footnote 28: There are no exact figures for the num-

ber of Azeri civilians killed because Karabakh Armenian forces gained control of the area after the massacre. While it is widely accepted that 200 hundred Azeris were murdered, as many as 500-1000 may have died.

*Human Rights Watch/Helsinki,
24 March 1997*

“LETTER BY HOLLY CARTNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH/HELSINKI, ADDRESSED TO MR. ALEXANDER ARZOUMANYAN, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA”

Dear Mr. Arzoumanyan,

As Executive Director of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki (formerly Helsinki Watch), I wish to respond to the March 3 Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement regarding the 1992 slaughter of Azeri civilians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno Karabakh. In it, the Ministry argues that the Popular Front of Azerbaijan was responsible for the civilian deaths, supporting this argument by referring to an interview with former President Ayaz Mutalibov and, incredibly, to a 1992 report by our organization. The report, Bloodshed in the Caucasus: Escalation of the Armed Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, documents violations of humanitarian law in the conflict committed by both Azerbaijani and Karabakh Armenian forces. Neither our overview and version of the events, nor the individual interviews with Azeri refugees from Khojaly and other villages in Nagorno Karabakh published in the report could possibly support the notion that Azerbaijani forces willfully prevented the evacuation of civilians or that they shot their own citizens. We are deeply distressed that the Ministry has, wittingly or unwittingly, linked our report to views which we reject and which our report does not reflect.

The Ministry statement reads: “... the militia of the Azerbaijani National Front actively ob-



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structed and actually prevented the exodus of the local population through the mountain passages specifically left open by Karabakh Armenians to facilitate the flight of the civilian population. On this matter, the September 1992 Helsinki Watch non-governmental organization report quotes an Azerbaijani woman who says that Armenians had notified the Azerbaijani civilian population to leave the town with white flags raised, in fact the Azerbaijani militia shot those who attempted to flee.”

Our report indeed found that many residents of Khojaly may have had advance warning of the impending military operation, since Armenian forces had given an ultimatum to Alif Gajiyev, then head of the Khojaly militia, who in turn warned civilians. Our research and that of the Memorial Human Rights Center found that the retreating militia fled Khojaly along with some of the large groups of fleeing civilians. Our report noted that by remaining armed and in uniform, the Azerbaijani militia may be considered as combatants and thus endangered fleeing civilians, even if their intent had been to protect them.

Yet we place direct responsibility for the civilian deaths with Karabakh Armenian forces. Indeed, neither our report nor that of Memorial includes any evidence to support the argument that Azerbaijani forces obstructed the flight of, or fired on Azeri civilians. For clarity’s sake I cite our 1992 report (page 24):

“ ... Thus, a party that intersperses combatants with fleeing civilians puts those civilians at risk and violates its obligation to protect its own civilians... [T]he attacking party [i.e., Karabakh Armenian forces] is still obliged to take precautionary measures to avoid or minimize civilian casualties. In particular, the party must suspend an attack if it becomes apparent that the attack may be expected to cause civilian casualties that are excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.”

“The circumstances surrounding the attack ... on those fleeing Khojaly indicate that [Karabakh] Armenian forces and the troops of the 366th CIS

regiment ... deliberately disregarded this customary law restraint on attacks. Nagorno Karabakh officials and fighters clearly expected the inhabitants of Khojaly to flee since they claim to have informed the town that a corridor would be left open to allow for their safe passage... Under these circumstances, the killing of fleeing combatants could not justify the foreseeable large number of civilian casualties.”

Please allow me to clarify another reference to our 1992 report, regarding the 1988 Sumgait pogrom. Our report reads: “The most brutal of these events was the anti-Armenian pogrom in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, which took the lives of thirty-two Armenians, wounded hundreds more, and intensified the fears of ethnic Armenians living in other parts of Azerbaijan,” which differs from the citation used in the Ministry statement. We further cited the estimate of 300,000 – 350,000 ethnic Armenians who fled Azerbaijan, not 600,000 as the Ministry statement seemed to attribute to our report.

We welcome the use of our reports by governments and intergovernmental organizations, and we sincerely hope that there will be no further misrepresentation regarding the contents of our 1992 report.

I thank you for your attention.
Yours sincerely,

Holly Cartner
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch/Helsinki

cc: Mr. Hasan Hasanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Mr. Rouben Shugarian, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the United States
Mr. Hafiz Pashayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States
Ambassador Peter Tomsen, United States Ambassador to Armenia
Ambassador Richard Kauzlarich, United States Ambassador to Azerbaijan.



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STATEMENTS AND RECORDS OF STATE AGENCIES, OFFICIALS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS

*Congressman Dan Burton's speech in the US House of Representatives,
17 February 2005*

Mr. Burton of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, for years a number of distinguished Members of this House have come to the Floor of this Chamber every April to commemorate the so-called Armenian Genocide - the exact details of which are still very much under debate today almost 90 years after the events. Ironically and tragically, none of these Members has ever once mentioned the ethnic cleansing carried out by the Armenians during the Armenia-Azerbaijan war which ended a mere decade ago.

Khojaly was a little known small town in Azerbaijan until February 1992. Today it no longer exists, and for people of Azerbaijan and the region, the word “Khojaly” has become synonymous with pain, sorrow, and cruelty. On February 26, 1992, the world ended for the people of Khojaly when Armenian troops supported by a Russian infantry regiment did not just attack the town but they razed it to the ground. In the process the Armenians brutally murdered 613 people, annihilated whole families, captured 1275 people, left 1,000 civilians maimed or crippled, and another 150 people unaccounted for in their wake. Memorial, a Russian human rights group, reported that “scores of the corpses bore traces of profanation. Doctors on a hospital train in Agdam noted no less than four corpses that had been scalped and one that had been beheaded... and one case of live scalping.” Various other witnesses reported horrifying details of the massacre. The late Azerbaijani journalist Chingiz Mustafayev, who was the first to film the after-

math of the massacre, wrote an account of what he saw. He said, “Some children were found with severed ears; the skin had been cut from the left side of an elderly woman’s face; and men had been scalped.”

Human Rights Watch called the tragedy at the time “the largest massacre to date in the conflict.” The New York Times wrote about “truckloads of bodies” and described acts of “scalping.”

This savage cruelty against innocent women, children and the elderly is unfathomable in and of itself but the senseless brutality did not stop with Khojaly. Khojaly was simply the first. In fact, the level of brutality and the unprecedented atrocities committed at Khojaly set a pattern of destruction and ethnic cleansing that Armenian troops would adhere to for the remainder of the war. On November 29, 1993, Newsweek quoted a senior US Government official as saying “What we see now is a systematic destruction of every village in their (the Armenians) way. It’s vandalism.”

This year, as they have every year since the massacre, the leaders of Azerbaijan’s Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities issue appeals on the eve of commemoration of the massacre of Khojaly urging the international community to condemn the February 26, 1992 bloodshed, facilitate liberation of the occupied territories and repatriation of the displaced communities.

