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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4073-2024.1.117-130

## **THE CRIMES OF AZERBAIJAN AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF ARTSAKH DURING THE 2016 APRIL WAR**

### **KEYWORDS**

right to self-determination  
Armenophobia  
war  
crimes  
ethnic cleansing  
citizens  
impunity

### **ABSTRACT**

In the early morning hours of April 2, 2016 the Azerbaijani armed forces launched a thoroughly planned large-scale offensive along the entire line of contact between NKDA and Azerbaijani AF, deploying tanks, attack helicopters, heavy artillery, rocket launchers. The Azerbaijani surprise and unprovoked offensive was the largest and bloodiest breach of the ceasefire regime installed in 1994 through a trilateral agreement between NKR, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The active phase of the armed conflict lasted until 12pm on April 5, when by active interference of the international community the cease-fire regime of 1994 was restored. During the April war, Azerbaijan committed numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity, in particular many cases of brutal killings, torture and inhuman treatment of Armenian civilians and prisoners of war.

As a consequence of Azerbaijan's military aggression from April 2 to April 5, 2016, a total of 80 individuals lost their lives in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), comprising 76 servicemen and 4 civilians. Among these casualties, 31 fell under the control of Azerbaijan.

It is important to emphasize that the Azerbaijani Armed Forces have committed serious violations of international humanitarian law against the civilian population, as well as military personnel, which can be qualified as war crimes.

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\* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 03.01.24, գրախոսվել է 02.02.24, ընդունվել է տպագրության 30.04.24:

***Introduction***

Unlike crimes against humanity, which can occur in both peaceful and armed conflicts, war crimes are specific to situations of armed conflict. These crimes involve violations of international humanitarian law, such as willful or indiscriminate attacks on civilians, torture, or ill-treatment of individuals.

In conjunction with the military actions initiated by Azerbaijan in 2016, we have witnessed the commission of war crimes, particularly against the peaceful and unprotected population. The preserved evidence attests to one undeniable fact: Azerbaijan, while escalating the war, also aimed to carry out terrorist acts, including fear-mongering and the expulsion of Armenians from Artsakh.

From the outset, Azerbaijan has perpetrated war crimes with no statute of limitations, engaging in ethnic cleansing and implementing a genocidal policy on its territory and in the Armenian-populated areas of Artsakh. The anti-Armenian policy, marked by massacres and brutal actions, persisted during Artsakh's national liberation struggle. Mass Armenian pogroms occurred in Sumgait near Baku on February 27–29, 1988, in Baku on January 13–19, 1990, and in Maragha on April 10, 1992. These events, crimes against the civilian population, with impunity, contributed to the commission of war crimes during the four-day Artsakh war initiated by Azerbaijan in April 2016, and subsequently, during the conflicts of September–November 2020 and then in September 2023, leading to the forced displacement of the Artsakh population.

The purpose of this article is to shed light on the international crimes committed by Azerbaijan, specifically by its armed forces in April 2016. The aim is to underscore the significant violations of international humanitarian law, with a particular focus on the crimes perpetrated by Azerbaijan against civilians in Artsakh and the neighboring Armenian territories during the war.

***The Right of the People of Artsakh to Self-Determination***

The people of Artsakh realized their right to self-determination as early as 1991, after the massacres and deportations of the Armenian population in Sumgait, Gandzak, Baku in 1987–1990, violence and deportation of Armenians in the settlements of Northern Artsakh, as well as other types of violence against Armenians, when the impossibility of further peaceful and safe survival and internal self-determination of Armenians within Azerbaijan was obvious. In this case, the realization of the right to self-determination by the people of Artsakh was

fully legitimate under international law. According to the fundamental norms of international law, the principle of territorial integrity cannot be opposed to the right of peoples to self-determination<sup>1</sup>.

The UN Charter clearly defines that the principle of territorial integrity is applicable to relations between states. However, this principle, aimed at achieving the goals of the United Nations, cannot stand in opposition to the right of peoples to equality and self-determination.

