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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications  
for international peace, security and development****The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan****Elimination of racism, racial discrimination,  
xenophobia and related intolerance****Right of peoples to self-determination****Promotion and protection of human rights****The rule of law at the national and international levels****Measures to eliminate international terrorism****Security Council  
Seventy-fifth year****Letter dated 18 November 2020 from the Permanent  
Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to  
the Secretary-General**

Further to my letter dated 5 October 2020 ([A/75/497-S/2020/982](#)), I hereby transmit the report on the use of foreign terrorist fighters by the Republic of Armenia in its recent aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan (see annex). \* Additional photo evidence and the list of foreign nationals involved in Armenian forces and terrorist groups unlawfully deployed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are available from the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan upon request.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 40, 70, 71, 72, 86 and 114, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yashar Aliyev  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

\* Circulated in the language of submission only.



## **Annex to the letter dated 18 November 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

### **Report on the use of foreign terrorist fighters by the Republic of Armenia in its recent aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan**

#### **Overview**

In blatant violation of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions, Armenia has been occupying one fifth of the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan for almost 30 years. As a result of Armenia's aggression, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis were forcefully expelled from their homes and became internally displaced persons.

Over the years, Armenia has systematically and deliberately pursued the goal of cementing the occupation and securing the annexation of the seized Azerbaijani territories. Being against the political settlement, which rejects the status-quo based on the unlawful use of force, Armenia has undertaken a chain of provocative actions to undermine the peace process. The illegal transfer of settlers and foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) from Iraq, Lebanon and Syria into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is among such actions.

The Government of Armenia has provided accommodation, training and logistical maintenance of FTFs in the occupied territories to prepare them for terrorist and combat operations against Azerbaijan. Training camps had been established by Armenia under the instruction of PKK and ASALA terrorist organizations. The transfer of FTFs intensified immediately after Armenia had perpetrated another act of aggression on 27 September 2020.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly brought to the attention of the world community the threats and challenges emanating from Armenia's unlawful actions. In its communications, Azerbaijan has called on all States to condemn Armenia for its illegal settlement policy in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, strengthen border control measures for preventing the transfer of FTFs into the territories of Azerbaijan, suppress the financing of terrorism carried out under the cover of charity activities by Armenian diaspora organizations and prevent the abuse of civil aviation for transporting FTFs and armament to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

In an attempt to divert the attention of the international community from its own crimes and justify heavy losses inflicted on its armed forces on the battlefield, Armenia brazenly accused Azerbaijan of the use of FTFs and waged a scaled campaign of disseminating fake news to that end. However, professional analysis of various video and photo materials shared to substantiate Armenia's claims clearly testifies to their fabricated content and nature. Thus, as one author has noted, "[i]t is surprising that such obvious falsifications somehow get on to the pages of leading foreign publications. Yerevan has so far been unable to provide any evidence of the presence of so-called mercenaries in Karabakh fighting for Azerbaijan".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Philippe Jeune, "War in Karabakh: How fake news appears on Western media", *Eureporter* (10 November 2020), <https://www.eureporter.co/general/2020/11/10/war-in-karabakh-how-fake-news-appears-on-western-media/>.

## A. Recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters by Armenia – data from open media sources

In the course of its recent military aggression against Azerbaijan, Armenia has recruited foreign nationals from different countries into its armed units unlawfully deployed in the temporarily occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Immediately after the outbreak of hostilities on 27 September 2020, the Prime Minister of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, appealed to all Armenians, including foreign nationals of Armenian origin, to stand united in defence of the “homeland”. In his interview to *Ria Novosti* on 15 October 2020, Pashinyan confirmed the participation of foreign nationals, including those of Armenian origin, in combat operations against Azerbaijan.<sup>2</sup>

It must be particularly noted that what the leadership of Armenia calls the “homeland” is the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan under Armenia’s unlawful occupation. In response to the new act of aggression, Azerbaijan had undertaken counter-offensive measures, in the exercise of its inherent right of self-defence. Azerbaijan acted exclusively on its sovereign soil to protect its civilian population, liberate the occupied territories from aggressors and terrorists and allow 750 thousand internally displaced persons to return to their homes and properties.

The evidence gleaned before and during hostilities leaves no doubt as to the organized recruitment of mercenaries and FTFs by Armenia and their transfer to the conflict zone for using in combats against Azerbaijan and its civilian population.

