



CENTER OF ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
BEYNÖLXALQ MÜNASİBƏTLƏRİN TƏHLİLİ MƏRKƏZİ

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HIGHLIGHT OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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## I. **The demarcation process and Armenia's continued provocations on the border with Azerbaijan**

Border demarcation has been under way between Armenia and Azerbaijan following the Second Karabakh War. After the Trilateral Agreement of November 10th, Azerbaijan started the process of demarcation using Soviet maps and GPS systems. Delimitation and demarcation of state boundaries between Armenia and Azerbaijan are essential for the durable and sustainable peace and security in the region. At the same time, Azerbaijan understands that this process is very complicated. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan put it, "measures to strengthen the border protection system implemented within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan are carried out based on maps available to each of the sides that define the borderline between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since regaining its independence, there has been no state border between the two countries for obvious reasons, and for this reason, we speak about the complicated technical process, which is currently accompanied by disagreements between the sides".

The situation is even more complicated considering the continuing political crisis in Armenia after the war. The Second Karabakh War has transformed the political space in Armenia, throwing the Armenian society into deep political turmoil. Unfortunately, there is a significant risk that Armenia could implode from within both if Pashinyan is re-elected or the Karabakh clan led by Robert Kocharyan comes to power again. In case of Pashinyan's victory, the country could find itself in the middle of civil war, while with Kocharyan's election, the criminal-oligarchic system of government reinforced by a militarized dictatorship could be revived. As President

Ilham Aliyev put it, Armenian politicians "are playing the blame game – the current government blames the previous one and the previous government blames the current one. In fact, they are all guilty because they made a big mistake. They did not think that they would find themselves in such a helpless state, and they themselves are the culprits of all their troubles".

The revanchist forces in Armenia are seeking to present the trilateral statement as just a "truce agreement", akin to the 1994 Bishkek Protocol. However, the trilateral statement and the Bishkek protocol are fundamentally different documents with completely different legal and political weight. Unlike the Bishkek protocol, the trilateral statement was signed by the heads of state of Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia which paves the way for the final peace agreement. The trilateral statement also calls for the opening of all transport and communication links blocked during the first Karabakh war. The trilateral agreement also lays the groundwork for the delimitation and demarcation of the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In this context, deliberately whipping up tensions and increasing provocations on the border with Azerbaijan in the run-up to the June parliamentary election in Armenia was not unexpected. Armenia is playing provocative games, clearly striving to disrupt the process of the delimitation and demarcation of borders. By artificially stoking up tensions, Armenia tries to prove that the conflict is not over and push international actors, particularly Russia and the CSTO, to get involved in it. At the same time, through spreading disinformation, lies and hysteria about the demarcation process, the Armenian opposition forces also are trying to use it to destabilize the internal situation in Armenia,

weaken Pashinyan and eventually to come to power.

In this context, in the late hours of May 12th, Acting Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced at the Security Council meeting that Azerbaijani troops “crossed the border” in Syunik Region and advanced “three kilometers into Armenian territory”, claiming that it was “encroachment on Armenia's sovereign territory”. The baseless and provocative statements by the Armenian government that Azerbaijani troops advanced into Armenian territory in two sections of the state border - one in Syunik Region and the other in Gegharkunik Region, resulted in the routine demarcation process being deliberately blown up way out of proportion.

Azerbaijan rejected this claim. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan rejected as absolutely baseless Yerevan's complaint on 12 May that Azerbaijani troops breached the state border and advanced several kilometers into Armenia's territory. “We recommend that the political and military circles of Armenia not be alarmed, accept the reality of the interstate border regime along the Zangilan, Gubadli, Lachin and Kalbajar regions of Azerbaijan and not unreasonably aggravate the situation in the region,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan said in a statement on 13 May, adding that “such cases can and should be resolved through mutual contacts between the military on both sides”. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs called for resolving problems through mutual contacts and said that attempts by Yerevan's official circles to exploit the matter for political purposes ahead of the parliamentary election in Armenia were unacceptable.” According to the trilateral statement signed on November 10, 2020, with the improvement of weather conditions in the settlements of the liberated Lachin and Kalbajar regions bordering with Armenia,

which have a difficult mountainous terrain and climatic conditions, the Azerbaijani border forces are deployed in the positions of our country. This process is carried out in the usual mode and in a systematic manner,” Azerbaijan`s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement, adding that “since May 12, the leadership of the State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been sent to the area, negotiations are underway with the border guards of the opposite side and appropriate steps are being taken to normalize the situation.” According the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan: “Measures to strengthen the border protection system implemented within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan are carried out on the basis of maps available to each of the sides that define the border line between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since regaining its independence, there has been no state border between the two countries for obvious reasons, and for this reason we speak about the complicated technical process, which is currently accompanied by disagreements between the sides. It is surprising that the Armenian side reacted inadequately to this process and made provocative statements. We believe that attempts by official circles to use this issue for political purposes in connection with the pre-election situation in Armenia are unacceptable”.

In the meantime, on May 14th, Armenia took another provocative step to undermine the peace and stability in the region and referred this issue to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Yerevan appealed to the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) despite the fact that Moscow has already been mediating between the sides to settle the border delimitation issue. Armenia's appeal to the CSTO on this issue was nothing but an attempt by the

Armenian authorities to politicize the issue. In response, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov held several telephone conversations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, with Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker and with the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian. Minister Bayramov informed them about the measures taken to strengthen the border with Armenia and stressed the inadmissibility of exaggeration and politicization of such cases.

Touching upon this issue, President Ilham Aliyev noted that Armenia's appeal to the CSTO over the ongoing border delimitation process was totally baseless. President Ilham Aliyev made the remarks in a telephone conversation with Kazakh President Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev on May 17th. "Azerbaijani President noted that currently the process of demarcation of the border is underway, and the Armenian side demonstrates inadequate reaction to this process. Armenia's appeal to the Collective Security Treaty Organization in this regard is nothing but an attempt to internationalize the issue, and it is completely unfounded, there have been no clashes on the border, the situation is stable, negotiations are underway" the report of the telephone conversation stated.

