

## FROM THE EDITOR

The conflicts surrounding the safety and security of Artsakh date back more than a century. The search for solutions has been accompanied by negotiations and debate in the upper echelons of government, various referendums and popular movements, bloody clashes and military operations. The relative stability of the last three decades was broken in 2020 by the war of aggression initiated by the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result of this conflict, a number of territories, including a part of the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Region (Shushi and Hadrut), rich in tangible heritage and monuments of Armenian culture fell under the control of the Azerbaijani side.

The active military phase of the war ended with the announcement signed on 9 November 2020, but the aggression of the Azerbaijani side has not stopped. Azerbaijani encroachments have continued towards internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Armenia – a part of which now remains under illegal Azerbaijani occupation.

Both during and after the war, we have witnessed attempts at ethnic cleansing; a practice that highlights a dangerous resurgence of genocidal action. An alarm about a possible genocide was sounded by organizations such as Genocide Watch and the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention. This alarm was raised once again during the September aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Armenia in 2022, which shows the continuation of the use of violence by Azerbaijan; violence which has manifested both through active military operations and the blockade of Artsakh by false “activists” who infringe on people’s rights to free movement and safe living conditions without disruption or harassment.

Official Azerbaijani propaganda, based on lies and falsehoods and accompanied by expressions of open racism and xenophobia, attempts to distort and appropriate Armenian cultural heritage. These efforts have continued to intensify in recent years, as have attempts to rewrite past realities and historical-legal evaluations of the issue.

After the outbreak of open warfare in 2020, a research group on the Repression of the Armenians of Artsakh, Nakhijevan and Azerbaijan was created at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute. As of 2022, this research group has since grown into a department with a small number of dedicated employees. The target was set to objectively address the various aspects of the Artsakh issue and render it accessible in a wide variety of foreign languages. The publications presented within are among the first such steps.

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*Harutyun Marutyan*

*Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Foundation,  
Chief Editor of the International Journal of Armenian Genocide Studies*