Armenia has a long history of using FTFs to advance its malign foreign and security policy goals. Such terrorist organizations as the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG) have been actively involved in aggression against Azerbaijan in early 1990s. Among them is Monte Melkonyan, a notorious ASALA terrorist who actively participated in the conflict with his armed group and was posthumously named a national hero in Armenia.<sup>3</sup>

### PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party)

Over the years, Armenia has closely collaborated with PKK, one of the internationally recognized terrorist organizations.<sup>4</sup>

Before the latest aggression, there have been numerous reports about “300 militants belonging to PKK transferred by Armenia from various countries in the Middle East and placed in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, where they have subsequently begun training with Armenian military”.<sup>5</sup>

According to the reports, PKK has its office in the centre of Armenia’s capital city of Yerevan and its camps had been set up in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. In addition to the recent deployment of PKK terrorists from Iraq and

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ria.ru/amp/20201015/karabakh-1580006838.html?>

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., “Monte Melkonian A Commander During The Karabakh War A National Hero of Armenia & N.K.Republic” (23 April 2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLxSdRcrw-Y>.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, “*Turkey’s Kurdish Question*” (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1998), pp 32, 166.

<sup>5</sup> “Turkey: Armenia transports hundreds of PKK militants to fight Azerbaijan”, *Middle East Monitor* (30 September 2020), <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200930-armenia-transport-hundreds-of-pkk-militants-to-fight-azerbaijan/>. See also James Wilson, “PKK’s involvement in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict would jeopardize European security”, *Eureporter* (23 September 2020), <https://www.eureporter.co/frontpage/2020/09/23/pkks-involvement-in-the-armenia-azerbaijan-conflict-would-jeopardize-european-security/>.

Syria in Nagorny Karabakh,<sup>6</sup> there were also reports of civilians from those countries earlier transferred into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and provided with cash benefits and low-interest loans.<sup>7</sup>

Armenia is reportedly supplying missile systems to PKK. Their delivery is coordinated by PKK commander, one of its five founders, Jamil Bayik. PKK stronghold in Qandil, Iraq, is said to be the destination of delivery.<sup>8</sup>

Some sources suggest that the members of “Nubar Ozanyan Brigade”, an Armenian-run terrorist group based in Qamishli city of Syria with strong ties to Iravan, joined the armed forces of Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.<sup>9</sup> The Brigade was formed under the leadership of YPG, the Syrian wing of PKK.

Armenia had transferred hundreds of armed terrorists from Suleymaniyah, another stronghold of PKK in Iraq, to the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.<sup>10</sup> Flight data acquired from open internet sources indicates the intensity of flights from Suleymaniyah to Iravan in September and October 2020, while no single flight on the same itinerary had been operated in the past. The flights took place on 9 and 19 September, as well as on 8 and 13 October 2020 (each time carrying at least 300 passengers on board) and conducted by the aircrafts of Olympus Airways of Greece.

Some media sources reported that the contact with PKK terrorists in Iraq and Syria had been established by Hrachya Poladian, Armenian Ambassador to Baghdad. Poladian convinced the groups in meetings and agreed with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan for the transfer of terrorists from Iraq and Syria to the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.<sup>11</sup>

According to media reports, YPG/PKK terrorists deployed in the Shusha city of Azerbaijan had worn uniforms of the armed forces of Azerbaijan. The purpose was not only to confuse Azerbaijani forces, but also introduce killed terrorists as allegedly brought from Syria by Azerbaijan.<sup>12</sup>

Armenian prisoner of war Albert Mikaelyan admitted that FTFs were fighting in the Armenian ranks in Nagorny Karabakh with a monthly salary of \$600.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/LukeDCoffey/status/1312063454975590401>.

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Report on illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, UN Doc. A/70/1016–S/2016/711 (16 August 2016); <https://www.turksam.org/daglik-karabag-a-yerlesen-pkk-ve-turkiye-nin-sinir-otesi-mudahale-hakki>.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Mushvig Mehdiyev, “Armenia Deploys PKK Terrorists to Occupied Azerbaijani Lands”, *Caspian News* (26 September 2020), <https://caspiannews.com/news-detail/armenia-deploys-pkk-terrorists-to-occupied-azerbaijani-lands-2020-9-25-36/>.

<sup>9</sup> “Are PKK-linked terrorists fighting alongside Armenia in occupied-Karabakh”, *TRT World* (1 October 2020), <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/are-pkk-linked-terrorists-fighting-alongside-armenia-in-occupied-karabakh-40201>.

<sup>10</sup> James Wilson, “PKK’s involvement in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict would jeopardize European security”, *Eureporter* (23 September 2020), <https://www.eureporter.co/frontpage/2020/09/23/pkks-involvement-in-the-armenia-azerbaijan-conflict-would-jeopardize-european-security/>.

<sup>11</sup> “Armenia transfers YPG/PKK terrorists to occupied area to train militias against Azerbaijan”, *Daily Sabah* (25 September 2020), <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/war-on-terror/armenia-transfers-yppgk-terrorists-to-occupied-area-to-train-militias-against-azerbaijan>.

<sup>12</sup> Ruslan Rehimov, “Armenia making PKK terrorists wear Azerbaijani uniforms” (26 October 2020), <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/azerbaijan-front-line/armenia-making-pkk-terrorists-wear-azerbaijani-uniforms/2018969>.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.azeridaily.com/reality/59170>.