In a statement on 16 May, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan described the situation as a technical matter which was part of border demarcation and delimitation process and stressed that disagreements should be resolved through negotiations. "Armenia and Azerbaijan have newly emerged from the war and successful border demarcation and delimitation are key to peace and security," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted, pointing out that the sides had already settled via negotiations several disagreements

on border issues over the last months. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also accused third actors of exaggerating this technical issue with provocative statements and a smear campaign against Azerbaijan. "Such a destructive approach only serves to increase tensions," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs underscored.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov had telephone conversations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker, Secretary-General of the European External Action Service Stefano Sannino, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ann Linde stressing the importance of resolving tensions through political and diplomatic means and the inadmissibility of exaggeration and politicization of such cases. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov also warned French Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian against politicizing the recent border tensions between Baku and Yerevan. The French foreign minister's phone call followed soon after President Emanuel Macron's pro-Armenian Facebook post, in which he blamed Baku for the recent border tensions around the Lake Garagol on the border between Azerbaijan's Lachin District and Gegharkunik Region of Armenia and called for the immediate pullout of the troops from the area.

In another statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan responded the international calls for the withdrawal of the Azerbaijani border troops from a part of Lachin District around the Lake Garagol and advised the concerned parties to recall the occupation of Azerbaijani lands until November 2020, before voicing concerns about sovereign Armenian territory. The illegal occupation of Azerbaijani land at the core of the tension on the border, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said,

adding that Azerbaijan is only restoring its violated territorial integrity.

Recalling that the State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan could not launch the delimitation and demarcation of the border on this segment earlier due to the harsh seasonal climate conditions, the statement said “now Azerbaijan is strengthening security on the border, and this is being done on the basis of maps available to Baku and Yerevan. Azerbaijan respects the sovereignty of the borders, territorial integrity and inviolability”.

Commenting on provocative statements from third actors, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan said that border demarcation and delimitation was a bilateral process to be carried out by Azerbaijan and Armenia. “It would be better for third countries to study the situation comprehensively before making statements,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, adding that “Armenia and Azerbaijan have just emerged from war, therefore successful border demarcation and delimitation will play a key role in ensuring peace and security,” adding that “over the recent months, there have been disagreements between the parties on border issues, all resolved through negotiations between the parties to the tripartite statement. We believe that such disagreements should be resolved by political and diplomatic means”.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has also said that there was “no reason to stoke emotions” with regard to the ongoing border dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia. “After this incident occurred, Azerbaijan issued statements explaining the incident by a misunderstanding, and most importantly, by the absence of a delimited and demarcated border. Nobody there ever thought about it. We suggested that the parties start working on

this. We stand ready to assist them in providing cartographic material and consultations. Not a single shot was fired. No skirmishes took place. We sat down and started talking calmly about how to defuse this situation. They asked for assistance. Our military provided it. An agreement has been reached. I see no reason to stoke emotions with regard to an issue that has been settled in a calm manner,” Lavrov said at a news conference in Moscow on May 17th.

On May 17th, US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan spoke separately with President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to discuss the ongoing tension on the Azerbaijani-Armenian border. President Ilham Aliyev stated that Azerbaijan is committed to ensuring peace and stability in the region. President Ilham Aliyev agreed with the US President's National Security Adviser on the need for commencing talks on the delimitation of the international border between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and stressed the importance of this process to be conducted in accordance with the trilateral statement dated November 10, 2020. President Ilham Aliyev noted that Armenia's inadequate response to border tensions and attempts to internationalize the issue could lead to increased tensions in the region, and stressed the importance of peacefully resolving all disputes within the negotiation process.

In the meantime, the diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue continued. On May 19th, Russian President Vladimir Putin and President Ilham Aliyev discussed the border crisis over phone. It was said that the crisis should be resolved through diplomacy and Moscow would “continue its mediation efforts and provide advisory assistance aimed at reaching an agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia on launching the process of

delimitation and demarcation of the state border". Earlier on the same day, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that Moscow had offered to create and mediate a joint Armenian-Azerbaijani commission for settling the ongoing border dispute. As the critical guarantor of the peace and security in the region, Russia urged the sides to resolve all issues through political-diplomatic means. Russian Foreign Ministry statement underscored that "Russia is ready to offer full support for the normalization of the situation in the South Caucasus." Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visit to Azerbaijan and Armenia, and Russian MFA's statement sent an important signal that Russia is not interested in any regional escalations, thus proposing to create a joint commission for the demarcation of the state border. On May 20th, Armenian Interim Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has announced he is going to sign a new document on establishing a joint commission with Azerbaijan for the demarcation and delimitation of the state border.

At the same time, in another sign of deep political turmoil in Armenia, acting Armenian Foreign Minister Ara Ayvazyan has tendered his resignation, announcing his decision in a Facebook post. The move came after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said that Armenia was going to sign a border deal with Azerbaijan. Ayvazyan was appointed as foreign minister amid the ongoing political crisis in the country sparked by Armenia's defeat in the Second Karabakh War late last year. He became the second foreign minister to resign (after Zohrab Mnatsakanyan) following the signing of the tripartite agreement in November 2020.