And every year, those residents of Khojaly, who survived the massacre - many still scattered among one million refugees and displaced persons in camps around Azerbaijan - appeal with pain and hope to the international community to hold Armenia responsible for this crime. I am pleased to say that on January 25, 2005 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe overwhelmingly adopted a resolution highlighting that “considerable parts of Azerbaijan’s ter-



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Statements and records of state agencies, officials and parliamentarians

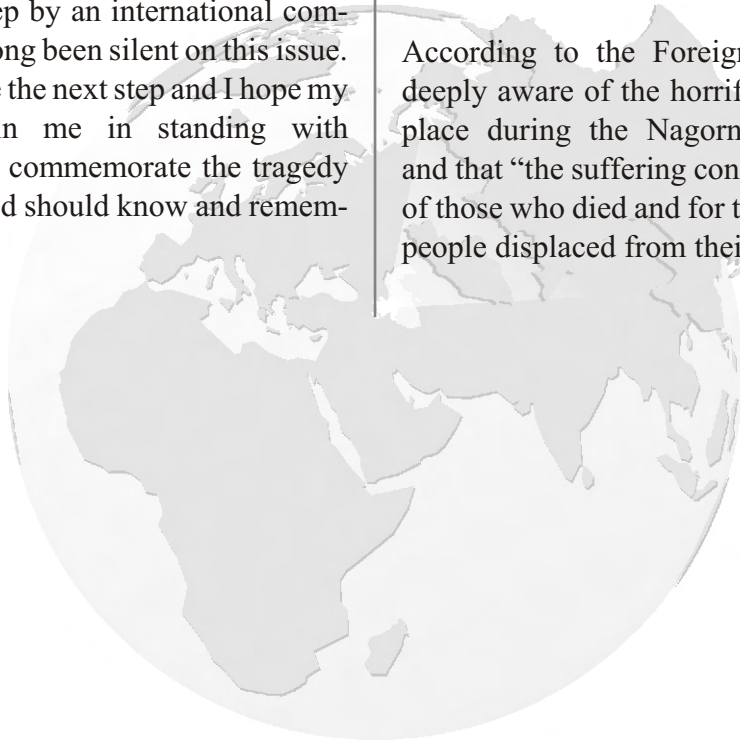
ritory are still occupied by the Armenian forces and separatist forces are still in control of the Nagorno-Karabakh region.” It also expressed concern that the military action between 1988 and 1994 and the widespread ethnic hostilities which preceded it, “led to large-scale ethnic expulsion and the creation of mono-ethnic areas which resemble the terrible concept of ethnic cleansing.”

Mr. Speaker, this is not the ringing condemnation that the survivors of Khojaly deserve but it is an important first step by an international community that has too long been silent on this issue. Congress should take the next step and I hope my colleagues will join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate the tragedy of Khojaly. The world should know and remember.

Letter of Britain’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the Vatan Society,
24 February 2005

In its letter to the Vatan Society Britain’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office stated inter alia that “[w]hat happened at Khodjaly stands out as an appalling tragedy in a list of many that occurred during the course of the war. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of the victims and our assurance that their suffering will not be forgotten”.

According to the Foreign Office, the UK is deeply aware of the horrific incidents that took place during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and that “the suffering continues for the families of those who died and for the many thousands of people displaced from their homes”.





ADDITIONAL SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Charles van der Leeuw, Azerbaijan: A quest for identity: a short history (New York: St. Martin Press, 2000), p. 171

In the early morning of February 26, the Artsakh Self-Defence Forces stormed the town of Khojaly, on the road between Stepanakert and Agdam, which appeared to have been left almost undefended. Taken by surprise, the population tried to escape but a large number were caught on the way, many slaughtered then and there and many more taken to perish under torture. In total, at least a thousand civilians are thought to have died in the atrocity or else have been reported missing with no hope of survival. More than half of the victims consisted of women, children and elderly.

Thomas de Waal, Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through peace and war (New York & London: New York University Press, 2003), pp. 169-172

Beginning in the New Year of 1992, the Armenians began to break out of the Karabakhi capital, Stepanakert. They captured the Azerbaijani villages that surrounded the town, expelling the hundreds of Azerbaijanis who remained there. Their main target was now Khojaly...

The Armenian assault began on the night of 25-26 February, a date probably chosen to mark the anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms four years earlier. Armored vehicles from the Soviet 366th Regiment lent their support. They surrounded Khojaly on three sides before Armenian fighters went in and overwhelmed the local defenders...

In the middle of the night, a large crowd fled through the woods, which were ankle-deep in snow, and started to descend the valley of the small Gargar river. In early morning, the crowd of Khojaly civilians, interspersed with a few militiamen, emerged onto open ground near the Armenian village of Nakhchivanik. There they were hit by a wall of gunfire from Armenian fighters on the hillside above... More fleeing civilians kept on coming onto a scene of appalling carnage...

An Armenian police officer, Major Valery Babayan, suggested revenge as a motive. He told the American reporter Paul Quinn-Judge that many of the fighters who had taken part in the Khojaly attack “originally came from Sumgait and places like that”.¹

Asked about the taking of Khojaly, the Armenian military leader Serzh Sarkisian² said carefully, “We don’t speak loudly about these things”. “A lot was exaggerated” in the casualties and the fleeing Azerbaijanis had put up armed resistance, he claimed. Sarkisian’s summation of what had happened, however, was more honest and more brutal:

But I think the main point is something different. Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]. And that’s what happened. And we should also take into account that amongst those boys were people who had fled from Baku and Sumgait.

Sarkisian’s account throws a different light on the worst massacre of the Karabakh war, suggesting that the killings may, at least in part, have been a deliberate act of mass killing as intimidation”.

1 See Paul Quinn-Judge, “Armenians, Azerbaijanis tell of terror; Behind an alleged massacre, a long trail of personal revenge”, *Boston Globe*, 15 March 1992.

2 Currently takes up the post of the Defense Minister of Armenia.



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Additional sources and references

Ednan Agaev, Azerbaijan: the next battleground between EAST and WEST (Paris: Office d’Edition Impression Librairie, F.-X. de Guibert, 2005), pp. 121-122

Located a stone’s throw from Hankendy (Spedanaker for the Armenians), the capital of Upper Karabakh, the Azerbaijani city of Khodzjali, population 2,500, has the only airport in the enclave. A strategic place par excellence in the conflict, Khodzjali piqued the interest of Armenia, which decided to appropriate the city by means of force. During the night of February 25

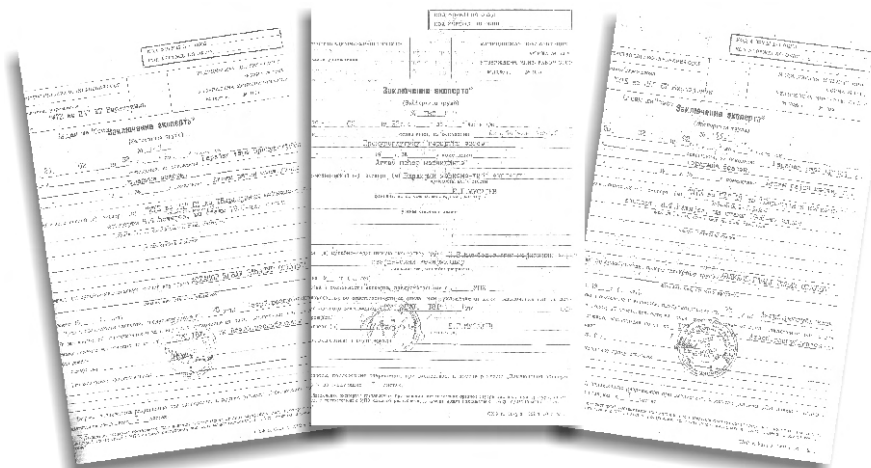
to 26th, 1992, militia of the Autonomous Republic of Upper Karabakh, backed by the motorized infantry of the 366th regiment of the ex-Soviet Union, the majority of its officers are Armenian in origin-shelled the city. Then, carrying out a policy of ethnic cleansing, decided by Armenia against Azerbaijan, mounted a bloody attack.

After a few hours of fierce combat, Khodzjali surrendered. It was completely destroyed, a shell of a town, a ghost city. Its luckiest inhabitants were able to escape, but the losses were very heavy: 613 people, of which 63 were children, 106 women and 70 aged people-were killed, and 487 others seriously wounded.