## Lebanese and Syrian nationals

Armenia had taken the advantage of people suffered from the crisis in Syria and the destructive explosion in the Beirut Port on 4 August 2020 to recruit the nationals of these countries of Armenian origin to fight against Azerbaijan.<sup>14</sup>

Between 2011 and 2017, Armenia has settled more than 20,000 Syrian nationals on its territory and in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.<sup>15</sup> In 2016, former residents of the Syrian village of Yacoubiyah were enticed to settle en masse in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.<sup>16</sup>

After the liberation of the Zangilan district of Azerbaijan from occupation in October 2020, the list of names of 60 Syrian nationals (19 families) moved from Syria to the occupied territories was found in one of the buildings used by Armenian intelligence services.<sup>17</sup>

Immediately after the Beirut Port explosion on 4 August 2020, Armenia organized the transfer of Lebanon nationals into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Since August 2020, nine families from Lebanon have been settled in Nagorny Karabakh,<sup>18</sup> while Armenian authorities expressed their readiness to transfer 100-150 more families to the region.<sup>19</sup>

The video footage appeared on 29 October 2020 shows the Lebanese national acknowledging fighting in the ranks of Armenia's army against Azerbaijan.<sup>20</sup>

As *Radio France International* has reported, fighters from Lebanon, Syria and Latin America arrived in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to fight for Armenia. According to the report, around 30 fighters received "express training" and "[s]ince the start of the conflict, so many have been registered that some are still waiting in Yerevan to be called in to support those who are fighting".<sup>21</sup>

*Associated Press* (AP) reported that Lebanese Armenians joined the fight against Azerbaijan. Several residents of Beirut's main Armenian district, Bourj Hammoud, told AP that they too are ready to abandon their lives in Lebanon to fight against Azerbaijan. "We will fight until the last Armenian soldier," a shop owner was

<sup>14</sup> "From The Turmoil Of Aleppo To Conflict In Nagorno-Karabakh", *Radio Liberty* (5 September 2016), <https://www.rferl.org/a/nagorno-karabakh-syrian-armenians/27967773.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Anna Kamay, Anush Babajanyan, "Karabakh: Syrian Refugees Flee One War Zone for Another" (16 January 2017), *Eurasianet*, <https://www.eurasianet.org/karabakh-syrian-refugees-flee-one-war-zone-for-another>.

<sup>16</sup> Fabrice Balanche, "Two Potential Safe Zones in Northern Syria" (24 February 2016), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/two-potential-safe-zones-in-northern-syria>.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.defence.az/en/news/148484>.

<sup>18</sup> Siranush Ghazanchyan, "Nine more Lebanese Armenian families to settle in Artsakh", *Public Radio of Armenia* (27 August 2020), <https://en.armradio.am/2020/08/27/nine-more-lebanese-armenian-families-to-settle-in-artsakh/>.

<sup>19</sup> Vasif Huseynov, "Armenian Resettlement From Lebanon to the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan Endangers Peace Process", *Eurasia Daily Monitor* (23 September 2020), <https://www.jamestown.org/program/armenian-resettlement-from-lebanon-to-the-occupied-territories-of-azerbaijan-endangers-peace-process/>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/ragipsoylu/status/1311035752847937539>.

<sup>21</sup> "Dans le Haut-Karabakh, les volontaires arméniens découvrent la guerre", *Radio France International* (3 October 2020), <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/europe/20201003-le-haut-karabakh-les-volontaires-arm%C3%A9niens-d%C3%A9couvrent-la-guerre>.

quoted as saying. Opera singer Kevork Hadjian, who was known for his rousing renditions of nationalist Armenian songs, was killed in combat.<sup>22</sup>

In an interview to AP, Rafi Ghazaryan, 50-years-old national of Lebanon, expressed his intention to leave for Armenia and fight against Azerbaijan. He confirmed that many of his compatriots of Armenian origin had already done so.<sup>23</sup>

Vartkes, young national of Lebanon, told *Reuters* that Lebanon's financial crisis pushed him to leave for Armenia this summer and that he wanted to go to the combat zone "when the conflict between Azerbaijani and ethnic Armenian forces erupted soon after his move".<sup>24</sup>

Karapet Aghajanyan, the combat instructor in Iravan, who trained local and foreign volunteers, said that around 10 Lebanese Armenians had received training in his camp. He also said they had arrived from Beirut after the fighting broke out in late September to go to the frontline.<sup>25</sup>

### Other nationals

Besides PKK and nationals from the Middle Eastern countries, Armenia had deployed FTFs also from other countries.

