



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 4

**Human rights situations that require the Council's attention**

### **Note verbale dated 6 September 2021 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva hereby transmits the message of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Ararat Mirzoyan, on the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Armenia kindly requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto\* as a document of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

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\* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Annex to the note verbale dated 6 September 2021 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

### **Message of the Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan dated 30 August 2021 on the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances**

On 21 December 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution expressing its deep concern on the increase of the enforced or involuntary disappearances in various regions of the world, including enforced or involuntary arrests and declared 30 August as International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances.

Victims of enforced disappearance are in fact deprived of all their rights: the right to liberty and security of person, the right to identity and the right to a fair trial. Unfortunately, in many cases they are also deprived of the right to life.

On this symbolic day, I would like to once again raise the issue and draw the attention of all our partners to the imperative of restoring the rights of Armenian prisoners of war and civilians illegally detained in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani authorities deny the capture of dozens of Armenian servicemen and civilians, on which there is clear evidence, thus these people are victims of enforced disappearance.

Official Baku also explicitly disregards the relevant decisions of the ECHR on providing information on Armenian servicemen and civilian hostages in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan continues to impede the return of prisoners in flagrant violation of the international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and the provision 8 of the Trilateral Statement of November 9, 2020.

Meanwhile, in continuation of the anti-Armenian policy of hatred pursued by the top leadership of Azerbaijan, the Armenian captives in Azerbaijan are subjected to torture, inhuman and humiliating treatment. Cases of deprivation of their right to life have already been registered. At the same time illegal, fake trials of Armenian prisoners of war continue.

Another indication of war crimes and crimes against humanity is the concealment of the true number of the Armenian POWs and captured civilians and places of their detention by Azerbaijan.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that in a report on its visit to Armenia and Artsakh, the Human Rights Watch described the humiliating treatment and torture of Armenian captives by Azerbaijan as a war crime.

It is commendable that many other human rights organizations, including Freedom House, have addressed this issue, in particular calling on the Azerbaijani authorities to fully cooperate with the European Court of Human Rights in providing comprehensive information on Armenian prisoners and protecting their rights.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the European Parliament, as well as the parliaments of a number of countries, including the Netherlands, Slovakia, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, heads of states, high-ranking clerics, dozens of human rights defenders, human rights activists, world-renowned artists and cultural figures, parliamentarians, international organizations and individuals who, fighting for the highest values of human rights and respect for dignity, raised the issue of the Armenian prisoners of war in their statements, appeals, resolutions, speeches, calls and demanded their immediate release and repatriation.

Following the advice of the day, we call on our international partners, as well as human rights organizations, to intensify international pressure on the Azerbaijani authorities, demanding respect for international humanitarian law, as well as the immediate release of Armenian prisoners of war and civilians held in inhumane conditions in Azerbaijan.