FORENSIC MEDICAL EXAMINATION REPORTS¹



Women

Name and surname: Firangul Karimova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: F.J.Abbasov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I All limbs, auricles, breasts, eyeballs are missing. Wound with clotted blood on the chest, the size of 25 x 30 cm.
- II All the mentioned injuries were inflicted by a sharp weapon and resulted in blood flow.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: H.Humbatova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

¹ Prepared on the basis of the records of the criminal case investigating by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wound on the chest. Eyeballs and mammary glands are missing. Round-shaped wounds over the area of eye-pits, eyeballs, chest and mammary glands.
- II Bullet wound was caused by stray bullet which entered the thoracic cavity. According to the morphological symptoms of the wounds eyeballs and mammary glands were excised by a sharp weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Tamara Mammadova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wounds on the back. Eyeballs and mammary glands are missing.
- II Bullet wounds on the back were caused by the fire-arms. According to the morphological symptoms of the wounds on the site of the eyeballs and mammary glands they were inflicted by a sharp weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Dilara Nuraliyeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Both eyes and teeth are missing. Perforating wounds on the chest.
- II Both eyes and teeth were put out by a blunt object. Perforating wounds on the chest were caused by numerous bullets and this resulted in intraabdominal injury and internal hemorrhage.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Dilara Azimova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Four bullet wounds the chest, perforating wound on the left side of the chest.
- II Injuries are the result of the fire directed from both the front and back sides. The wound on the left side of the chest was caused by explosive bullet and led to internal hemorrhage and blood flow.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Dilara Hanifayeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Two bullet wounds on the left side of the chest, four bullet wounds on the right hip and on the right shin. One cut wound on the left side of the chest.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms. The cut wound was inflicted by a sharp weapon.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Teyube Allahverdiyeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I One bullet wound on the forehead, one bullet wound on the right sinciput, and one bullet wound on the chest.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms.



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Forensic medical examination reports

- III These injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Zahra Guliyeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Two bullet wounds on the chest.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms and led to blood flow and shock.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: Shafiga Zeynalova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: I.Bagirov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Seven perforating wounds on the chest. First degree frostbite on the leg toes.
- II Perforating wounds were caused by stray bullets and led to internal injury.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Rafiga Jafarova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Destruction and flatterng of skeleton from head to pelvis, destruction of internal organs and brain, injuries in the form of numerous parallel horizontal sores.



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- II Injuries are the result of the compression of the body by heavy items, such as caterpillar, which implies that it was crushed by a tank.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Elgunun Hasanova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: I.A.Bagirov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Multiple fractures of bones, wounds on the head, chest, pelvis and limbs, scrapes on the face, body and limbs. Bullet wound on the left hip.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object and indicate that the body was compressed by heavy object, such as caterpillar, which implies that it was crushed by tank. Bullet wound was caused by the fire-arms.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Fitat Hasanova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: I.A.Bagirov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Three wounds on the head, fracture of cranium, numerous bruises on the face and body, eyeballs are missing.
- II Injuries on the head and body were inflicted by a blunt object. Eyeballs were put out by a sharp weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Gulchohra Hasanova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh



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Performed by: I.A.Bagirov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wounds on the chest and upper side of abdomen. The joint on the left upper limb is missing. Frostbite of foots and toes.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms. The joint was excised by a sharp weapon. Frostbite is the result of the body being exposed to extremely low temperature.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Nazila Shadmanova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 5 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: I.A.Bagirov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Eight bullet wounds on the back, fractures of the 6th - 10th ribs.
- II Injuries were caused by the fire-arms and led to internal injury, blood flow and shock.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: Saadat Abishova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: L.A.Abbasov medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Sanatorium of the Naftalan city (Russian Federation)

Conclusion:

- I Injuries on the left hand and on the left side of the forehead.
- II Injuries were inflicted by a blow of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Halala Abdullayeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 18 September 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 1 March 1992
Performed by: M.S.Ismayilov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Outpatient clinic

Conclusion:

- I First-degree frostbite of the lower part of both legs.
- II Frostbite is the result of the body being exposed to extremely low temperature.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to long-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Maruza Mammadova

Forensic medical examination performed on: 20 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: F.Ch.Abbasov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Eyes are put out, mammary glands and nose are excised.
- II Injuries were inflicted by a sharp weapon and led to blood flow and shock.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: Zamina Valiyeva

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: G.Jafarov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of the Barda district

Conclusion:

- I First- and second-degree frostbite of both legs.
- II Frostbite is the result of the body being exposed to extremely low temperature.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Men

Name and surname: Igbal Aslanov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Second-degree burns on the whole surface of body, both eyes and male genital organs are excised. Destruction of the cranium. Perforating bullet wounds on the chest.
- II Burns are result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames. Wounds were inflicted with both blunt and sharp weapons. Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Ch.Farzaliyev

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Third-degree burns on about 100% of the head, body, upper and lower limbs surface, ears and lips completely carbonized.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: A.Huseynov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city



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Conclusion:

- I Third-degree burns on about 100% of the head, body, upper and lower limbs surface, fourth-degree burns on the right hand and toes.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: J.Rajabov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Third-degree burns on the head, body, upper and lower limbs.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Gachay Khalilov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Destruction of cranial bones. Bullet wounds on the chest.
- II Destruction of cranial bones was caused by a blow of a blunt object. Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Agayari Imani

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor



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Forensic medical examination reports

Performed by: of the Republic of Azerbaijan
E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Third- and forth-degree burns on about 100% of head and body surface.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: S.Huseynov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: E.Musayev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Third- and forth-degree burns on about 100% of head, body, upped and lower limbs surface.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: Natig Azimov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I First- and second-degree burns on the parts of the body, perforating bullet wound on the back. The male genital organs are excised.
- II Burns are caused by the fire-arms. Perforating wound on the back is the result of the long distance fire. The excision of male genital organs was caused by a thrust weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Tavakkul Alakbarov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Ten perforating wounds on the chest and abdomen, two bullet wounds on both the right and left sides of the back.
- II Perforating wounds were caused by a thrust weapon.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Telman Orudjov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
Performed by: N.Ch.Amanov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Wound on the head, bruises on the chest and multiple fractures of ribs.
- II Wounds were caused by the fire-arms and by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Bahadur Salimov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Second- and third-degree burns on the whole body surface, fracture of the cranium. Perforating wound on the chest, male genital organs are excised.
- II Burns were caused by the fire-arms. Fracture of the cranium was caused by a blunt object. Perforating wound on the chest was caused by the fire-arm. Male genital organs were excised by a sharp weapon.



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III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Bahman Bahmanov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Nine cut wounds on the back and chest, one bullet wound on the left side of the chest.
- II Cut wounds were inflicted by a sharp weapon. Bullet wound was caused by the fire-arms.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Ali Abishov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: M.F.Khajiyeu, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Fractures of upper and lower limbs. Multiple fractures of ribs.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death

Name and surname: Samuray Karimov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 26 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh
Performed by: F.J.Abbasov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I One bullet wound on the chest filled with bullet cartridge, eyeballs are missing, wounds on the back.
- II Bullet wound on the chest was caused by the fire-arms, eyeballs were put out by a sharp weapon, wounds on the back were inflicted by blows with bottle.



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- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Eldar Mammadov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Three bullet wounds on the right ear and on the right cheek. Two injuries on the front and on the left side of the forehead. Cut wounds under the right and left collar-bones, on the left breast and on the both 6th and 7th left ribs.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms. Cut wounds were inflicted by a blunt object.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Etibar Najafov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: E.I.Alakbarov, medical forensic expert

Conclusion:

- I Injuries on the left hip, toes are splintered.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to long-lasting decay of health.

Name and surname: Elshan Allahverdiev

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: U.M. Mikayilov, medical forensic expert



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Conclusion:

- I The chest is compressed, closed craniocerebral injury, concussion of the brain.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as severe injuries and lead to long-lasting decay of health.