Meanwhile, the dangerous and irresponsible provocations by Armenia on the border with Azerbaijan continued. On May 25th, the Armenian Defence Ministry claimed that

Armenian soldier was killed in an exchange of fire with Azerbaijani troops in Gegharkunik Region. The Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan denied any role in the Armenian soldier's death, adding that the Armenian soldier had been killed in an accident which had nothing to do with the Azerbaijani side. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, in a separate statement, accused Armenia of an attempt to use an incident within its armed forces to aggravate the situation at the border. "We call on the Armenian side not to aggravate the situation with false statements, and to hold constructive talks to resolve disagreements on this and other issues," the statement said. On May 26th, Nikol Pashinyan said in parliament that Yerevan was not "satisfied with the speed of the CSTO actions" and that Armenia could appeal to the UN Security Council.

The situation was further escalated on May 27th, when the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan announced that it arrested six members of Armenian subversive reconnaissance group who crossed into Azerbaijan's Kalbajar District and were planting mines on the supply routes of the Azerbaijani army. While admitting that the Armenian soldiers were indeed planting mines, Pashinyan claimed that the procedures were conducted along the border and "inside the Armenian territory". In turn, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan pointed out that Armenia is pursuing a purposeful policy of increasing tensions at the border. On May 28, the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan reported that an Azerbaijani soldier had been wounded in a ceasefire violation in the exclave of Nakhchivan on the Armenian border. The incident happened as Armenian troops opened fire at Azerbaijani positions in several directions near the village of Ashaghy Buzqov in Nakhchivan's Babak District in the night leading to 28 May. "We state that Armenia is

fully responsible for causing relative tension on the Nakhchivan section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. We are calling on the Armenian side to refrain from committing provocation and taking other steps that could cause tension and to behave responsibly," the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan said.

At a Security Council meeting on May 27th, Nikol Pashinyan announced that "since the situation has reached this dangerous point, I am putting forward an open proposal to the international community and the Azerbaijani leadership. What I am proposing is that we should agree that military subdivisions of the two sides are moving back from the border... We are proposing that armed forces of the two sides return to their initial positions." He added that international observers from Russia or the OSCE Minsk Group member states could be deployed at the Armenian-Azerbaijani border "for the both sides to be sure that none of the sides will bring troops close to the border". Then works can start to demarcate the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan "under international sponsorship", he said. He said that the situation at the border was "explosive" because Armenian and Azerbaijani troops were standing face to face there for two weeks. "This is an official proposal to Russia, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair countries and the Azerbaijani leadership," Pashinyan added. Through its actions, the Armenian government effectively confirms its unwillingness to relinquish control over Azerbaijan's border territories it occupied during the hostilities in 1991-1994. Pashinyan even claimed that Armenia would not sign a document on demarcation, if Azerbaijan did not withdraw its troops from its positions, that is Azerbaijan's own territories. At the same time, it is obvious that Armenia is trying to make the OSCE Minsk Group relevant again, although the group has completely outlived

itself and in its current iteration is not politically important. The acting prime minister of Armenia is also torpedoing the trilateral format, which implies the final resolution of the conflict, that is, the mutual recognition of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, the opening of communications and obligations to resolve issues exclusively through political and diplomatic means.

As Shahmar Hajiyev, senior advisor at the AIR Center, put it, "the recent incidents around the Sev Lidj (Qaragol) in the Syunik region (Zangezur in Azerbaijani) have raised the importance of the full delimitation and demarcation of the state border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is worth noting that Syunik/Zangezur region is a very important region in terms of regional economic integration, and according to the 9th section of the November Agreement all economic and transport links in the region must be restored, and Armenia guarantees the safety of transport links between the western regions of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan". According to Shahmar Hajiyev, "the border problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia will be key challenges to security and sustainable peace if neighboring states cannot sign an agreement for the demarcation /delimitation of the two countries' borders. Today, seven villages of Gazakh district and one village of Sadarak district of Nakhchivan AR are still under Armenian control. Azerbaijan wants to restore its territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Armenia must understand that the peaceful coexistence of Azerbaijani and Armenian people in the Karabakh region is a priority of the Azerbaijani government. Carrying out propaganda against Azerbaijan and preventing the commencement of the demarcation/delimitation will only damage the peace process. The long-term solution to

the Armenia-Azerbaijan border dispute is the mutual recognition of territorial integrity and support to this issue by the whole international community”.

## **II. Azerbaijan is transforming the region after the war**

On May 20th, President Ilham Aliyev said that Baku was “ready to start working on a peace agreement with Armenia,” adding that a peace deal can be “achieved in a relatively short period of time”. President Ilham Aliyev reaffirmed Azerbaijan’s position by tweeting on May 21st that Baku “is ready to work on a peace agreement with Armenia” that will recognize both countries' territorial integrity. “We hope that there will be more clarity with regard to this issue after the elections in Armenia,” President Ilham Aliyev said on his official Twitter account on May 22nd. For its part, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan has also called on Armenia “to normalize relations on the basis of the principles of international law to which it refers and to show constructiveness in resolving any differences”. At a special session of the OSCE Permanent Council on 25 May, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov spoke about an opportunity to normalize relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the basis of respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of internationally-recognized borders.

It is clear that Azerbaijan wants to normalize its relations with Armenia based on the principles of territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders. However, it is also clear that there are some external actors, greatly concerned by Azerbaijan’s leadership and its ability to single-handedly change the regional geo-economic

and geopolitical dynamics, which want to hinder this process as long as possible and prevent the durable peace, stability, and prosperity from becoming the dominant themes in the region. Drawing attention of Armenia's foreign backers to Yerevan's non-constructive approach to the final resolution of the conflict, President Ilham Aliyev noted that “no-one can put pressure on us. No-one can influence us. Certain pro-Armenian countries and circles are making some statements these days. Let them make them, it is their own business... I don't even pay attention to that”. Despite these obstacles, Azerbaijan is upbeat about the future of the region and Azerbaijan’s foreign policy is focused on fundamentally transforming the region to make Pax Caucasia a reality, which is the only forward for the South Caucasus.