Following the Artsakh war, Azerbaijan not only failed to respect the right of the Artsakh Armenians to self-determination but also actively engaged in and immediately executed large-scale persecution and ethnic cleansing. As a consequence, Azerbaijan forfeited the right to invoke its territorial integrity against the right of the people of Artsakh to self-determination. Furthermore, since the realization of the right of self-determination for the people of Artsakh, the Republic of Azerbaijan has persistently pursued a policy of persecution against Armenians. In recent years, this has escalated into a large-scale propagation of Armenophobia, which, among numerous other manifestations, includes the glorification of individuals responsible for the murders of Armenians, the destruction of Armenian cultural values, and a general denial of the right of Armenians to exist in the territories of their historical residence.

#### ***Azerbaijan's Rejection of Measures to Maintain the Ceasefire Regime***

The ceasefire regime, established in 1994, was generally observed with occasional violations until Azerbaijan initiated large-scale military operations in April 2016. However, in the years leading up to 2016, the Azerbaijani side consistently engaged in provocations, including attempts at sabotage and terrorism against civilians, with the clear intention of escalating the situation. These systematic crimes and violations had a defined objective. The Azerbaijani side consistently displayed a racist attitude towards the people of Artsakh and their struggle for self-determination. By adopting a maximalist position, the Azerbaijani government limited the potential for a peaceful settlement and actively prepared for a military "solution" to the issue.

Over decades, Azerbaijan has propagated Armenophobia by constructing an image of Armenians as radical "others." The official ideological foundation of Azerbaijan became the humiliation and destruction of this perceived "other," with

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.irtek.am>. Charter of the United Nations (retrieved: 02.12.2023).

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the ultimate goal of using all means to occupy territories and eliminate the Armenian presence there.

One of the manifestations of Azerbaijan's crime against the peaceful population of Artsakh is the organization of another sabotage operation on 29 June 2014. Armed Azerbaijanis Dilham Askerov and Shahbaz Guliyev, crossing the state border of the Republic of Artsakh, kidnapped and killed 17-year-old minor resident of Karvachar Smbat Tsakanyan<sup>2</sup>. Askerov and Guliyev were accompanied by a third person-Gasan Hasanov, who killed RA Army Major Sarkis Abrahamyan and wounded his companion Karine Davtyan on the Vardenis-Martakert highway. Askerov and Guliyev were detained as a result of joint actions of the police and armed forces of Artsakh, and Hasanov was killed as a result of a firefight with Defense Army soldiers. Azerbaijani citizens Guliyev and Askerov were sentenced by the NKR Court of General Jurisdiction to 22 years in prison<sup>3</sup> and life imprisonment in 2014 for the murder of a teenager, illegal crossing of the NKR border, weapons possession and espionage, and the murder of an Armenian army officer. These atrocities were not just a way to achieve the goal of seizing territory. Violence against the enemy was an end in itself, through which the state ideology of Armenianophobia was realized.

The memorandum from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh regarding the particularly grave crimes committed in Artsakh by Azerbaijani nationals Shahbaz Guliyev and Dilham Askerov was officially circulated to the UN in 2019, noting: "International law provides for the responsibility of states for crimes committed by their agents. The said norm of international law is codified in Article 8 of the Draft Articles of the United Nations International Law Commission on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, which states that "The conduct of a person or group of persons shall be considered an act of a State under international law if the person or group of persons is in fact acting on the instructions of, or under the direction or control of, that State in carrying out the conduct"<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> civilnet.am (retrieved: 16.08.2014), The Karvachar Murder Mystery (retrieved: 15.11.2023).

<sup>3</sup> According to the terms of the trilateral statement of November 9, 2020, on December 14, 2020, the Armenian side handed over Askerov and Guliyev to Azerbaijan as part of a prisoner exchange.