Name and surname: Elbrus Abbasov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: L.A.Abbasov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Sanatorium of the Naftalan city (Russian Federation)

Conclusion:

- I Injuries on the fifth finger of the right hand and on both haunches. Scars on the front side of the chest.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object, scars are the result of blows of a hot object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Gayyum Aslanov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: A.Z.Sultanov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of the Agdjabedi district

Conclusion:

- I Fractures of 6th, 7th and 8th left ribs, alimentary cachexy.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as severe injuries and lead to long-lasting decay of health.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Jamal Orujov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: V.Xidirov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Republican Clinical Hospital

Conclusion:

- I Avulsed wound under the right eye, injuries on the head.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Yashar Alammadov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: I.Ch.Aliyev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of the Yevlakh district

Conclusion:

- I Bruises on the body, simple fracture of the fifth finger of the right hand, concussion of the brain, closed craniocerebral injury.
- II These injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Jumali Usmanov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 April 1992
On the basis of the decision of: I.I.Ahmadov, Assistant of the Public Prosecutor of the Saatly district
Performed by: N.J.Amanov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Outpatient clinic



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Conclusion:

- I Simple fracture of the left hand, amputation of the finger-nail of the left hand, four wounds on the left hand, chest and back.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object and bludgeon, as well as by kicks and punch.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to long-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Yusif Karimov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: N.G. Iskandarov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of the Aghdash district

Conclusion:

- I Craniocerebral injury, severe concussion of the brain.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as severe injuries and lead to long-lasting decay of health.

Name and surname: Yavar Aliyev

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: A.A.Haziyev, medical forensic expert

Conclusion:

- I Infectious bullet wounds on the left elbow and on the right haunch.
- II Injuries were caused by the fire-arms.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to long-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Sharif Mammadov

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan



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Performed by: G.Jafarov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination
Department of the Barda district.

Conclusion:

- I Excision of the fifth finger of the left hand, fractures of 3rd and 4th fingers.
- II Injuries were inflicted by both sharp and blunt objects and led to infection.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to long-term decay of health.

Children

Name and surname: Aynura Zeynalova (six years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 27 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wounds on the left temple and left upper arm caused by the fire-arms.
- II Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- III The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.

Name and surname: Aysel Mehdiyeva (six years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Two bullet wounds on the chest.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock
- IV The foregoing injuries imminently caused death.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Halala Orudjeva (three years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The morgue of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Three bullet wounds on the head, chest and left hip, one cut wound on the heart.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms and led to complete destruction of the head, cut wound was inflicted by a sharp weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name and surname: Aynur Zeynalova (six years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 28 February 1992
Performed by: S.V.Gasimov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Two bullet wounds and one avulsed wound on the chest, one injury on the left side of the forehead.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by the fire-arms, avulsed wound was caused by a sharp weapon. Injury on the forehead was caused by shackles.
- III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- IV The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted death.

Name and surname: Ziya Abbasov (two years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 3 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: A.A.Mammadov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Republican Neurosurgeon Hospital



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Conclusion:

- I One wound on the surface of the right cheek-bone and ear.
- II Injury was caused by bullet from the fire-arm.
- III The described injury is diagnosed as mean injury and lead to short-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Salatin Ahmadova (one year old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 19 September 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 3 March 1992
Performed by: I.Azmammadov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Emergency clinic

Conclusion:

- I First- and second-degree frostbite of both leg's toes.
- II Frostbite is the result of the body being exposed to extremely low temperature.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to long-term decay of health.

Name and surname: Gunel Hamzayeva (three years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 16 December 1992
On the basis of the decision of: Z.B.Allahverdiyev, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: I.K.Mammadov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of the Beylagan district

Conclusion:

- I Wound on the left side of the chest.
- II This wound was caused by missile fragment.
- III The described injury is diagnosed as trivial injury and lead to short-term decay of health.



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Forensic medical examination reports

Name and surname: Nigar Amirova (four years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 29 January 1993
On the basis of the decision of: Z.B.Allahverdiyev, Investigator for Particularly Important cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 16 December 1992
Performed by: J.T.Allahverdiyev, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: General Ambulatory and Pathology and Forensic Examination Department

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wounds on the left haunch and on the right hip.
- II Injuries were caused by the fire-arms.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and lead to short-term decay of health.

Elderly

Name and surname: Mamad Mammadov (sixty years old)

Forensic medical examination performed on: 1 March 1992
On the basis of the decision of: E.A.Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Performed by: M.S.Ismayilov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: The mosque of the Aghdam city

Conclusion:

- I Simple fractures of 9th and 10th hips, wound on the head.
- II Injuries were inflicted by blows of a blunt object.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and lead to short-term decay of health



KHOJALY TRAGEDY

TESTIMONIES OF THE INHABITANTS OF KHOJALY TAKEN HOSTAGE BY THE ARMENIAN SIDE¹

Elshad Allahverdi Agayev:

After the seizure of Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 I had to leave the town with my family. But during the skirmish we lost each other. Later I began to look for them but could find only my sister Durdana wounded in her leg in the place called Garagaya in the Aghdam district.

On 26 February 1992, at about 8.00-9.00 a.m., the Armenians opened fire, and we tried to escape and hide in the trench towards Garagaya along with 5-6 men, but were surrounded and captured. Abusing and beating us with the barrels of machine guns, pieces of wood and iron they forced us to walk by foot to the highway in Askeran. The Armenians were throwing stones, pieces of wood and shooting over our heads. They were beating and torturing me and my sister Durdana for about thirty minutes, and after that they brought us to the isolator of the Askeran Police Department and threw to the cell full of people. Here they tortured us more cruelly. Tortures were led by Karo, an Armenian who was the head of the Fire Prevention Division at that Department. Karo with the other Armenians in military uniform were beating people in the cells with batons, barrels of machine guns, pieces of wood and iron, dragging women by hair to the corridors, raping and then throwing to separate cells.

On 26 February 1992, at about 12.00-13.00 a.m., 7-8 drunk Armenians in military uniform entered the cell and began to beat Zulfi, Elkhan, Nasib,

Khagani and 30-40 inhabitants of Khojaly and the Garadagli village, whose names I can't remember now. One Armenian hit my mouth with the barrel of AKM machine gun and torn my upper lip. I have a scar left as a result of that injury. The inhabitant of Khojaly, tractor driver Huseyn, went mad after being beaten by the Armenians, he was laughing all the time and that's why they killed him there. When the Armenians found out that the other inhabitant of Khojaly Elkhan was “Alazan” rifleman, they cut his belly with a knife and took him somewhere. Later we heard that Elkhan had died from the received injuries. They took young boy Khagani somewhere, and we haven't heard anything about him since then. They took machine-gunner Natig somewhere too.

I remember that on 27 February 1992 I was brought to the cell of that Department. Here the Armenians, following Karo's instructions, undressed people and began to beat them with pieces of iron until they lost consciousness. That night they were beating me too, but before they started I saw that they had brought into the cell a young boy Mobil who had worked at the bread shop in Khojaly. Karo wounded Mobil's leg from the fire-arm and he fell down. Then they began to beat him. I don't know what happened to him later. I think they killed him.

The Armenians by pincers tore the beard from the one side of Ilgar's face, leaving the other hairy, and then began to mock and abuse him. Following Karo's instructions, they did not give us bread and water.

On 1 March 1992 Karo shot Shahmali's son Faiq in the yard of that Police Department for not naming Ganja as “Kirovabad”. I didn't see it by myself, but I learnt that from the inhabitants of Khojaly whose names I can't remember now. I heard Faiq's screams while Karo and his assistants were torturing him in the adjacent cell. He

¹ Prepared on the basis of the records of the criminal case investigating by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan.



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was a very brave man. He abused the Armenians for their cruelty, and they began to torture him more severely.

In March 1992 they put me, my sister Durdana and two 12-13- years-old girls from Khojaly, whom I did not know, in UAZ car and brought us to the Azerbaijan side.

Yashar Shahmali Alimammadov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, after the seizure of Khojaly, I had to leave the town with my wife Saida, six-years-old son Siraj, my father Shahmali, my cousin Saadat and other relatives. On 27 February 1992, at about 10.00-11.00 a.m., an armed Armenians surrounded and captured us near the Pirjamal village. They put sacks on our heads and brought somewhere in a car. When they took sacks away we found ourselves in the stable where cattle, donkeys and sheep were kept. There I saw about 200-300 inhabitants of Khojaly, including women and elderly, as well as my son, my father-in-law Jamil, my brother Faiq and the others. Then they brought my brother Namiq. The Armenians took money, gold, jewelry and other valuable things away from people, put them in a big pot and said that for them they would buy weapons and kill Azerbaijanis.

