



Promoting a Lasting Partnership
Between Azerbaijan and America

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Marking a Day of Sorrow

Washington, DC – July 23, 2014 - July 23 is marked as a day of sorrow for the loss of the Azerbaijani town of Agdam to the occupying Armenian army. In early 1988, Armenian nationalists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, backed by the Armenian Republic, started a mass exodus of ethnic Azeris from their ancestral homes to annex Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia. By mid-1993, after the complete ethnic cleansing of Azeris from Nagorno-Karabakh and massacres in the Khojaly, Shusha and Kelbajar regions, Armenian forces advanced on the heartland Azerbaijan.

Occupation of Agdam (1,094 sq km and population of 153,000) by Armenian forces caused material destruction equaling \$6.179 billion; 5,897 ethnic Azerbaijanis died in Agdam during the days of occupation.

From April through November of 1993, the United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions — 822, 853, 874 and 884 — calling for immediate withdrawal of Armenian forces, allowing the return of Azerbaijani refugees. On March 14, 2008, the U.N. General Assembly reiterated its position on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by resolution A/62/L.42. Armenia has yet to comply.

According to the U.S. Refugee Committee's report (2000) on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, "More than 568,000 persons from western regions of Azerbaijan under Armenian occupation since 1993, including 42,072 from Nagorno-Karabakh, remained displaced within the country. Most were displaced from regions just outside Nagorno Karabakh, including Fizuli (133,725 persons), Agdam (128,584), Lachin (63,007), Kelbajar (59,274), Jabrayil (58,834), Gubadly (31,276), Zangilan (34,797), Terter (5,171) and Agjabedi (3,358)."

As a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I urge you to be proactive in exerting pressure on Armenia to take a constructive stance, force it to comply with the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, withdraw from internationally recognized Azerbaijani territories and allow the return of Azerbaijani refugees to their homes.

Submitted to The Hill from Yusif Babanly, Arlington, Va.

The Working Group of the U.S. Congress on Azerbaijan which has operated since 2004, plays a special role in the development of relations between Azerbaijan and the United States. For more information, please visit the Alliance website at www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org

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