<sup>4</sup> <https://politik.am/am/mak-um-taratsvel-e-arcakhi-hanrapetuty-an-hushagiry-shahbaz-gulievi-ev-dilham-askerovi-katarats-hancagortsutyunneri> (retrieved: 20.10.2023).

Thus, the wrongful acts of individuals sent as “volunteers” to carry out certain tasks in foreign territory entail the international responsibility of States.

It should be noted that in 2013–2015 the Azerbaijani side made at least 180 sabotage attempts<sup>5</sup> targeting border settlements and civilian population living there.

### ***Military Operations on April 2–5, 2016***

In spring 2016 (April), the agenda of internal and foreign political events of the Republic of Artsakh changed almost completely due to the threat of a direct military invasion of the country by Azerbaijan. Violating the trilateral ceasefire agreement (Nagorno-Karabakh-Azerbaijani Republic-Republic of Armenia), reached on May 12, 1994, and international obligations to settle the Karabakh conflict exclusively by peaceful means, the Azerbaijani side launched offensive military actions along the entire line of demarcation of the opposing forces on the night of April 1 to 2, around 3:00a.m.<sup>6</sup>.

The military operations commenced with the infiltration of Islamist extremists and Turkish-trained special forces engaging the positions of the Defense Army. Despite facing these challenges, the Defense Army managed to achieve certain positional success in the northern and southern directions of the NKR, aided by artillery, heavy armored vehicles, and aviation support. The conscripts, led by their experienced officers, displayed unwavering courage throughout the conflict and showcased unique examples of heroism until the end.

The fighting was most fierce in the southern - Hadrut and northern – Martakert directions of the front line. The main target of the attack was the civilian population on the border and in the deep rear. The Azerbaijani army, using its numerous weapons (Grad MM-21 rocket-artillery launcher and Smerch multiple rocket launcher, artillery of various caliber (including 152 mm cannons), heavy grenade launcher system TOS-1A Solntsepek, Mi-24 attack helicopters, tanks and other armoured vehicles, and attack drones), shelled a number of settlements in Artsakh, resulting in the death and injury of civilians, including children, women and the elderly<sup>7</sup>. Military operations with the use of new types of high-tech

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<sup>5</sup> Հովհաննիսյան 2016, 243–250:

<sup>6</sup> [http://noravank.am/arm/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=14725](http://noravank.am/arm/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=14725), 31.05.2016: the Artsakh Republic and the 4-day War (retrieved: 15.10.2023).

<sup>7</sup> Human rights defender (ombudsman) interim public report / atrocities committed by Azerbaijani military forces against the civilian population of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic and servicemen of the Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army on 2–5 April 2016, Shushi 2016, p. 16.

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weapons gave analysts a legitimate reason to call the April war a 6<sup>th</sup> generation war unleashed by the enemy against Artsakh.

The April 2016 aggression marked another attempt by Azerbaijan to resolve the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict through military force. Despite extensive preparations, including the allocation of substantial funds for the acquisition of modern weapons, Azerbaijan was unable to achieve significant success in its military operations in Artsakh. Faced with substantial losses in personnel and equipment, Azerbaijan was compelled to halt hostilities on April 5. This cessation was facilitated through the mediation of the Russian Federation, leading to the restoration of the ceasefire regime in accordance with the 1994 trilateral ceasefire agreement<sup>8</sup>.

#### ***War Crimes of Azerbaijan in the Days of War***

During the April war, Azerbaijan committed numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity, in particular many cases of brutal killings, torture and inhuman treatment of Armenian civilians and prisoners of war.

As a consequence of Azerbaijan's military aggression from April 2 to April 5, 2016, a total of 80 individuals lost their lives in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), comprising 76 servicemen and 4 civilians. Among these casualties, 31 (28 servicemen and 3 civilians) fell under the control of Azerbaijan. The incidents involving NKR civilians or NKR Defense Army servicemen occurred in three directions: in the north (Talış village) – 3 civilians and 6 servicemen, in the northeast – 4 servicemen, and in the south – 18 servicemen<sup>9</sup>.