That day, at 16:00 p.m., about 20 bearded men in both civil and military uniforms entered the stable with pieces of reinforcing steel, wood and machine guns, divided us into several groups and began to beat cruelly by hitting our heads, backs and legs. They were pushing people one to another. There were people with broken ribs, teeth and injured heads. By pincers they also pulled out golden teeth. They hit me in my nose with a barrel of machine gun and broke it. I lost consciousness because of pain and, after coming to senses, could not see for a while. After beating us cruelly and threatening with the fire-arms, they made us stand on one foot for hours and eat soil

and cattle dung.

On 1 March 1992 they brought us to the Askeran Police Department where we were met by police officer Karo who had worked there as the head of the Fire Prevention Division. Karo told me that I would die. They gathered us in the temporary cell and began to search us. Karo ordered me, Isa and Elkhan to stay in the cell and sent the others out. When my son started to cry wishing to stay with me, he cruelly beat him. He knocked me down by blowing with a barrel of pistol and ordered about 10-12 bearded Armenians to beat me with a baton. I lost consciousness because of these blows. When I came to senses, Elkhan told me that they had been blowing me with a baton for more than 50 times, and even when I had lost consciousness. Early in the morning on 2 March 1992 they released us.

After returning from captivity, I heard from Khojaly inhabitants Valeh, my uncle Mammad, Jamil, Janan (now dead), Ilgar, Ilham (now dead), Durdana (she worked as the telephone operator at the Khojaly post office), and his brother Elshad, who were taken hostage at the Askeran Police Department, what had happened with Faiq. Thus, according to them, Karo asked my brother Faiq where he had studied. After he answered “in Ganja”, Karo ordered to name it “Kirovabad”, but Faiq again repeated “Ganja”. Then Karo asked Faiq: “To whom does Karabakh belong?”, and Faig answered: “Karabakh belongs to us”. After that Karo took his gun out and shot at his chest and throat in the yard of the Police Department and thus killed him.

At present I am the second group invalid because of the injuries received in the captivity.

Zulfu Ibrahim Mammadov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians surrounded and shelled Khojaly



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town. With my family we tried to break out of the encirclement, but the Armenians captured us and put into the cell. There were more than 25 of my countrymen. The Armenians tortured and beat us every day; some of us were killed, shot and beheaded. I remember the following:

1. Fakhraddin Bahadir Salimov, born in 1960 - one Armenian killed him hitting his head with a barrel of machine gun.
2. Elkhan Nasib, born in 1962 – the Armenians took him from the cell and shot.
3. Mobil, born in 1968 – the Armenians killed him cruelly by kicking and beating with batons and barrels of machine gun.
4. 55-years-old Huseyn (his mother’s name was Marish) – the Armenians took him from our cell to the adjacent one, began to beat him cruelly and then shot.
5. Vidadi, born in 1965, and Murvat, born in 1974 - after taking away from the cell the Armenians beheaded them.
6. My neighbor Faiq Shahmali, born in 1969 - was shot by Armenian captain Karo.

At the time we were in Khojaly Karo was known as a hangman. He was the head of the Fire Prevention Division. He was tall, broad-shouldered and had black moustache.

Ilgar Niyaz Abishov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 Armenians surrounded and shelled Khojaly. We were on duty that time. During the exchange of fire with the Armenians my cousin Elshad was shot in his head. My mother, four brothers, my aunt’s grandsons Zahir, Elmar, his son Klos, Mobil, Guleysha and I were surrounded near the Askeran district. We were brought to the Askeran Police Department, and when we tried to escape they had shot my aunt’s grandson from behind. They tortured us by kicking and beating with batons and barrels of machine guns. A police officer Karo tortured me severely. Natiq,

Mehman and Arif were there at the time we were brought. They were also subjected to tortures. About 8 days later they brought us to the place called Gala and cruelly beat us again. There were Mirza, Yunus, Huseyn, Ibrahim, Ali, my brothers Ilham and Saadat, and 2 men from Garadagli. They exchanged us with the help of Allahverdi Bagirov.

Mammad Jumshud Mammadov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, after the seizure of Khojaly by the Armenians, I had to flee away with the inhabitants of the town. With Janan Orujov, Faig Alimammadov, Kamil Mammadov, Kamal, Isa, Ilgar Abishov, Yashar Alimammadov, Mahammad Mammadov, and a group of people, whose names I forgot, we hid in the forest and stayed there till 28 February 1992. That night the Armenians captured me and brought to the farm in Nakhchevanik. There I learnt that they had killed Mammad after capturing him and that the other hostages were kept there. Karo Babayan headed those who captured us. He was the head of the Fire Prevention Division and a police captain. He tortured people who were held there. There were women and children among us. On 14 March 1992 they gathered 21 hostages in the room of the passport office of the Askeran Police Department. The Armenians from Karo’s group were beating us in that room. Later on that day they brought us back to the Azerbaijani side. Before exchanging us Karo Babayan killed Faiq Alimammadov in the yard of the Department. My brother Jamil Jumshud Mammadov can confirm this.

Valeh Sahib Huseynov:

Seeing the seizure of Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, at about 23.00 p.m., with my wife Saadat, my uncle Zakariyya Guliyev, his wife Shura, their sons Akbar, Taleh, their grandchildren Sevinj and Samir we began to flee to Askeran. When we reached the space between



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Shelli and Dahra the Armenians surrounded us and opened the fire. We tried to hide fleeing away in different directions. Then we lost each other. When I reached Shelli I could find my wife among those who had escaped and returned to the place where she had hidden. There were Salim, Durdana, Saida, Elshad and about 13-14 inhabitants of Khojaly, whose names I can't remember now. When all our bullets were over, the Armenians captured us. My wife died as a result of the bullet wound. On 26 February 1992 they brought us to Askeran. On our way they were pushing us into the cold water of the Gargar river. They placed us in the Askeran Police Department with 13-14 people at about 10.00 a.m. There they separated women from men and began to beat. I remember Elkhan, Natiq, Salim, Vasif (now dead), Ilgar, Saadat (now dead), Intizam and Mehman, who were kept in my cell. About 15-20 hostages were kept in each cell. That evening Karo, who was the head of the Fire Prevention Division at that the Police Department and led other bearded Armenians, ordered to throw Elkhan, Salim, Huseyn, Natiq and me to the cell and cruelly beat us striking with barrels of machine guns, legs of chairs and batons. Cries were heard from the adjacent cells as well. Thus we realized that the Armenians were beating, raping and abusing women kept there. On 28 February 1992, at about 16.00-17.00 p.m., they took me and Elkhan to the cell that was designed for Karo's tortures and pulled my nail out of the thumb and then broke my fingers. During the torture I was losing consciousness for several times. On 1 March Karo and some other bearded Armenians entered the cell and beat everybody. Following Karo's instructions, one Armenian thrust his knife into Elkhan's chest but not very deep, so Elkhan did not die. Two hours later Karo took Elkhan, Natiq and 2 persons (I can't remember their names) somewhere, and I don't know what happened to them afterwards. Then I learnt that Karo took Salim, Huseyn, Araz, Vasif from the cell and shot. That day at about 20.00 – 21.00 p.m., when he took us to beat again, he shot

a person whose name was Faiq. On 22 March 1992, they brought me back to the Azerbaijani side and exchanged for 3 Armenians.

Yusif Museyib Karimov:

Before 25 February 1992 I lived in Khojaly with my family - my wife Iltima Mohterem Karimova, son Algayit, and daughters Aynura, Aygun and Yegana.