President Ilham Aliyev has urged the United States to persuade Armenia to sign a peace agreement with Baku following the recent Karabakh war. President Ilham Aliyev made the remarks at a video conference titled “South Caucasus: Prospects for regional development and cooperation” on May 20th. “As I said before, we are ready to start working on [a] peace agreement with Armenia. I think the United States can use its potential to persuade Armenia that this is the only way how to move forward,” President Ilham Aliyev said. President Ilham Aliyev also suggested that the three South Caucasus countries could cooperate in a trilateral format. “Until now we had relations with Georgia, Armenia had relations with Georgia, and [there have been] no relations, no cooperation between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Maybe now it's time to... see whether it's possible to have kind of a trilateral format of cooperation. We are ready for that,” the president said.

President Ilham Aliyev also said that Baku is willing to boost relations with the United



States: “We are ready to work closely as strategic partners to expand our cooperation. And I think that the US can play a very important role in post-conflict development in the region.” “We are ready for the [Biden] administration to be fully established and to have more clear messages how they want to build their relations with us,” the president added. “We have very diversified relations [with the United States] ... but we want to diversify them even more, particularly to cover the area of modern technologies, trade - the level of mutual trade is still very low, and other issues,” President Ilham Aliyev noted. President Aliyev has also noted that Baku expects to obtain military equipment from the United States now that the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is settled. There is no reason why Azerbaijan shouldn't have defence-industrial cooperation with the United States. “We want to get access to American weapons. Previously, we did not have such an opportunity due to the conflict with Armenia. But now, after the end of the conflict, we expect to be able to do it,” the president said. Baku is also satisfied with US support for Azerbaijan's energy projects, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov told a meeting with a delegation of the Caspian Policy Centre (CPC), an independent, a non-profit research think tank based in Washington DC, adding that the large-scale energy projects contribute to regional development and constant US support for them is vital.

In May, the United Kingdom has opened a chamber of commerce in Baku. The opening ceremony was attended by Britain's parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Department for International Trade, Graham Stuart, and the British ambassador in Baku, James Sharp. It was said at the ceremony that the UK continues to remain one of the largest investors in Azerbaijan. The opening of the

chamber is expected to boost the export of Azerbaijani products to the United Kingdom. President Ilham Aliyev had received Stuart on May 21st. President Ilham Aliyev said he was confident that Stuart's visit would step up bilateral relations. The president said there was “very active political dialogue, also big prospects in economic area” between the two countries, adding that the UK had invested more than 30bn dollars in Azerbaijan. “It's a lot and it helped us to develop. It helped us to develop not only in oil industry and gas industry but general development,” the president noted. President Ilham Aliyev also said that BP had been Azerbaijan's strategic partner for 30 years and would remain such for at least another 30 years. “Because there are new prospects, and new agreements have been signed,” the president underscored explained. “We want to expand cooperation with British companies, as companies from a friendly country,” President Ilham Aliyev added. Stuart also pointed out that the United Kingdom was “pleased and privileged to be a close partner with Azerbaijan and work for so many years”.

President Ilham Aliyev has also praised Baku's relations with the European Union, said that a new bilateral agreement has already been agreed 90 percent, and expressed optimism about further cooperation with the EU during the video conference “South Caucasus: Prospects for Regional Development and Cooperation” on May 20th. “We are working on a new agreement between Azerbaijan and the European Union... More than 90 percent of the agreement has already been agreed,” the president said, explaining that negotiations had been interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and then the Second Karabakh War. “I hope that soon we will resume the active phase of the final stage of negotiations,” President Ilham Aliyev added.

The EU can play a very important role in post-war development in the region. “We would like to see more active cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan,” the president said, adding that he had “very promising expectations about our cooperation”. “The completion of the Southern Gas Corridor creates new opportunities for our cooperation with the European Union because Azerbaijan [has] already started to play an important role in the European Union's energy security,” the president noted.

President Ilham Aliyev also praised current relations with the EU, saying that Baku highly appreciates the role that the European Union plays in the region. “The European Union and Azerbaijan... are close partners on issues related to energy security,” he said. “The EU was always a good partner of Azerbaijan. The EU is our main trading partner,” the president added and also said that most of Azerbaijan's exports went to EU member countries. President Ilham Aliyev also pointed out that Baku had signed or adopted strategic partnership documents with a third of EU member states and this showed that “we are good partners and strategic partners”.

The president then went on to express his hope that Armenia would enable a new railway to be built via its territory to Europe, in addition to the existing Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad. “Hopefully, if Armenia does not put artificial obstacles, we can also have another railroad connection through the territory of Armenia so Armenia can also be a part of a regional development program that will give additional opportunities for security,” President Ilham Aliyev underscored.

The establishment of the Zangazur corridor is one the core elements of the signed documents between Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia. Azerbaijan is fully committed to the

creation of this corridor and restoration of transport links as it considers cooperation to be the main tool for creating sustainable peace in the region. Baku has reiterated its determination and willpower to further strengthen the state border with Armenia to prevent fresh provocations. Azerbaijan has also made clear that the issue of delimitation and demarcation of the borders between Azerbaijan and Armenia will be resolved and the Zangazur Corridor will be opened.

On May 30th, during his meeting with a delegation led by Turkish Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Adil Karaismailoglu, President Ilham Aliyev noted that “in the early stages after the war, Armenia protested at this issue. However, I have recently been informed that the Armenian side is already properly analyzing the issues related to the inevitability of this corridor. As you know, discussions are now taking place in a trilateral format. This issue is being discussed within the working group at the level of Deputy Prime Ministers of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia, and there are good results. We have already started the construction of a railway from Horadiz to the Armenian border in the liberated lands. I am confident that in the next two years, maybe two and a half years, this railway will be fully operational. Most of the Nakhchivan railway is operational and the remaining part will be built as well. All instructions have been issued. A significant part of the Zangazur corridor must be built in Armenia. Thus, a new corridor will be opened and this connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan will become even stronger.”