As early as April 2, around 8:30 a.m., i.e. at the very beginning of hostilities, the secondary school of Zoravan settlement of Martuni region was shelled by the enemy from MM-21 "Grad" multiple rocket launcher system, as a result of which a 12-year-old pupil of the school, Vagharshak Grigoryan, was killed. Two more children aged 12 and 13<sup>10</sup> were seriously wounded during the same shelling. It is appalling that the shelling of the secondary school was carried out from irregular lethal weapons – the MM-21 "Grad" multiple rocket launcher system. Another crime committed by Azerbaijan involved a gross violation of children's rights, as protected by international legal norms. According to Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva

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<sup>8</sup> **Բաղդասարյան** 2017, 37–48:

<sup>9</sup> Artsakh Ombudsman's Second Interim Report on Atrocities committed by Azerbaijan during the 2016 April war, Shushi, 2016 p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> <https://razm.info>, 03.04.2016: Summary of Armenian-Azerbaijani hostilities on April 1–3 (retrieved: 12.10.2023).

Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, individuals who “take no active part in conflicts” should be treated with dignity in all situations and safeguarded from all forms of violence, inhuman treatment, promises, hostage-taking, humiliation, and degrading treatment<sup>11</sup>.

During the military operations, a number of border settlements, civilian homes and civilian infrastructure were hit. As a result of intensive rocket fire, material damage was caused to residential houses, movable property, buildings and structures of public and educational institutions<sup>12</sup>.

For security reasons, civilians in the settlements of Talish, Mataghis and Martakert were evacuated. The local authorities organized the deportation at two stages. The local population was compelled to engage in internal migration, relocating to settlements situated far from the borders<sup>13</sup>.

There is substantial evidence of atrocities and inhuman violence committed by the Azerbaijani army against the peaceful population of Artsakh. This is particularly evident in the events that transpired in the village of Talish on April 3. Azerbaijani armed forces, despite a considerable distance from the active combat zone, targeted and killed three civilians. In their own home, elderly spouses Valeri Khalapyan and Razmela Vardanyan were subjected to torture and killed by Azerbaijani soldiers. Additionally, Marusya Khalapyan, the 92-year-old mother of Valeri Khalapyan, was brutally murdered, and their residence was completely destroyed<sup>14</sup>. The fact that Azerbaijani servicemen who committed war crimes were awarded personally by the President of Azerbaijan once again confirms that these acts were committed by order of the Azerbaijani authorities or under their direction and control.

Three civilians were killed by the Azerbaijani armed forces in the village of Talish at a considerable distance from the site of the armed hostilities, and these murders were obviously committed purposefully and without any military necessity.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.irtek.am/views/act.aspx?aid=50342>. Convention on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Geneva (retrieved: 10.10.2023).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCEr1pur64A>. 06.04. 2016: Information center “Azatutyun TV” (retrieved: 11.10.2023).

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.youtube.com>. 05.04.2020: APRIL OF VICTORY. Documentary film (retrieved: 20.11.2023).

<sup>14</sup> Artsakh Ombudsman’s Second Interim Report on Atrocities committed by Azerbaijan during the 2016 April war, Shushi, 2016, p. 8.

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Consequently, they are to be categorized as the killing of the civilian population, constituting a serious violation of humanitarian law and, therefore, a war crime.

#### ***Evidence of Torture, Inhuman Treatment, Intentional Killings***

Videos of atrocities committed by the Azerbaijani armed forces have appeared on Azerbaijani social networks since the very first days of the war. Evidence of Azerbaijani atrocities available on the Internet and mostly uploaded by Azerbaijani users, testify to their inhumane treatment. One proof of this is a video posted on Youtube on April 27, 2016 by Azerbaijani user Samsadin Hasanov. This video portrays a murdered Armenian soldier, capturing a conversation in Azerbaijani (though the individuals are not visible). In the conversation, one person requests a knife to cut off the soldier's ear, while the other remarks that the left ear has already been severed. Subsequently, the video was edited, removing the image of the soldier's ear being cut off, and muffling the part of the conversation about the knife)<sup>15</sup>.