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 Khojaly was seized. That moment I was on duty standing with machine gun near the railway. I did not see my family when I returned home. I went in the direction of the Gargar river, near which I saw my family and about 20-25 inhabitants of the town, mainly women and children. At that moment the Armenians surrounded us and opened the fire. I fired as well, but as the barrel of the machine gun had been overheated and smashed to pieces I threw it to the river. The Armenians wounded me in my right thigh and captured us. They were bearded, I didn't know their names, and among them were several Russians. Cruelly beating us with barrels of machine guns and pieces of wood they made us go on foot and gathered in the shop in Khojaly. They also brought others there. There were about 30 people. I remember Huseyn Sariyev, Hasan Hasanov, Alasgar, Shargiyya, and her daughters Alima and Irada.

On 26 February 1992, they put us in the bus and brought to the school for dumb in Khankendi. We were terribly tortured by the Armenians, whose names I didn't know. One Armenian tore my forehead by beating with a barrel of the machine gun. They undressed Irada, 24-years-old daughter of Shargiyya, raped her and began to beat. The Armenians also raped my wife Iltima Karimova, cut her long hair to make her look ugly. As the Armenians struck my 6- and 7-years-old children against the concrete floor, they still suffer from headaches.



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Then the Armenians separated me from the women, threw to the cellar and subjected to terrible tortures. My left four ribs were fractured as a result of blows. One Armenian thrust a knife into my left shoulder and pulled it out of my bosom, fired a piece of paper and burned my hair and then threw me back to the cell. There I saw my wife, children and other men and women bleeding and moaning.

On 5 March 1992, they separated me from my family, and along with Huseyn and Elbrus brought to the Khankendi police isolator. Here we were beaten by Agajanyan, the head of the Askeran Police Department. Before our eyes they killed the son of Khojaly inhabitant Mammadali. A week later they brought other inhabitants of Khojaly Ganahat, Alif Hajiyev's father Latif Mammadov, Gayim, Gadim, Kamil Huseynov, Abulfat, Ali and his son Nabi. They tortured us there too.

On 16 April 1992, they brought me and Kamil to the place called Khanbagi in Khankendi, where the Armenians along with the Russian soldiers were beating, humiliating and torturing us for 5 days.

On 20 April 1992 they brought us to Yerevan, and after that to Goris and Megri. There they kept us in the cellar where we were regularly beaten and abused.

On 24 July 1992 they brought me and Kamil Huseynov to the Gubadly district and released us. They exchanged my family members in May.

Because of the injuries I received during the captivity, I have a very bad sight and now undergo medical treatment at the Institute of Eye Diseases.

Besides all my property was stealed by the Armenians.

Sahida Gurban Alakbarova:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the town of Khojaly was exposed to fire opened from 3 directions. We had to leave the town. The Armenians took us hostage along with 9 people in the area called Garagaya and brought to the Askeran Police Department. They took all our documents, money and jewelry on the way there. There were about 70 women and children. The Armenians took young girls and tortured them. One day they wanted to take my 6-years-old daughter. I didn't let them take her and so they began to torture me. That day my mother was killed for her faith. My sisters Makhmar Huseynova and Mahbuba Abishova, her son Chingiz and daughter Chinara, my brother-in-law Sohrab are still missing. Along with 70 other people we were exchanged for two Armenian corpses. As a result of the seizure of the town, our house and all our property were plundered by the Armenians.

Adila Ali Nacafova:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly, and so we were forced to leave the town. There were about 150-200 people among us. We fled to the forest. About 200 armed Armenians were shooting at us, and there were Russian soldiers among them as well. After the heavy fire approximately 20 of 150-200 people survived. The Armenians took away our money and jewelry, by pincers pulled out golden teeth, scratched women's ears and took their earrings. My father's and my gold teeth were pulled out as well. They cruelly murdered our neighbor Jalal's wife, daughter, son and his fiancée. They tied a man whose name was Mushfig to the car and dragged him on the ground before our eyes. His face was injured and arms fractured. His own father could not recognize his corpse. We were severely beaten several times a day. Among the Armenians there was a woman whose name was Janna, and she tortured us as well. They did not even let us eat snow.



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Vugar Ali Nacafov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly at about 23.00 p.m. At that time we were on duty. After they surrounded us and we made an attempt to escape trying to move towards Aghdam. There were 60-70 people of us, only 20-30 people survived. Armenians gathered us in the house and began to torture. There was a Meskhetian Turk from Uzbekistan among us whose name was Ahmed. They tied his hands and legs and beheaded him. Then they took me to Khankandi. There they threw me to the cellar, tied my hands and started to beat until I lost consciousness. They heated a knife and branded my legs. There are numerous scars from knife wounds on my body. After that they forced me to drink yellow medicine. Now I know what a medicine it was. I have been married for 9 years but I still don't have children. Having tortured many young Azerbaijanis like me, they made us miserable for lifetime. As a result of all these tortures, I suffer from nervous disorder, my kidneys are often aching, I can hardly stand on my feet. Our house, property, jewelry and money were plundered by the Armenians.

Etibar Ali Nacafov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, at about 22.00 p.m., the Armenians attacked Khojaly. At that time we were on duty. Early in the morning at about 4.00-5.00 a.m. the Armenians fired at us from the tank. As I was seriously wounded, I lost consciousness. When I came to senses I saw that the fire was ceased. The Armenians captured me along with the other inhabitants of Khojaly and brought to the isolator in Khankendi, where we were severely tortured. Although my left leg was seriously wounded, they broke my right leg striking it with one metre long iron. By pincers they pulled out golden teeth of a man whose name was Alasgar. He could not stand tortures and died that night.

Many people were dying there being unable to stand tortures. As a result of the seizure of the town, our house, jewelry, money, all our property were plundered by the Armenians.

Ramil Bilman Alakbarov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 I left my home town of Khojaly with my parents. That time I was 12 years old. We left the town and fled to the forest where we stayed for 6 days. The Armenians surrounded us and began to shoot. I was wounded in my left leg. There I saw with my own eyes that the Armenians shot 16 young people and dropped them into the well drill with the tractor. When we wanted to flee to Aghdam the Armenians caught us and cruelly beat my father. They took our jewelry and money. Then they brought us to the farm located in the Aghdam district and kept there for 3 days. As my leg was seriously wounded, my parents tied it with the string trying to stop bleeding. The Armenians were severely beating the hostages kept there. In 3 days they released us. After returning from captivity I was treated in the Aghdam hospital, and there are 12 stitches left on my leg. Now I suffer from these injuries. I still can't normally walk. My father suffers from kidney and liver diseases as a result of the tortures he was exposed to during captivity.

Asya Mushur Bidzinova:

I had lived in Uzbekistan before. We found refuge in Azerbaijan and were settled in Khojaly. Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly. The people began to flee to the forest. We hid in the basement of our house. The Armenians got into this basement and began to shoot. My husband was also there and died because of shots. When I wanted to come up to him the Armenians hit my back with a barrel of machine gun. There is a scar left on my body. They took 64 people, among which were little children, to Khankendi and kept there



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for 3 days. During captivity they didn't give us even a slice of bread. The Armenians were raping young girls and regularly beating us.

Mahir Imran Khalilov:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians attacked Khojaly. They burnt houses, killed innocent people and looted all our property. We fled to the forest. A day later we reached the village of Abdal-Gulabli in Aghdam. There we were surrounded and captured by 30 Armenian militaries. I was with my father-in-law, mother-in-law, wife, brother-in-law and two daughters. Children were less than 1 year old. When we were taken hostage the Armenians beat us cruelly and took to the village of Dahraz in the Askeran district. There we were kept in the cellar for a week. Although there were little children among us, we were kept in a cold without food and water, beaten with barrels of machine guns, bludgeons and sticks. At present I suffer from these injuries. I got craniocerebral trauma, and my nervous system is disordered. When we left Khojaly our house and jewelry were looted by the Armenians. At the time we were taken hostage the Armenians took our money. On 3 March we were released. Among those Armenians who tortured us I remember only Armen who was beating captives with bludgeons, barrels of machine guns and spades.