*Greek City Times* revealed that the first batch of Greek fighters would consist of approximately 80 Greek citizens, around 50 of Armenian origin and about 30 ethnic Greeks.<sup>26</sup> The Greek media further reported that Armenian recruitment involved around 500-800 Greek nationals, some with combat experience in NATO missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo.<sup>27</sup>

David Koroghlyan, a U.S. national, was visiting his family in Armenia when hostilities erupted on 27 September 2020. He did not leave for the U.S. and joined the ranks of Armenian forces. His relative, another U.S. national, George Avakian, also left Glendale, U.S., to take part in hostilities.<sup>28</sup>

Arsen Harutyunyan, famous mountain skier coach in the U.S., who had participated in Winter Olympics as member of the U.S. national team, was also among the U.S. nationals joining Armenian forces in Nagorny Karabakh.<sup>29</sup>

There are plenty of sources attesting to the involvement of French nationals to the armed units of Armenia against Azerbaijan.

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<sup>22</sup> "Lebanese Armenians join fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh", *Middle East Monitor* (13 October 2020), <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20201013-lebanese-armenians-join-fighting-in-nagorno-karabakh/>.

<sup>23</sup> "Associated Press: Война в Нагорном Карабахе привлекает бойцов с Ближнего Востока" (9 October 2020), <https://www.unian.net/world/nagornyyu-karabah-armyane-iz-livana-edut-na-voynu-s-azerbaydzhanom-novosti-mira-11176991.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Maria Semerdjian, Ellen Francis, "Despite Lebanon's woes, Armenians spring to action for Nagorno-Karabakh", *Reuters* (1 November 2020), <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-armenia-azerbaijan-lebanon/despite-lebanons-woes-armenians-spring-to-action-for-nagorno-karabakh-idUKKBN27H157>.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Paul Antonopoulos, "GCT Exclusive: I cannot watch what is hapenning and not fight" – Approximately 80 Grreks going to Artsakh battlefield", <https://www.greekcitytimes.com/2020/10/01/greeks-going-to-artsakh-battlefront/>.

<sup>27</sup> "Former non-commissioned officer: "I'm going to Artsakh with 500-800 Greeks to crush the Turks", <https://www.greekcitytimes.com/2020/10/03/former-non-commissioned-officer-im-going-to-artsakh-with-500-800-greeks-to-crush-the-turks/?amp>.

<sup>28</sup> Lila Seidman, "Bound by duty and love, some L.A. Armenians are joining the battle lines in their homeland", *Los Angeles Times* (9 October 2020), <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-10-09/armenia-azerbaijan-los-angeles-artsakh-war-connections>.

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.defence.az/en/news/147955>.

Referring to French media, *Daily Sabah* reported that “scores of Armenians living in France have arrived in the illegally occupied Azerbaijani territory of Nagorno-Karabakh to fight alongside Yerevan forces”. “Armenians from France are starting to arrive in Armenia to fight the Azerbaijani army on the Nagorno-Karabakh front,” Georges Malbrunot, a senior reporter of *Le Figaro* said in a tweet. According to *France 24*, “Vardan, an Armenian builder living in western France, flew back to Armenia to fight in the conflict with Azerbaijan.”<sup>30</sup>

Hrayr Keroglyan, 45-year-old national of France, who was born in Aleppo, Syria, arrived in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan with his eldest son immediately after the eruption of hostilities on 27 September 2020.<sup>31</sup>

Hamlet Hovsepian, 31-years-old sports wrestler from Strasbourg,<sup>32</sup> and Arthur Ohanissian were also among those French citizens taking part in hostilities.

It is worth reading the following passage of Arthur Ohanissian’s interview to *Novaya Gazeta*, which draws the solid picture of disappointment of FTFs for their joining the ranks of Armenian forces:

“They [the Armenian authorities] deceive people! They sent 18-year-old soldiers to the front only with machine guns. [They say:] “Sorry, no bullets, sorry, no tanks.” Bulletproof jackets are completely useless. There is nothing there. The food truck unloads everything on the road, and if you want to eat, you have to walk 4 kilometers under the Grads. We, 8 friends, went for 4 nights and carried food for all four lines on our shoulders.

I just came, I don’t even have any documents, I bought a machine gun and went ahead. I had two brothers there and I followed them and stayed. I am from Gumri, but a French citizen. I came two weeks ago from there.”<sup>33</sup>

As the *Libération* reported, the leader of the extreme right-wing group Zouaves Paris (ZVP), Marc de Cacqueray-Valmenier, informed via Instagram that he had arrived in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to fight alongside Armenians against Azerbaijan. To illustrate his commitment, he shared own photo in uniform with an assault rifle in his hands that could be a Kalashnikov. On his bust were two patches: an Armenian flag and a totenkopf, the skull used by some SS units. He also made known his will to create “a brigade of foreign volunteers” in collaboration with the local authorities.<sup>34</sup>

Media sources of Georgia reported about nationals of this country of Armenian origin participating in military operations against Azerbaijan.