During his brief trip to the Nakhchivan exclave on May 10th, President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated a military airport and a central military hospital among other new facilities. The president praised the Nakhchivan Army saying it was equipped with state-of-the-art

weapons and military hardware. President Ilham Aliyev said that part of those weapons had been used and commando troops of the Nakhchivan Army had fought in the Second Karabakh war. Speaking about the capabilities of the Nakhchivan Army, President Ilham Aliyev especially stressed the successful military operation to regain the village of Gunnut and several strategic heights in Sharur District carried out by the Nakhchivan Separate Combined Arms Army in 2018. "These heights give us full control over strategic communication lines [in Armenia], including the road connecting Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. During the Second Karabakh War, the control we had over this road helped us obtain a large amount of information. The opposite side knows that these communications that we control can be cut off any time and surely, they must take steps bearing this in mind," President Ilham Aliyev said. The president also warned revanchist forces in Armenia. "If they move from statements to any practical actions, they will be destroyed immediately. No-one will defend them. Let them not count on anyone," President Ilham Aliyev said. "If we see even the tiniest threat, we will immediately destroy them."

The president said that he had also visited the Ordubad railway station as part of his Nakhchivan trip. President Ilham Aliyev said that a 15-16 km railway would be built from Ordubad to the Armenian border, which would link mainland Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan through a 40-km Zangezur corridor and further to Turkey. "I can say with confidence that the railway corridor will open. No-one should doubt this," President Ilham Aliyev noted.

In response to a question on the need to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as voiced by some external actors amid the president's statement that the conflict has

already been resolved, President Ilham Aliyev reiterated that "the Karabakh conflict has been resolved, Azerbaijan has resolved this conflict itself both in the battlefield and at the negotiating table. The victory won in the battlefield forced the enemy to raise the white flag, surrender, and sign the act of surrender. The document signed on 10 November is an act of Armenia's surrender".

In reaction to recent criticism of Azerbaijan by France and Canada, President Ilham Aliyev described their treatment of the issue as unacceptable. The president also rejected a statement by the French Foreign Ministry on the Baku Military Trophy Park, pointing out the "skulls of slain leaders of the Algerian national resistance movement" in a French museum.

The president added that there was no territorial unit called Nagorno-Karabakh on the territory of Azerbaijan. "As for what some politicians say about the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, it means they are talking about a non-existent structure. I also said that if someone wants to give the Armenians living on our territory a status, I do not mind, but let him choose a good place for them in their own countries. These places have long been captured by the Armenian diaspora. Let them give them autonomy or independence there, but not in Azerbaijan. This will not happen in Azerbaijan irrespective of who says what," the president emphasized. "The conflict has found its solution, and I believe that it is pointless to return to this question. In any case, we have shown this in the period after the war. First, if someone believes that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has not been resolved, this is his own problem. Second, this is a very dangerous approach. If this conflict is not resolved, what should be the settlement of this conflict?" President Ilham Aliyev wondered.

20 days after the end of the war, Armenia sent troops to Azerbaijan. As a result of the terrorist acts committed by those servicemen, four Azerbaijani soldiers were killed and one civilian was injured. Apparently, the fate of 62 Armenian saboteurs and terrorists greatly worries Paris and Ottawa; however, the same politicians, for some reason, do not extend that empathy to the Azerbaijani soldiers shot and killed by the same saboteurs sent by Armenia after the declaration of the ceasefire. During the war, Armenia fired at Azerbaijani cities with lethal missiles, destroyed entire neighborhoods in Ganja and Barda, located 100 km from the theatre of war. About 100 were killed, more than 400 civilians were wounded, including children, elderly and women. For some reason, however, all of this does not bother France, Canada and other Western actors who prefer to ignore Armenia's provocations and do not dare to condemn Armenia for such actions. However, they are ready to lecture and urge Baku to meet the "demands" of the Armenian government without calling on Yerevan to pull out all its servicemen illegally remaining on the territory of Karabakh. Moreover, about 4,000 Azerbaijanis went missing during the first war of 1991-94. Armenia has not yet provided information about these people and has also refused to provide maps of minefields of the liberated regions. However, we have not seen the same level of concern from these actors when it comes to the actions of the Armenian government over its three-decade-long occupation or condemnation towards Armenia's violation of human rights of the Azerbaijani population. If France and Canada want to take an objective approach towards this issue, they could urge Armenia to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law and refrain from actions that could endanger lasting peace in the region.

Speaking at a press conference in Baku following talks with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on May 11, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov said that Baku had implemented its part of the November peace agreement. The minister pointed out that Azerbaijan had released all Armenian POWs, handed 1,600 dead Armenian soldiers over to Yerevan, and allowed Armenia to use a road passing through Azerbaijani territory. The minister pointed out that Armenia does not show constructive approach, hinders the implementation of the agreements, causes unnecessary tension and torpedoes the peace process, adding that Armenia is refusing to provide maps of minefields, which is tantamount to war crime, and is refusing to provide information of about 4,000 Azerbaijanis who went missing during the first Karabakh war in the early 1990s.

### **III. Azerbaijan continues to rebuild Karabakh**

On May 28, President Ilham Aliyev attended ceremony to lay foundation stone for restoration of Aghdam city. During the ceremony, President Ilham Aliyev noted that "the development plan of the city has already been fully developed, and it meets modern standards and requirements. The entire Karabakh zone will become a "green energy" zone. All cities will be built on the basis of a "smart city" concept". As Dr. Esmira Jafarova puts it, "Azerbaijan is bent on carrying out the reconstruction work in its liberated territories, and the idea is to rebuild those territories as "smart" cities and villages". The main goal is to utilize technology integration and smart green solutions as the way to achieve a sustainable development of the region. In this vein, one of the key tasks of the government in the restoration process is to provide energy

security to the liberated territories and create a “Green Energy Zone”. Thus, priority will be given to the use of renewable energy sources. It is estimated that liberated territories have more than 4,000 Mw of solar and up to 500 Mw of wind energy potential. The process of developing a green energy zone has already begun. In May, the Energy Ministry of Azerbaijan and the Japanese company TEPCO have signed an agreement on the creation of a green energy zone in the liberated territories. Establishing green energy zones and smart cities and villages will create substantial opportunities for sustainable economic growth in Karabakh.