Dilshad Saday Guliyeva:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly. They killed innocent people, burnt houses and plundered property. Those inhabitants of Khojaly who survived fled away in different directions. We fled to the forest and hid there. After 4 days of hiding in the forest near Nakhchivanik about 30 Armenian soldiers took us captive and brought to the Armenian village. The weather was very frosty and they made us go on foot. There were people who died of frost and hunger. They threw us to the cellar in

the Armenian village and began to beat cruelly. There they shot about 7-8 Azerbaijanis before my eyes. Then they brought us to Askeran and threw into prison. There they kept us without food and water, beat us cruelly, cauterized burning cigarettes on the bodies of men and women. They took away our money and jewelry. They took my gold necklace, watch, rings and earrings. When we showed resistance they beat us severely. When we left Khojaly all our property was plundered by the Armenians. They also destroyed our house. When we were captured my two brothers-in-law were with us. One of them Mikayil Zahid Guliyev committed suicide. Another one, Azad Zahid Guliyev, was taken hostage by the Armenians and was held in captivity for 28 days. I was exchanged for the Armenian captives after being kept for a day in Askeran.

Shahla Bahatur Safarova:

We were forced to leave Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. Along with my husband and our 5 children we hid in the forest. There we were surrounded by the Armenians. I was wounded in my left arm at the village of Nakhchivanik. We could not move and were captured. The Armenians took us to Askeran and held us at the Police Department. Despite the fact that I was wounded, they did not provide me any medical aid. Though it was very cold, we were kept in the windowless room without food. When we left Khojaly the Armenians had plundered our house, jewelry, money and all our property. Two days later I was released.

Azad Zahid Guliyev:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 and fled to the forest. My brother Mikayil, sister-in-law Dilshad and cousin Asif were with me. My brother Mikayil committed suicide to avoid captivity. We were taken hostage in the place towards Nakhchivanik. I was held in captivity in Nakhchivanik, Askeran and



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Noragekh. The Armenians regularly beat us with barrels of machine guns, kept us without food, and cauterized burning cigarettes on our bodies. When I was in Nakhchivanik the Armenians shot 8 Azerbaijanis. I remember inspector Karen from Askeran and inspector Samvel from Noragekh. They beat and ruthlessly tortured all Azerbaijanis. I was held in captivity for 14 days, and then released along with the others.

Sattar Mukhtar Agayev:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. That day I was on duty. When I returned home I saw nobody there. I went towards the forest and met my family members. The weather was very frosty. We crossed the Gargar river and got soaked to the skin. I took my 10-years-old son Vusal in my arms and went on. But my son could not stand frost and died. As my legs freezed I could not move. In such a condition I was approached by two Armenians, beaten and captured. I wanted to take my son's corpse but they kicked his dead body and did not let me take him. I was held in Dahraz, Khankendi, during my captivity. When I was held in the cellar they asked me if I had a son who had served in the national army. Trying to deceive them I gave a negative answer. Then they showed me his documents but I did not confess again. They beat me, then showed me the corpse of my son, the national army's soldier Zahid Agayev. When I wanted to embrace him they beat me cruelly and I lost consciousness. By pincers they pulled out all my teeth. Wounds on my legs began to rot. They did not treat me. After being in captivity for 35 days I was released.

Sardar Sattar Agayev:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. Along with armed men we helped civilians to leave the village. We were going towards the forest. Suddenly a skirmish started. I was separated from my friends and cap-

tured by the Armenians. They ruthlessly beat me and I lost consciousness. When I came to senses I found myself in a hen-house. There one Armenian began to beat me cruelly with a barrel of machine gun. He struck me mainly in the head. Everything went dark before my eyes and I fell into a faint. When I came to senses I found myself surrounded by my relatives in the village of Abdal-Gulabli.

Sarvar Sattar Agayev:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. That time I was 12 years old. I was with my two brothers and mother. We stayed in the forest without food for 2 days.

When the cross-fire started I was separated from my family, captured by two Armenians and taken to the area called Agbulag. There they cruelly beat me and after threatening for 24 hours released me. I was scared and extremely nervous. By this reason I often have heart attacks, suffer from nervous disorder and have bad self-control.

Kamil Dadash Huseynov:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. That day I was on duty. I hardly reached home and saw nobody there. I fled to the forest and stayed there for 3 days with the other inhabitants of Khojaly. The weather was very frosty and foggy. That is why we lost the direction. We wanted to go to the village of Abdal-Gulabli of the Aghdam district. But by mistake we came to the village of Dahraz. There about 50-60 Armenian militaries shot at us. Many people died there. I was captured and taken to the isolator in Khankendi. I remember the names of people who were captured with me: Niftalin, Sattar, Samandar, Mahammed, Kamal, Alish, Abulfat. During the captivity they were severely beating us with barrels of machine guns. Furthermore, they let the civilians beat us. I remember very well the inspectors Felix and



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Arthur who were in the isolator. Then they brought us to Goris in Armenia. I was held captive at the Yerevan Polis Department and was exposed to ruthless tortures. We were kept almost without food. In total, I was held captive for 6 months. Then they exchanged us for the Armenian captives in Gubadli. In the result of tortures I was struck by gastroenterostomy and later operated. After captivity I was told that my 8-years-old daughter Maral had been killed by the Armenians.

Rahila Rashid Hajieva:

The Armenians seized Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. They burnt houses, killed innocent people, plundered our property. The people were forced to leave their houses and flee away. At that time my husband Mustafayev Vidadi Shafa participated in the battle. He served in the volunte battalion. We could not leave our house. My daughters Safayat, Ayshan, my son Taleh, my sister-in-law Rahila and the family of Alkhan who worked at the Khojaly Polis Department hid in the bathroom of our house. It was snowing and very frosty. Alkhan came to our house at about 4.00-5.00 a.m. He told that the Armenians had already occupied Khojaly. The Armenians got into our house and captured us on 26 February at about 11.00 a.m. They were beating us cruelly. My daughter Safayat was crying: “Don’t beat my mother”. An Armenian caught and threw her from the second floor. She injured her knee joint. Then the Armenians started to beat Alkhan. He told us that my husband Vidadi had been wounded during the battle and had given him cartridges to shoot us to avoid captivity. Alkhan asked to forgive him for being unable to do that and the Armenians killed him by beating before our eyes. One Armenian took his wife. His two sons were brought with us to the Askeran Polis Department. I recognized Ashot from Shushukand among the Armenians who captured us. His father’s name was Ata. They kept us in Askeran for a week. There was an

Azerbaijani with a nickname Dumbay who lives at present at the hostel of college ? 9 in Ganja. They took him away for beating. When he returned he told that my husband was held in the cellar and the Armenians were planning to kill us torturing before his eyes. Then the Armenians asked me for several times who was that man. I didn’t reply anything and they began to torture me. They heated reinforcing steel and cauterized it to my body. They cut my left arm and upper jaw with a knife. These scars remain on my body now. Later I learnt that my husband Vidadi along with 4 other Azerbaijanis had been taken to the grave-yard by an Armenian whose 20-years-old brother had been killed in the battle, and there he had beheaded them on his grave.

My sister-in law Rahila Shafa Mustafayeva was also held in captivity. She was 25 years old. We were raped by the Armenians for several times. They were beating us with barrels of machine guns and bludgeons and didn’t give us any food. A man whose name was Karo was among the Armenians who tortured us. He was even more cruel than the others. He was tying captives’ arms and legs and was beating and breaking them with baton. He was cauterizing burning cigarettes to their eyes and different parts of their bodies and raping women. He was always wearing military uniform. The Armenians took all our jewelry, money and documents. My sister-in-law Rahila fell ill seriously. As a result of tortures, a blood flow started. It was hard to keep her alive till the end of captivity. There we were kept in the cold and without food. All my children fell ill. 7 days later we were exchanged for the Armenian captives. Although we underwent medical treatment after captivity, it was impossible to save the lives of my sister-in-law Rahila and my daughter Shafayat. My daughter died at the age of 22, my daughter Ayshan and son Taleh are always ailing and are under the doctor’s control. I myself was operated. Because of received craniocerebral injury, I often suffer from headaches.