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<sup>30</sup> “French Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh to fight Azerbaijan” (7 October 2020), <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/french-armenians-in-nagorno-karabakh-to-fight-azerbaijan/news>; “Armenian volunteer returns from France to fight for Nagorno-Karabakh”, *France 24* (7 October 2020), <https://www.france24.com/en/20201007-armenian-volunteer-returns-from-france-to-fight-for-nagorno-karabakh>.

<sup>31</sup> “French citizens fight against Azerbaijani Army in Nagorno-Karabakh”, *Azərbaycan 24* (3 November 2020), <https://www.azerbaycan24.com/en/french-citizens-fight-against-azerbaijani-army-in-nagorno-karabakh-nbsp/>.

<sup>32</sup> “Tout le monde doit combattre”: les volontaires arméniens affluent vers le Haut-Karabakh”, *Le Figaro* (7 October 2020), <https://www.lefigaro.fr/international/tout-le-monde-doit-combattre-les-volontaires-armeniens-affluent-vers-le-haut-karabakh-20201006>.

<sup>33</sup> “Война у южных ворот”, *Новая Газета* (9 October 2020), <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2020/10/07/87416-voyna-u-yuzhnyh-vorot>.

<sup>34</sup> “Extrême droite : le patron des Zouaves Paris part combattre au Haut-Karabakh”, *Libération* (30 October 2020), [https://www.liberation.fr/france/2020/10/30/extrême-droite-le-patron-des-zouaves-paris-part-combattre-au-haut-karabakh\\_1803962](https://www.liberation.fr/france/2020/10/30/extrême-droite-le-patron-des-zouaves-paris-part-combattre-au-haut-karabakh_1803962).

Major Ovannes Ayvazyan, senior lieutenant Migran Avdalyan, lieutenant colonel Arman Kostanyan and lieutenant colonel Arsen Khachatryan were awarded with “orders” by the so-called “defence army of Nagorny Karabakh”.<sup>35</sup>

The following nationals of Georgia, who joined Armenian forces, were killed in combats in Nagorny Karabakh: Simon Avagyan, Mkhitar Khachikovich Agjoyan, Ashot Alikovich Chobanyan, Gnel Minasovich Fidanyan, Valentin Shavarshovich Burnusuzyan, Vachagan Anushavanovich Ginosyan, Gevorg Babkenovich Berakchyan, Arsen Karapetyan, Suren Artashevich Vantsyan, Alexander Nairovich Farmanyan, Oganeg Onikovich Apozyan, Vage Edikovich Vardanyan, Alen Vardanyan, Arsen Meruzhanovich Yegoyan, Isaak Arturovich Garibyan, Arsen Sargisovich Sargsyan, Gagik Sedrakovich Brsoyan, Ashot Ovannesovich Taziyan.<sup>36</sup>

One of the leaders of Armenian separatists in Georgia, Vaagn Chakhalyan, who was sentenced by the Georgian Court to 10 years in prison in 2009, and several other nationals of this country of Armenian origin from the Javakheti region of Georgia, went to Karabakh as part of a terrorist group. Chakhalyan posted pictures on his Facebook page showing him along with other terrorists in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.<sup>37</sup>

There were also media reports about the arrival of a group of FTFs from Abkhazia, Georgia. Some of them were members of Armenian battalion called “Bagramyan”, which is well-known for its cruelties against the civilian population of Georgia. The recruiter of the group was Akhra Avidzba, who is known with his nickname “Abkhaz”. The group departed Sochi on 6 November 2020 with Ural Airlines flight U6-8871.<sup>38</sup>

Another FTF taking part in terrorist activities against Azerbaijan and its civilian population is Aghasi Asatryan, German national, who was an IT specialist in Germany before arriving in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.<sup>39</sup>

Alexander Bagdasaryan, 26-years-old national of the Russian Federation from Moscow, joined Armenian forces immediately after the hostilities started.<sup>40</sup>

The Union of Armenians in Russia compiled a list of 20,000 volunteers willing to join the fighting. Some of those travelled to the region were turned away from the battlefield. The source cited a student from Moscow, Levan, who went to Nagorny Karabakh with three friends as saying: “I was in Stepanakert (Khankendi) a few days ago, they wrote my name down but said I was not yet needed. At the moment they are only accepting fighters with experience”.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>35</sup> “Ованнес Айвазян награжден орденом «Боевой крест»”, *JNEWS* (8 October 2020), <http://www.jnews.ge/?p=59484>.

<sup>36</sup> “Имена выходцев из Джавахети, погибших в Карабахе”, *JNEWS* (19 October 2020), <http://www.jnews.ge/?p=60116>.

<sup>37</sup> “Джавахкский сепаратист Ваагн Чахалян воюет в рядах террористов в Карабахе и обещает вернуться в Грузию с оружием и “побратимыми”-террористами”, *Caucasus Plus* (5 October 2020), <https://www.kavkazplus.com/news.php?id=30429#.X5VYq1UzaUk>.