The events of April 10, 2016, involving the exchange of remains mediated by the ICRC and the OSCE, revealed disturbing findings. The bodies of 18 NKR Defense Army servicemen returned by the Azerbaijani side were reported to have been tortured and mutilated, as confirmed by the NKR State Commission for Prisoners of War, Hostages, and Missing Persons in the presence of ICRC representatives.

Examination of the facts indicates that a significant majority of civilians and NKR Defense Army servicemen who fell under the control of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces (approximately 90%) were subjected to torture, killing, or dismemberment. Among the reported war crimes were three cases of beheading, two of which occurred after the victims were killed, while one was carried out ISIS-style. The most prevalent war crime was amputation, with 24 cases, including 21 instances of ear cutting. Additionally, there were five cases of torture, involving the cutting off of hands and slitting of throats. 7 cases of murder, mostly with the use of firearms<sup>16</sup>. This act, being a blatant manifestation of anti-humanism, contradicts the laws and customs of war and grossly violates the international humanitarian

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<sup>15</sup> Artsakh Ombudsman's Second Interim Report on Atrocities committed by Azerbaijan during the 2016 April war, Shushi, 2016 p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Expert Group of the RA Chamber of Advocates Studying International Legal Aspects of the Problem of the Republic of Artsakh.



law, in particular the requirements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Geneva Convention of 1949 for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Active Armies, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Geneva Convention of 1949 for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, as well as the requirements of Protocol 1 of the 1977 Convention for the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts of August 12, 1949<sup>17</sup>.

The case of Ramil Safarov is indeed a notable example of the encouragement of war crimes and brutal killings of civilians at the state level in Azerbaijan. In 2004, Ramil Safarov, a senior lieutenant of the Azerbaijani Army, killed Armenian Armed Forces serviceman Gurgen Margaryan with an axe while he was sleeping in Budapest. Both Safarov and Margaryan were attending language courses in Budapest as part of NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

Following the incident, Ramil Safarov was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Hungarian court. However, in a controversial move, he was extradited to Azerbaijan on August 31, 2012. Upon his return to Azerbaijan, Safarov was immediately issued a pardon, and shockingly, he was promoted to the rank of major with a salary for the eight years he had spent in prison. The President of Azerbaijan at that time stated that the decision to release Safarov was "lawful and just"<sup>18</sup>.

Azerbaijan has never been held accountable for violating international law and encouraging xenophobia at the state level.

The suggestion is that the war crimes of April 2016 might have been preventable had the international community provided a suitable assessment of Azerbaijan's glorification of perpetrators and imposed sanctions on the country. However, as there were no such measures taken, Azerbaijan continued to glorify individuals responsible for violent acts, including those who committed atrocities against Armenians. Notably, Azerbaijan continued to honor brutal killers and criminals who mutilated the bodies of the victims.

Instances of glorification at the state level in Azerbaijan include those involved in war crimes in Artsakh from April 2 to 5, 2016. This lack of international response and sanctions against such actions may be seen as a failure to deter further violence and a failure to uphold the principles of justice and accountability.

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<sup>17</sup> Artsakh Ombudsman's Second Interim Report on Atrocities committed by Azerbaijan during the 2016 April war, Shushi, 2016, pp. 25–27.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.aniarc.am>, 19-01-2021: From Ramil Safarov to Ilham Aliyev: Axe and Diplomacy (retrieved: 22.11.2023).