The three-decade-long occupation have resulted in massive destruction in Karabakh. Armenia has almost completely destroyed the existing infrastructure in the occupied territories, razing most of the cities and villages to the ground. Aghdam faced the most extreme destruction and was dubbed the “Hiroshima of the Caucasus.” According to the UN estimates, the total economic damage of the occupation was around \$53.5 billion. According to the Military Prosecutor’s Office of Azerbaijan, if all the material and environmental destruction is taken into account, the total damage that Azerbaijan is faced with is about \$819 billion. With the end of the occupation, Azerbaijan now aims to fully revive the liberated territories. Despite the fact that the scale of the devastation makes the economic recovery process complex and time-consuming, Azerbaijan wants to transform the liberated territories into areas of high-tech development. Thus, immediately after the war, the plan for socio-economic development of the liberated territories was prepared and the reconstruction process has started. For the efficient organization of the recovery process “Coordination Headquarters” and 17 working groups on

different areas were established. Initially, \$2.2 billion is planned to be allocated in the 2021 budget for the restoration process. The first steps taken in the restoration process have been the construction of roads, highways, airports, and other transport links. The construction of the Aghdam Industrial Park, Barda-Aghdam highway and 121-hectare forest at the entrance of Aghdam have also been launched. Reconstruction of transport networks and establishment of airports in the liberated territories will create a favorable environment for the full usage of the tourism potential of Karabakh while establishing green energy zones and smart cities will boost economic growth in the region.

#### **IV. Reintegrating Karabakh’s Armenian population into the rest of Azerbaijan**

In a new reality that emerged after the Second Karabakh War, the concepts of "Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region" and "Armenian community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region" have lost their relevance, along with the administrative-territorial unit "Nagorno-Karabakh" and the issue of its status, which, in turn, led to the public association "Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan" to dissolve itself. The community was established in 2006 in order to unite hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis ethnically cleansed from Karabakh by Armenia in the 1990s. However, after the war, the institution of the community has lost its purpose and significance. The decision to dissolve the community also carries political implications since Azerbaijan regards the Armenian population of Karabakh as its own citizens and contrary to the chauvinistic platform of the Armenian revanchist forces

fundamentally rejects the ultranationalist idea of the ethnic incompatibility of the two peoples. Like all national minorities living in our multinational country, Armenians will freely live in Azerbaijan as individual citizens. Azerbaijan is confident that it will smoothly reintegrate Armenians living in Karabakh into its own political, social, and economic environment and grant them the same rights and freedoms as all citizens of Azerbaijan. The liberation of Azerbaijani territories creates conditions for the protection of the rights of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons to a safe and dignified return to their homes and the government has already begun to take practical measures to restore the territories, ensure the safe and dignified return of the displaced population, and peaceful coexistence within the frameworks of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. Going forward, the community will focus its activities on being conducive to the return of Azerbaijanis to their historical lands, which will be implemented under a new association, called “Qarabağa dönüş” (Return to Karabakh) and led by the former Head of the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and Member of Azerbaijani Parliament representing Khankendi city Tural Ganjaliyev.

As Dr. Esmira Jafarova, a Board Member at the Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center), puts it, “the restoration of Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity, reconstruction work, and reconciliation efforts with Armenia are also intended to happen in parallel with the reintegration of Karabakh’s Armenian population into the rest of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan declared from the outset that it sees the Armenian population of Karabakh as its own citizens and will do its utmost for their reintegration. Azerbaijani citizens of Armenian origin resided in the

country during both Soviet times and the years of occupation, and they continue to do so even today. The fate of Karabakh Armenians should be no different from now on. As the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, has repeatedly stated, Azerbaijan views the Armenian population of Karabakh as its citizens and is ready to do its best to facilitate their reintegration into Azerbaijani society. A message of reintegration and related efforts are currently prevalent in Azerbaijan’s post-conflict rehabilitation works. Nevertheless, Azerbaijanis are also mindful that this is a delicate process and should happen with due regard to sensitivities on the part of both Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Emotional and other related challenges to this process notwithstanding, Azerbaijan strongly believes in the irreversibility of this process and is determined to make things work”.

#### **V. Azerbaijan to put foreign terrorist fighters on trial**

In May, the State Security Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan completed an investigation and sent an indictment to a court regarding the Lebanese citizen, Vigen Abraham Euljekchyan. Euljekchyan had fought as a mercenary in the Second Karabakh War on Armenia’s side. On September 29, Vigen Euljekchyan accepted a proposal from another Lebanese citizen, Ovak Kikeyan (or Hovak Kikeyan), to fight in the war as a mercenary for 2,500 dollars. On the same day, Euljekchyan together with other people, as an organized group, crossed the border into Azerbaijan from Armenian territory and arrived in areas where there were other mercenaries. Euljekchyan and other militants who were hired as mercenaries also participated in terrorist activities against Azerbaijani citizens and army with the use of weapons. Euljekchyan has been

charged under several articles of Azerbaijan's Criminal Code - a mercenary's participation in a military conflict or a military operation; terrorism; and illegal crossing of Azerbaijan's state border. In January, Azerbaijan indicted two Lebanese, one Syrian and one Russian citizen for fighting on the Armenian side in the Second Karabakh war.