<sup>38</sup> “Сухуми — Карабах: транзит террористов продолжается”, *Minval*, [https://www.musavat.com/ru/news/suhumi-karabah-tranzit-terroristov-prodolzhaetsya\\_751745.html?d=1](https://www.musavat.com/ru/news/suhumi-karabah-tranzit-terroristov-prodolzhaetsya_751745.html?d=1).

<sup>39</sup> “Armenian nationals abroad return to fight in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”, *The Jerusalem Post* (29 October 2020), <https://www.jpost.com/international/armenian-nationals-abroad-return-to-fight-in-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-647381>.

<sup>40</sup> Gabrielle Tétrault-Farber, “Armenian diaspora rushes to Nagorno-Karabakh to back troops”, *Reuters* (9 October 2020), <https://www.reuters.com/article/armenia-azerbaijan-volunteers-int-idUSKBN26U13N>.

<sup>41</sup> “‘I Want to Join the Final Battle.’ Armenians in Russia Flock to Karabakh”, *The Moscow Times* (7 October 2020), <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/10/07/i-want-to-join-the-final-battle-armenians-in-russia-flock-to-karabakh-a71686>.

## **Public Military-Patriotic Organization – VoMA**

According to the information available to the law-enforcement agencies of Azerbaijan, Russian/Armenian citizen Vladimir Vartanov (date of birth: 10.12.1965) and others, having created the armed formation called “VoMA” (“VoxjMnaluArvest” – the art of survival), had involved the citizens from various countries, including the members of ASALA, PKK and other terrorist groups, in training within the Mountain Rifle Reserve Battalion (VoMA battalion) to commit terrorist acts against Azerbaijan.

VoMA posted an announcement on social network calling on Armenians aged between 18–55 to join fighting. It organized a charter flight from Moscow to Iravan and expressed readiness to provide free flight tickets to those unable to afford them.<sup>42</sup> Activities of VoMA have reportedly been funded by the Ministry of Defence of Armenia and Armenian diaspora. There was a separate link in the website of VoMA for donation.

The Office of the General Prosecutor of Azerbaijan established that FTFs associated with VoMA crossed the internationally recognized border of Azerbaijan outside the checkpoints and arrived in the city of Khankendi and other occupied territories to fight against Azerbaijan. It was also established that the members of VoMA had committed numerous offenses motivated by ethnic hatred, as well as carried out terrorist acts with particular cruelty against Azerbaijani civilians.<sup>43</sup>

### **A. Recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters by Armenia – data from intelligence sources**

The following foreign nationals and armed groups has been recently deployed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to take part in hostilities in the ranks of Armenian forces:

U.S. nationals and residents of Glendale, California, Aroushan Badasyan (date of birth: 27.05.1968) and Allen Sayadyan (40-years-old).

Murad Aslan Vartanyan, national of Iraq and major of that country’s armed forces. Arrived in the conflict zone together with his armed group consisted of Iraqi nationals of Armenian (36 fighters) and Assyrian origins.

Harmik Hovsepyan, 59-years-old national of Iran and member of an Iranian chapter of radical “Dashnaksutyun” party of Armenia. Was wounded and hospitalized on 10 October 2020.

Sergey Valeryevich Vabishevich (Serov, Sirov), national of Belarus (date of birth: 20.07.1967) from the Kobrin city and resident of Moscow, Russian Federation. Joined Armenian forces in the occupied Azerbaijani city of Khankendi on 1 October 2020 together with other fighters he recruited. Was reportedly wounded on 5 November 2020.

Anahit Martirosyan, national of Belarus.

Peter Petrossian, national of Belgium (date of birth: 04.10.1977) from the Zamar region of Syria and resident of Brussels. Besides personal involvement in hostilities, he reportedly brokered the illegal shipment of armament from Iraq to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.vk.com/voma\\_official](https://www.vk.com/voma_official).

<sup>43</sup> The list of individuals registered for VoMA trainings is available at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan upon request.

Setrag Balian, a Palestinian national. Illegally crossed the State border between Azerbaijan and Armenia in early October.

Gilbert-Levon Minasyan, 65-years-old national of France from Marseille. Was the head of “Young Communists” movement in France in 1970s.

Hamlet Hovsepian, national of France (date of birth: 12.08.1989) and resident of Strasbourg. Committed several terrorist acts in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and organized fundraising activities in Strasbourg for purchasing and transferring armament to the conflict zone.

David Hovsepian, 28-years-old Sipan Mouradian and 30-years-old Sipan Koroghlian, all nationals of France.

David, 22-years-old national of France and resident of Paris. Was an employee of the European Space Agency before joining Armenian forces.