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The report disseminated by the NKR General Prosecutor's Office in 2016<sup>19</sup> notes that between April 2 and 5, 2016, the servicemen of the Republic of Azerbaijan mutilated the bodies of the Defense Army servicemen in a number of cases in flagrant violation of norm 113 of Chapter 35 of Customary International Humanitarian Law. In particular, private serviceman Kyaram Sloyan was beheaded after his death and Major Hayk Toroyan was beheaded while he was alive. In the case of other servicemen, their bodies were mutilated after death. The servicemen of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces together with Major Hayk Toroyan also beheaded 68-year-old contract serviceman, driver Hrant Gharibyan. In the village of Talish, servicemen of the Azerbaijani army killed elderly spouses and a 92-year-old old woman.

The glorification of criminals in Azerbaijan is evidenced by the photo of I. Aliyev visiting one of the military units of the AR Armed Forces, published on May 1, 2016 on the website of the President of Azerbaijan. From the above photos it becomes clear that I. Aliyev met and awarded the servicemen, among whom was a serviceman of the Artsakh Armed Forces Elnur Farzaliyev showing the severed head of K. Sloyan as a "trophy" in an Azerbaijani village<sup>20</sup>.

The fact that such criminals were personally awarded by the President of Azerbaijan is deeply troubling. These crimes were not limited to acts against the soldiers of the Artsakh Defense Army but also targeted elderly civilians.

The atrocities committed during the Artsakh national liberation struggle in 1988–1994, with hundreds of Armenians murdered and subjected to dismemberment in Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad, and other Azerbaijani cities, draw concerning parallels. Despite the passage of time, it appears that little has changed in Azerbaijan, except for the evolution of tactics by the Azerbaijani armed forces, which now include terrorist-style executions and the gruesome practice of taking pictures with severed heads. The persistence of such brutal acts raises questions about the culture of impunity and the need for accountability in the region.

### **Conclusions**

The article describes Azerbaijan's armed attack on the Republic of Artsakh from April 2–5, 2016, as a violation of norms prohibiting the use of force in

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<sup>19</sup> <https://prosecutornk.am>, 05.05.2016: Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Artsakh. Criminal Cases have been Initiated (retrieved: 01.12.2023).

<sup>20</sup> <https://armenpress.am>, 16.02.2019: War Crimes Committed in April 2016. Azerbaijan, a State where Killing Armenians is Heroism (retrieved: 20.11.2023).

international relations and a clear breach of international humanitarian law. The primary target of the attack was the civilian population on the border and in the deep rear.

The narrative underscores the commission of war crimes against the peaceful and unprotected population during the conflict. The studies mentioned indicate that Azerbaijan not only committed war crimes but also violated various human rights, including the right to life, prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, rights to respect for health, personal and family life, and the rights to protection of property. These crimes and violations are characterized as systemic, with a discernible objective.

Furthermore, the Azerbaijani government's adoption of a maximalist position is highlighted, constraining the potential for a peaceful settlement and indicating a preparedness for a military resolution to the issue. The consistent display of a racist attitude towards the people of Artsakh and their struggle for self-determination is also emphasized in this context.

The emphasis on the Azerbaijani government's adoption of a maximalist position highlights its inclination to limit the potential for a peaceful settlement, signaling a readiness for a military resolution to the issue. Additionally, the persistent display of a racist attitude towards the people of Artsakh and their struggle for self-determination is underscored in this context. This combination of a maximalist stance, a potential preference for a military solution, and a racist attitude contributes to a challenging and hostile environment, hindering efforts for peaceful negotiations and coexistence in the region.

The narrative underscores two interconnected processes leading to Azerbaijan's attack on Artsakh in 2016. Firstly, Baku insisted on substantial unilateral concessions during the negotiation process. Secondly, the construction of an ideology centered around Armenophobia undermined efforts at reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Instead, these policies paved way for what is referred to as a "military solution." These deliberate measures on the part of the Aliyev regime were aimed at making the idea of going to war acceptable in the eyes of Azerbaijani society. In the nationalist narratives propagated by the Azerbaijani government, the rights of people living in Artsakh held no value.

As a result, the destruction of the enemy by any means was considered acceptable.