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Testimonies of the inhabitants of Khojaly taken hostage by the Armenian side

Elmira Isgandar Valiyeva:

The Armenians seized Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. They burnt houses, killed innocent people. We could hardly flee to the forest and stayed there for 5 days. The weather was very frosty. We were stiffed with cold. In such a condition we were captured and held in captivity for several days. Then they exchanged. While staying in Askeran, we were severely beaten with batons. The Armenians took my ring, necklace, earrings and money. As a result of received injuries, I often have headaches and suffer from nervous disorder.

Guloysha Baxtiyar Mammadova:

We left Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. With my son Farhad we fled to the forest. After staying there for 3 days we were taken hostage in the area of Gilinbag and then brought to the Askeran Police Department. There we were held for 10 days. They severely beat us, kept without food; many young women were tortured and raped. They beat us with bludgeons, pieces of iron and barrels of machine guns. I was held hostage for 10 days. At the moment I am being tormented by the injuries received in captivity. I had got craniocerebral trauma. I can't sleep without taking sleeping pills. I often have severe headaches. I suffer from kidney and stomach-intestine diseases.

Sanam Hasan Abdullayeva:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 I left Khojaly along with my father, mother, my sisters Hadija, Tazagul, Latafat, my daughters Vusala, Khayala and my nephew Ruslan. We fled to the forest where my father, mother and sister Latafat died. We stayed there for 4 days. Then we were taken hostage by the Armenians near the village of Pirjamal and kept in the stable along with about 300 inhabitants of Khojaly. While we were in captivity an armed Armenians killed Faiq

Alimammadov and Ismail. The Armenians tortured and beat us with barrels of machine guns and bludgeons, and didn't give us any food. We were released in a day.

Farman Gazanfar Mammadov:

The Armenians seized Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. We were forced to leave our native land. I was 10 years old then. With my mother we fled to the forest along with the other civilians.

Without food we had to stay there in freezing cold for 3 days. Then we were taken hostage by the Armenians. They severely beat us and brought to the Askeran Police Department. There they kept us in the cell for 10 days. There were about 20-30 people. Every day prison guards were beating us with reinforcing steel and raping young women. They kept us without food. I was a child and when I cried of fear the Armenians were knocking me down and kicking. As a result, I got kidney disease. In 10 days we were released. Since then I was undergoing medical treatment until 1996. Our house and property were plundered by the Armenians.

Sevil Mursal Abdulova:

The Armenians seized Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992. With my family - my husband and our 3 children we fled to the forest. The Armenians surrounded us. They started to shoot in the direction where people crowded. My 12-years-old son Jeyhun and I were wounded and then separated from the other family members near Aghdam in the area called Garagaya. There we were taken hostage by two armed Armenians. A woman from Khankendi whose name was Gulli and her son were with us. This woman burnt all her money. When the Armenians saw it they killed them both. They took money and jewelry out of my bag. They brought us to their house in Khankendi and held there for



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3 days. The name of the house host was Sarkis. His son Karlen Ayrumyan was imprisoned in Azerbaijan. Later we were exchanged for him in Askeran.

Fatma Hasan Zamanova:

As a result of the seizure of Khojaly over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992, my family members fled away in different directions, and I hid in the basement prepared for protection from bombing. There were about 100 women, men, elderly and children. Later the Armenian and Russian soldiers found us and started to beat with barrels of machine guns, and then by kicking pulled us out of the basement. When I saw my husband - Novruz Gulu Zamanov's dead body I wanted to approach him, but an Armenian saw it and kicked me so that I fell down. Then they brought us to the village of Mehdi. There they undressed a group of Azerbaijani soldiers and shot them before our eyes, cut their bodies into pieces and then put one on another. They cut pregnant women's stomachs, pulled out babies and then started to shoot tearing them to pieces. They told they would not allow the Azerbaijani women to bear boys because one day they would come with weapons in their arms to kill the Armenians. They were putting glass bottles into women's wombs, knocking them down and then jumping over them, breaking bottles on their stomachs and putting old galoshes into their wombs. They cut girls' hair to make them look ugly. They chose 50 girls and took them away to rape. The Armenians undressed some men and tried to force them to have sexual intercourse with their daughters, threatening to behead them if they refuse. I don't remember the names of our torturers. They brought those who survived to the cellar of unknown building in Khankendi, and our tortures continued. I was released at the end of March 1992.

Shakhnaz Yusif Behbudova:

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 Khojaly was seized. My father-in-law Shura Pashayev and mother-in-law Kubra Pashayeva were with us at that time. After crossing the Gargar river we fled to the forest near the village of Nakhchivanik together with our children and went towards Aghdam. But when we reached the cemetery between Aghdam and Askeran the Armenians surrounded us and started to shoot from machine guns. All people began to flee away in different directions. There were about 100 woman, children, and old people from the city. My husband Elshan Shura Pashayev and father-in-law Shura Pashayev along with the other people died from fire opened by the Armenians. Lining up those who survived near the river-bed they started to throw grenades. Only nine men who managed to flee to the pit could survive being wounded. My mother-in-law Kubra was wounded in her left hand by 2 bullets and my leg was scraped. Our neighbors Elbrus, Islam, Vugar, Gulnaz, Surayya (she died later) survived. Lining us up again the Armenians began to strike by different objects, abuse and then threw us to the basement of the Askeran Polis Department.

There they kept men separately from women. There were about 40-50 wounded women and children in our cell. Tortures were horrible. They were excising women's arms, noses and ears, they didn't give us any food or water, children were crying and wounded people were moaning. Sometimes the Armenians were coming to our cell and taking away beautiful, young women and upon their return we knew that they had been raped. I heard that some girls were not released yet. When girls' mothers wanted to go with their daughters they were beaten till the loss of consciousness. The Armenians took all our jewelry. All these tortures continued till the next day. We were brought back to the Azerbaijan side in the evening on 27 February 1992.



CONCLUSION

As a result of aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, ethnic cleansing of the territory of Armenia proper and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan from the ethnic Azerbaijani population, there are currently almost one million refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan, that is, approximately one out of every eight persons in the country is an internally displaced or refugee. About 20,000 Azerbaijani citizens have been killed and 50,000 have been wounded or maimed. A total of 900 settlements have been looted and burnt out, over 9 million square meters of civilian housing, state enterprises and social facilities have been destroyed.

The most serious crimes of concern to the international community, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, constituting the violation of peremptory norms of international law, have been committed during the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The facts mentioned above confirm that the intentional slaughter of the Khojaly town civilians on 25-26 February 1992, including children, elderly and women, was directed to their mass extermination only because they were Azerbaijanis. The Khojaly town was chosen as a stage for further occupation and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijani territories, creating panic and fear before the horrifying massacre.

There can not be true, long-term, sustainable peace without justice, without respect for human dignity, human rights and freedoms. This belief has been affirmed by the General Assembly, almost half century ago, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which apart from pro-

claiming that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”, quite correctly pointed out that “disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind”.¹

Conventional rules as well as international instruments concluded within the framework of the United Nations, which require States to “prosecute or extradite”, support the argument about existence of the customary obligation under international law to prosecute those who are alleged to have committed crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. Further argument precluding the possibility of invoking a State discretion to decide whether to adjudicate or not for the commission of the most serious international crimes is based on the jus cogens nature of international legal norms prohibiting these crimes.²

1 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, GA res. 217 A (III), 10 December 1948. For text see UN Centre for Human Rights, Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments, ST/HR/1/Rev.5, vol. 1 (First Part), New York & Geneva, UN 1994, pp. 1-7, at p. 1.

2 For more information see A.Yusifova, “Does international law allow societies in transition from conflict or authoritarian government to choose peace at the expense of justice? Should it?”, in “Diplomatiya Aləmi” journal, No. 10 (2005), pp. 151-155.



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PHOTOS OF VICTIMS





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