Armen Chakhalian and Ashot Abramian, nationals of Georgia from the Samtskhe-Javakhetia region of Georgia.

60-years-old Krishian Grigoryevich Artyun from the Akhalkalaki region of Georgia, 35-40-years-old Gevork Avagian from the Ninotsminda region of Georgia, 35-40-years-old Maksim Arzumanian from the Ninotsminda region of Georgia and 55-60-years old Grigor Soqoyan from the Ninotsminda region of Georgia, all nationals of Georgia.

30-years-old Iakovos Stamatiadis, journalist Paul Antonopoulos, 16-years-old Armen Panoutsarian, 27-years-old Ellinoarmenis Mars, employee of the Call Center, and Aren Osipov, all nationals of Greece.

Kegart Hovansian, 31-years-old national of Syria and priest. Was reportedly wounded in combat.

Gevork Chawishian, national of Syria from the Qamishli region and member of “Nubar Ozanyan” terrorist group.

Stephan Keshishian, national of Syria, arrived in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in late September.

Samuel Badalian, 63-years-old national of Spain, resident of the Lloret de-Mar city of the Girona province. Was a chief of private security company before joining Armenian forces.

Armen Knyazian, national of Spain (date of birth: 30.06.1974), resident of the Lloret de-Mar city of the Girona province. Was a manager of restaurant before joining Armenian forces. Was killed in combat on 10 October 2020.

Norik Knyazian, resident of the Lloret de-Mar city of the Girona province and cousin of Armen Knyazyan. Was a cook before joining Armenian forces.

Haigaz Kradenian, national of Jordan from Amman.

Qalust Akopovich Safaryan (date of birth: 23.12.1968), national of the Russian Federation, known with his pseudonym “Garegin Nzhdeh”– Nazi SS general. Organized the illegal armed group called “Garegin Nzhdeh troop” and arrived in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan from Moscow via Iravan.

Semyon Pegov, 35-years-old national of the Russian Federation. Presents himself as a journalist. Was involved in active military operations as combatant in military uniform. His reports from the war area were motivated by terrorist ideology.

Migran Arutunian (date of birth: 25.03.1989), national of the Russian Federation. Wrestling athlete participated in several Olympic and World Wrestling Championships.

Armen Martoyan (date of birth: 18.09.1967), national of the Russian Federation, known with pseudonym “Samvel”. Founded the armed group “Alliance of Crimean volunteers” to join Armenian forces.

Viktor Aleksandrovich Rastorquyev (date of birth: 26.11.1976), national of the Russian Federation and resident of Saint Petersburg. Announced on his personal Facebook page on 20 October 2020 that he was leaving to fight against Azerbaijan.

Shagen Danielian, national of the Russian Federation and employee of the Skilofosovski Medical Clinic. Arrived in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan at the end of September via Iravan.

Armen Mkrтчian, national of the Russian Federation and resident of Moscow. Announced through his social network accounts about his departure to join Armenian forces.

Sergei Gurgenovitch Bulishev, 48-years-old national of the Russian Federation. Writer. On 2 October 2020, he left Moscow for the occupied Khankendi city of Azerbaijan via Iravan to join Armenian forces.

Eduard Danielovich Vartanian (date of birth: 11.06.1991), national of the Russian Federation. Professional MMA fighter. Arrived in the occupied Azerbaijani city of Khankendi in early October.

Akhshen Badalian, 30-35-years-old national of the Russian Federation. Board member of the Moscow representation of the “Homenetmen” sports organization uniting all Armenians around the world. Joined Armenian forces in October 2020.

Gaspar, 50-years-old national of the Russian Federation and resident of Sochi. Was chief of a private security company guarding one of the local sanatoriums.

Hagop Khajiryan, national of Lebanon. On 14 October 2020, sent SMS message from his mobile number to his Armenian counterpart (Vartan Petrosyan) in Iravan with the following text:

“Hello dear Vartan. I am in Yerevan. I hope the current situation will be over soon and ceasefire will be established. I arrived in Yerevan on Saturday. I should have been in Artsakh with my fellow compatriots, but we have been strictly suggested to limit our numbers. Therefore, we decided to be only two of us”.

H.Khajiryan is a graduate of the Lebanese American University, currently holding the position at the Asian Secretariat of FIBA (International Basketball Federation). Member of “Homenetmen” Armenian basketball team of Lebanon. It is not excluded that, while referring to his “fellow compatriots”, H.Khajiryan meant his teammates from the mentioned basketball team.

Hagop Terzian, national of Lebanon. Arrived in Armenia at the end of September 2020.

Tamar Godijian (date of birth: 06.06.1991; place of birth: Beirut), national of Lebanon and resident of Beirut. Used to work as a chief accountant at Beirut-based “Mirum MEA”. She has illegally visited the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan many times before. Last time arrived in Iravan on 6 October 2020.