The AIR Center has previously published extensive reports on the use of foreign fighters and mercenaries by Armenia against Azerbaijan during the Second Karabakh War. There is ample evidence that foreign fighters (citizens of France, Russia, and Georgia) as well as mercenaries were deployed by the Armenian side. Armenian diaspora organizations played a critical role in the Second Karabakh War, contributing manpower and financing to Armenian army. Armenian organizations all over the world circulated ads for the recruitment of military forces, and one such organization named VoMA (short for Armenian “Ողջ Մնալ ու Արվեստ” – “the art of staying alive”), operating in Yerevan, launched accelerated military training courses with the aim of establishing a mountain rifle battalion under the command of the Ministry of Defense of Armenia. According to several media agencies, an indeterminate number of French citizens joined the military operations against Azerbaijan, among them a French Armenian by the name of Artur Oganisyan, who, in his interview to Russian outlet “Новая газета” mentioned that he and his two brothers arrived in Armenia, received automatic assault rifles without providing any identification or requiring any permissions, and were swiftly added to the army. Such cases were also highlighted by the “France24” news agency, which published video materials validating the stories of a number of volunteers heading to Armenia to join military action, among them a

veteran referred to as “Vardan” and a 28-year-old French citizen Sipan Muradyan. Information on Marc de Cacqueray-Valmenier, French citizen participating in military training by the Armenian military forces was disseminated by “Libération” news agency. A photograph published on social media by Marc de Cacqueray-Valmenier, a notorious neo-Nazi and the leader of the far-right group Zouaves Paris (ZVP), verified his presence in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Armenian diaspora organizations widely disseminated the calls to join military operations among their members. Among those who joined the military trainings were citizens of Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and the U.S. For instance, despite the fact that the Article 208(2) of the Criminal Code of Russian Federation prohibits the participation of its citizens in an armed force that is not ordained by a federal law, and states that such actions may carry up to five years in prison, the head of the “Armenian Union of Russia” (“Союз армян России”) Ara Abramyan on 28th of September 2020 announced that 20 thousand Russian Armenians were eager to fight for the Armenian separatist regime in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. As a result, on September 29th, members of Armenian diaspora in Russia, including a few representatives of the ARF Dashnaksutyun party, traveled from Sochi to Yerevan with the aim of joining military operations as volunteers. Similar cases took place in several European states: according to the “Sputnik Hellas” news agency, at least 30-35 Greek Armenians, as well as 10-15 ethnic Greeks departed for Armenia to join the military actions against Turkish armed forces. A similar case was covered by the Spanish “El Confidencial” news agency. Additionally, an

information leak revealed that members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) from Syria and Iraq, as well as 1,500 Kurdish mercenaries joined the Armenian military.

At the same time, an Armenian citizen, Mkrtchyan Ludwig Mkrtichovich, was charged with torturing Azerbaijani captives during the first Karabakh war in the early 1990s. The investigation established that, an Azerbaijani citizen taken hostage in July 1991 in a forest called "Ballija" near Khojaly city followed by unlawful restriction of liberty, and a civilian taken hostage in Tapgaragoyunlu village, Goranboy district on September 13, 1999 and brought to Yerevan city, the Republic of Armenia, who was detained in one of the military units in the city and acted as an interpreter during the interrogation by the Armenian special services, were tortured by Mkrtchyan Ludwig Mkrtichovich, a citizen of the Republic of Armenia, born in 1969, who upon prior conspiracy entered into criminal relations with a group of individuals participating in the activities of the armed groups consisting of nationalist Armenians living in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, as well as coming from the Republic of Armenia. The investigation also revealed that 11 Azerbaijani citizens taken captives, at different times were beaten and exposed to various tortures in Khojavand and Aghdara districts, Shusha prison and Yerevan city. Struck by automatic gunfire, a serviceman of the N military unit, Defense Ministry, was killed. Ludwig Mkrtichyan was detained by the servicemen of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces on October 20, 2020 in the territory of Malikjanli village, Fuzuli district.

Investigative measures carried out also exposed the criminal acts by Khosrovyan Alyosha Aramaisovich, another citizen of the Republic of Armenia, born in 1967, who together with Ludwig Mkrtichyan brutally

treated and tortured Azerbaijanis. It was revealed that Alyosha Khosrovyan tortured 5 Azerbaijanis during their captivity and subjected them to cruel and inhumane treatment. Thus, a former soldier of the military unit N of the Ministry of Defense taken prisoner in April 1994 was exposed to cruel and inhumane treatment by Khosrovyan Alyosha Aramaisovich. During his illegal detention in one of the houses in Mysmina (Aghbulag) village, Khojavand district he was forced to do heavy construction work of a house for the so-called Minister of Defense of the "Nagorno-Karabakh Republic" Babayan Samvel Andranikovich, and inflicted various bodily injuries. Alyosha Khosrovyan also demonstrated especial cruelty to soldiers of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces, who were taken captives in 1993-1994 and illegally detained in the Shusha city prison. He tortured them by exposing to regular beatings, starving, and inflicting mental anguish and physical pain. Alyosha Khosrovyan was detained by servicemen of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces on October 3, 2020 while conducting reconnaissance operations in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan. On May 20, the indictment on the criminal case was approved and sent to Baku Military Court for consideration. Hundreds of Azerbaijani citizens, including children, women and the elderly, have been subjected to intolerable torture while held in captivity and taken hostage as a result of numerous crimes committed against the Azerbaijani civilian population on the instructions of the Armenian criminal leadership.