The surviving evidence indicates that Azerbaijan's escalation was not only aimed at achieving military objectives but also sought the de-armenization of

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Artsakh. This dual approach involved both military actions and a broader agenda to undermine the Armenian presence in the region.

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ԱՎԱՆԵՍՅԱՆ Ի.

### **Ամփոփում**

**Քանալի բառեր՝** ինքնորոշման իրավունք, հայատյացություն, հանցագործություններ, էթնիկ զտում, պատերազմ, տեղահանություն, անպատժելիություն:

Արցախի ժողովրդի ինքնորոշման իրականացումից ի վեր Աղրբեջանի Հանրապետությունը շարունակել է հայերին հետապնդելու քաղաքականությունը և, մասնավորապես, վերջին տարիներին ձեռնամուխ է եղել համատարած հայատյացության քարոզին, ինչն, ի թիվս բազմաթիվ այլ դրսևորումների, արտահայտվել է հայերին սպանած անձանց հերոսացման, հայկական մշակութային արժեքների ոչնչացման և առհասարակ հայերի՝ իրենց պատմական բնակության տարածքներում գոյության իրավունքի մերժման միջոցով:

Սույն հոդվածում ներկայացված են 2016 թ. ապրիլին Աղրբեջանի սանձազերծած պատերազմում Արցախի բնակչության դեմ հանցագործությունները: Վերհանվում են Աղրբեջանի և մասնավորապես վերջինիս զինված ուժերի կողմից քաղաքացիական խաղաղ բնակչության նկատմամբ անմարդկային վերաբերմունքի դեպքերը և քաղաքացիական օբյեկտների դեմ ուղղորդված ու նախապես պլանավորված հարձակումները:

Հարկ է ընդգծել, որ Աղրբեջանի զինուժը խաղաղ բնակչության, նաև՝ զինվորականների հանդեպ թույլ է տվել միջազգային մարդասիրական իրավունքի նորմերի լուրջ խախտումներ, որոնք պետք է որակել որպես պատերազմական հանցագործություններ: Խոսքը, մասնավորապես, քաղաքացիական անձանց սպանությունների, խոշտանգումների ու դիակների խեղման դեպքերի մասին է:

Փաստերի ուսումնասիրությունը ցույց է տալիս, որ հայերի կոտորածները պարբերական բնույթ ունենին, որոնք դրսևորվում են առ այսօր:

## **ПРЕСТУПЛЕНИЯ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА В ОТНОШЕНИИ ГРАЖДАНСКОГО НАСЕЛЕНИЯ АРЦАХА ВО ВРЕМЯ АПРЕЛЬСКОЙ ВОЙНЫ 2016 ГОДА**

АВАНЕСЯН И.

### **Резюме**

**Ключевые слова:** право на самоопределение, армянофобия, преступления, этнические чистки, война, безнаказанность, депортация.

С момента провозглашения самоопределения Арцаха Азербайджанская Республика продолжала политику преследования армян. В частности, в последние годы она начала активно проводить политику широкомасштабной пропаганды армянофобии. Это проявляется, среди прочего, в героизации лиц, совершивших убийства армян, уничтожении армянских культурных ценностей и отказе армянам в праве на существование на территориях их исторического проживания в целом.

Данная статья рассматривает преступления, совершенные в отношении населения Арцаха во время войны, развязанной Азербайджаном в апреле 2016 года. Были выявлены случаи бесчеловечного обращения с мирным гражданским населением со стороны Азербайджана и, в частности, его вооруженных сил. Также отмечены целенаправленные и заранее спланированные нападения на гражданские объекты.

Важно подчеркнуть, что Вооруженные Силы Азербайджана совершили серьезные нарушения норм международного гуманитарного права в отношении гражданского населения, а также военнослужащих, что может быть квалифицировано как военные преступления. В частности, речь идет об убийствах, пытках гражданских лиц и нанесении увечий трупам.

Изучение фактов свидетельствует о том, что массовые убийства армян имели периодический характер и продолжаются по сей день.