Fatima Kourani, 25-years-old national of Lebanon (place of birth: Yater town in south Lebanon) and resident of Beirut. Graduate of the Geography Department of the Lebanon University.

Aline Keshishian, national of Lebanon and resident of Beirut. Graduate of the Armenian Evangelical College and the Haigazian University's Business Management Department.

Hussein Sharafeddine, national of Lebanon and resident of the Zahle town. Graduate of the Art, Science and Technology University.

Harout Genejian, national of Lebanon and resident of Beirut. Graduate of the Lebanon University and member of the "Dashnaksutyun" party. After receiving training, illegally crossed the border of Azerbaijan on 3 March 2020.

Dalisha Kontar, national of Lebanon (place of birth: Beirut). Graduate of the Electronics and Computer Engineering Department of the American University of Beirut.

Hratch Yardemian, national of Lebanon and resident of Beirut. Graduate of the Armenian Evangelical College and the American University of Lebanon.

David Ovanesian, national of Lebanon. Received military training in Lebanon. Was killed in combat on 2 October 2020.

Other nationals of Lebanon: Antuan Sidirian, Tony Orian (journalist), Gevorg Keombejian (orthopedic surgeon), Nikolas Ltaif, Aslan Murad Vartanyan, Paul Naourian (Khalo Giro), Nora Dakessian and Ara Dakessian, Murad Nersisian (from the Beqaa region's Anjar city).

Christopher Arutunian, 40–45-years-old citizen of Canada. Was killed in combat.

The State Security Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan intercepted radio-communication of terrorists linked to PKK who were taking part in hostilities against Azerbaijan. They discussed the miserable situation experienced by the armed forces of Armenia and their own hardships, as well as effective use of UAVs by Azerbaijani army. Thus, they expressed regret for being deceived by the Armenian side and their arrival in the conflict zone. One of them informed the other about the arrival of a group of terrorists from Suleymaniyah (Iraq).<sup>44</sup>

### **International framework in relation to the use of foreign terrorist fighters by Armenia**

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), "individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict" are defined as FTFs.

Regardless of their ethnic origin (Armenian or non-Armenian), intention (voluntary or involuntary) or material motivation (paid or unpaid), all individuals leaving their countries of residence or nationality for the purpose of joining the armed conflict are considered FTFs.

Since 27 September 2020, as a result of direct and indiscriminate attacks by the armed forces of Armenia, 94 civilians had been killed, more than 400 civilians had been wounded and some 3,410 private houses, 120 apartment buildings and 512 other

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6mbK9f0oiQ>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWaUaTiIDPs>; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r98uSSN\\_B28](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r98uSSN_B28); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWaUaTiIDPs&t=32s>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wv-YAOD2KA>.

civilian objects, including schools, kindergartens, hospitals, religious sites and cultural monuments, had been either destroyed or damaged.

Armenia bears international legal liability for bringing terrorist groups and individuals into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and for organizing and conducting terrorist and related activities against Azerbaijan and its civilians.

Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), the States Members of the United Nations “shall prevent the movement of terrorists and terrorist groups by effective border controls and undertake necessary punitive measures under their penal legislation”.

Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2253 \(2015\)](#): “Member States shall prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer to these individuals, groups, undertakings and entities from their territories or by their nationals outside their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, and technical advice, assistance or training related to military activities”.

In its resolution [2462 \(2019\)](#), the Security Council “calls upon Member States to conduct financial investigations in terrorism related cases and to seek ways to address the challenges in obtaining evidence to secure terrorist financing convictions”. The Security Council “further calls upon Member States to more effectively investigate and prosecute cases of terrorist financing and to apply, as appropriate, effective, proportionate, and dissuasive criminal sanctions to individuals and entities convicted of terrorist financing activity”.

Article 5 of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries prohibits States Parties to recruit, use, finance or train mercenaries and oblige them to punish these offences. The Convention also contains provisions outlining the responsibility of States to cooperate in preventing mercenary offences (Article 6) and implementing the Convention (Article 7).

According to common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the High Contracting Parties shall undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances.

Both international humanitarian law and international human rights law require that States take appropriate measures to bring perpetrators of violations to justice and provide effective remedies to victims.

In addition to their obligations deriving from international law and national legislation, the States of origin should also bear in mind that FTFs taking part in military operations against Azerbaijan, once returned to their countries, would pose a serious threat to their own societies.

In view of the above-mentioned, the Republic of Azerbaijan strongly urges the respective authorities of all States, origin or transit, to exercise due diligence in light of travel by their nationals to Armenia and put in place necessary preventive border control measures, as well as to take all steps required for not allowing their territories to be used for supporting or financing terrorist activities against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its civilian population.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is determined to take all measures stemming from its rights under relevant bilateral and multilateral mechanisms with a view to curbing terrorist activities within its internationally recognized territories and bringing the perpetrators to justice.