## **VI. Azerbaijan and Turkey deepen military-technical cooperation**

Azerbaijan and Turkey intend to step up military cooperation. The government plans



large increases in defence spending over the next decade, actively investing in new military technologies and advancements in order to boost the capabilities of the Armed Forces. After the war, President Ilham Aliyev has underscored the government's determination to keep the army's combat readiness high and supply it with the advanced weapon systems to guarantee the country's territorial integrity against all potential challenges. In parallel with acquiring advanced military technologies and building more capable and innovative military, Azerbaijan seeks to upgrade its own defence-industrial base. Large-scale modernization and procurement programs will be carried out in this period, including the expansion of the domestic defence sector in the longer term, as domestic enterprises, for which government support is strengthening, benefit from technology transfer agreements tied to defence import contracts. The increased military spending will allow the government to develop and strengthen its military-industrial base. Upgrading the domestic defence-industrial base is a fundamental element of Azerbaijan's broader hedging strategy against future uncertainties.

In this context, cooperation with Turkey is particularly important for Azerbaijan. President Ilham Aliyev has already emphasized that the goal of the government is to build a small model of the Turkish army in Azerbaijan, which is one of the strongest armies in the world and second strongest in NATO, adding that "our army should become stronger and more modern, and the model of the Turkish army is the most acceptable model to us, and we will continue working jointly in this direction". On April 30th, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Colonel General Zakir Hasanov met with the delegation led by the Chairman of the Turkish Presidency of Defence Industries Ismail Demir. The

delegation included representatives of the leading companies of Turkey's military-industrial complex: STM, Rocketsan, Havelsan, and ASELSAN. Minister of Defence Zakir Hasanov highlighted successful bilateral military and military-technical cooperation between the two countries which is improving all the time. The sides discussed at the meeting important matters related to Azerbaijani-Turkish bilateral military-technical cooperation and outlined ways of implementing new joint projects developed with the consideration of new ways and methods of conducting modern military operations, in particular, combat experience gained in the Second Karabakh War.

Turkey also plays an important role in helping Azerbaijan to restore the liberated lands, especially with the process of demining of Karabakh. In May, Azerbaijan has purchased a new batch of engineering machinery and equipment for mine-clearance operations in liberated from Armenia's occupation territories. On May 5, the Turkish Defence Ministry reported on its official Twitter account that seven pieces of mine-clearance equipment have so far been delivered to Azerbaijan. Karabakh is one of the most mined territories in the world, most of which were set up during Armenia's three-decades-long occupation of Karabakh. The international humanitarian law is clear about the prohibition of the indiscriminate use of landmines. Unfortunately, Armenia continues to commit a war crime by refusing to hand over landmine maps to Azerbaijan. As a result, Azerbaijani civilians and troops continue to be killed and injured by those mines. Demining is a priority task for Azerbaijan. In order to achieve this objective, new military units, new sapper and engineering battalions of the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan and the State Agency for Mine Action have been established after the

war. At the same time, Azerbaijan purchased modern mine-clearance equipment from Turkey, including remotely operated units – robots and mine-clearing machines. In December, the first group of Turkish sappers and Turkish mine-clearance experts arrived in Azerbaijan to train their Azerbaijani counterparts. In February, Azerbaijan received from Turkey 20 MEMATT mechanical demining machines for mine-clearance operations in Karabakh.

## **VII. Azerbaijan at the forefront of the fight against Covid-19 pandemic**

On 24-31 May, The World Health Organization's (WHO's) decision-making body, World Health Assembly (WHA) met for its 74th session in a video format on theme: "Ending this pandemic, preventing the next: building together a healthier, safer and fairer world". At the invitation of WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev addressed the Assembly. In his speech, President Ilham Aliyev noted that Azerbaijan has been quite effective in tackling the spread of coronavirus by taking swift actions to minimize negative impact of the COVID-19 on the population and to keep the situation under control. The government has built 13 new modular hospitals for the treatment of coronavirus patients and arranged the production of protective and other medical gears in a short time. In his March 2020 letter to President Ilham Aliyev, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), praised the measures taken by the government to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

With public debt ratio of just below 50 percent of GDP, Baku has been successful in instrumentalizing its strong fiscal position to

respond to the economic ramifications of the pandemic. The government actively supported people and businesses hurt by the pandemic. The socio-economic stimulus programs to limit the negative economic spillover were rolled-out swiftly. The government allocated a stimulus package in the amount of more than \$2 billion in order to support COVID-affected households and businesses.

Azerbaijan was one of the first 50 countries to join the WHO-led COVAX platform aimed at ensuring the fair and equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines to every country. Despite the initial failure of the COVAX platform, Azerbaijan swiftly moved forward with its own vaccination campaign. Azerbaijan has launched its immunization campaign since mid-January 2021, using overwhelmingly "Sinovac" vaccines and the rest AstraZeneca and Sputnik vaccines. 2 million vaccine doses have already been administered, which constitutes 20 percent of the total population. All the citizens above 18 years old can get vaccinated voluntarily and COVID-19 passports are issued for those vaccinated.

President Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly underscored the significance of the joint fight of the countries of the world against the coronavirus pandemic and close cooperation in this area. Azerbaijan has repeatedly voiced its concerns over the actions of some countries which purchase several times more vaccines than their actual needs and deprive developing countries from protecting their populations. On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan initiated a resolution on ensuring equitable, universal access for all countries to vaccines in the UN Human Rights Council, which was unanimously adopted in March 2021. As President Ilham Aliyev has noted, "the persisting "vaccine nationalism" and deepening inequality in access to vaccines between developing and developed countries

are disturbing. According to international reports, so far, more than 82 percent of the world's vaccine doses have been purchased by wealthy countries, while only 0.3 percent have gone to low-income countries". In its capacity, as the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan has initiated a number of global initiatives, in particular the holding of the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in May 2020, and convening the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly at the level

of the heads of state and government in December 2020 which was supported by more than 150 States. Azerbaijan has also made voluntary financial contributions to the World Health Organization in the amount of \$10 million and provided humanitarian and financial assistance to more than 30 countries with regard to coronavirus.