



**The Council on State Support to NGOs  
under the auspices of the President  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**



**Citizens' Labor Rights Protection League**

**THE PLUNDER OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF  
AZERBAIJAN, DESTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ARTIFACTS,  
CHANGE OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES AND TOPONYMS BY ARMENIA**

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## BRIEF CHRONICLE

As a result of the military aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan, 20 percent of Azerbaijani territories, including Nagorno-Karabakh and 7 surrounding regions - Aghdam (62.8 percent of its territory is under occupation), Jabrayil, Fizuli (79.3 percent of the territory is under occupation), Kalbajar, Gubadli, Lachin, Zangilan and a number of settlements bordering with Armenia – a village of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic (Kerki), 13 villages of Terter region (Chardakhli, Umudlu, Ortakend, Talysh, Hasangaya, Shikharkh, Chanyatag, Chayli, Aghdere, Kichikgarabay, Giziloba, Agabeyyali, Ulugarabey) and 7 villages of Gazakh region (Yukhari Askipara, Ashaghiaskipara, Baganis Ayrum, Kheyrimli, Barkhudarly, Soflu, Gizilhajili) are under the control of Armenian armed forces for already 26 years.

The military aggression by Armenia has led to occupation of 17,000 sq. km of the country's most fertile lands, and destruction of 900 settlements, 150,000 houses, 7,000 public buildings, 693 schools, 855 kindergartens, 695 healthcare facilities, 927 libraries, 44 temples, 9 mosques, 473 historical monuments, palaces and museums, 40,000 museum exhibits, 6,000 industrial and agricultural entities, 2,670 km of motor roads, 160 bridges, 2,300 km of water lines, 2,000 km of gas lines, 15,000 km of power lines, 280,000 ha of forests, 1,000,000 ha of fertile agricultural lands and 1,200 km of irrigation systems. As a result of Armenian military aggression, 20,000 Azerbaijanis were killed, 100,000 were injured, 50,000 became disabled by various injuries and 4,011 went missing.

The UN Security Council has adopted 4 resolutions on withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied by Armenia territories<sup>1</sup>. However, thus far Armenia has not implemented any of these resolutions and demonstrates disregard for international law.

Prior to the occupation, Armenia has massively deported Azerbaijanis from the lands historically belonging to Azerbaijan, which is currently considered Armenia's territory. In 1920, Zangazur and some other territories of Azerbaijan were declared as the territory of the Armenian SSR. When the USSR was founded, these lands were declared as the territory of the Armenian SSR. In the subsequent period new ways were used by Armenia in order to further expand the deportation policy from these territories. For this purpose, they achieved the adoption of the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On the relocation of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Araz lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR" dated December 23, 1947, and the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical lands in 1948-1953 at state level. Over 100,000 Azerbaijanis were deported from the lands they lived in historically.

In 1988, 250,000 Azerbaijanis were deported from Armenia by particular violence within a week.<sup>2</sup> Presently, the names of thousands of geographical names, toponyms, including the names of all administrative-territorial units in the lands historically belonging to Azerbaijan which are currently

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/822\(1993\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/822(1993))  
[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/853\(1993\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/853(1993))  
[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/874\(1993\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/874(1993))  
[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/884\(1993\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/884(1993))

<sup>2</sup> <http://1905.az/en/order-that-deported-100000-azerbaijanis-from-armenia/#more-32083>

considered Armenia's territory have been armenianized. Historical and architectural monuments, as well as religious monuments belonging to Azerbaijani nation, have been completely destroyed. Geographical names, including the names of mountains, rivers, lakes, and etc. have been changed. At present, there is no even one Azerbaijani origin name in Armenia.

Subsequently, this policy was continued in the occupied by Armenia territories of Azerbaijan - in the territory of the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region and seven occupied surrounding regions.

Armenia either has destroyed or armenianized by structural alteration all historical, cultural and architectural monuments, including religious sites in the occupied territories. All geographical names in Garabagh volcanic plateau and Lesser Caucasus were renamed to Armenian names.

While occupying the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, along with a serious blow to international peace and security, the Republic of Armenia grossly violated several principles of international law, including the **principle of inviolability of the borders, the principle of territorial integrity of the states, the principle of non-use of force or threat of force.**

The Republic of Armenia violated war traditions with particular brutality, captured civilians in occupied territories, and deported people from the lands they lived historically. At present, there are no Azerbaijani civilians living in the occupied territories.

The Republic of Armenia either has destroyed or armenianized cultural, historical, geographical and architectural monuments in the occupied territories by structural alteration and by ascribing Armenian names which is particularly gross violation of a number of international norms.

The tyranny of Armenian occupiers in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, destruction of and deliberate damage to our historical and cultural monuments contravene the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, 1992 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage and UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention<sup>3</sup>.

## **CHANGE OF THE NAMES OF ADMINISTRATIVE-TERRITORIAL UNITS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

The names of administrative territorial units in Nagorno-Karabakh and 7 surrounding regions occupied by the Republic of Armenia have been changed by various ways. The Institute of Geography of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences has conducted extensive analyzes on change of the names of administrative territorial units and replacing them with Armenian origin ones. According to the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, "Research on change of the geographical names in the occupied by Armenia territories of Azerbaijan to Armenian toponyms has been conducted and it has been established that Azerbaijani origin toponyms (Turkic) has been subjected to aggression, step by step changed and armenianized: 277 geographical names located in the occupied by Armenia territories were altered by armenianization."<sup>4</sup>

"It has been determined that Armenia has falsely changed the Azerbaijani (Turkish) toponyms and replaced them with false Armenian names by different ways:

### **• Replacing Azerbaijani (Turkish) origin toponyms with Armenian names.**

For example:

- Aghdam city - Akna; Akn; Hakaku;
- Khojaly city - Ivanyan, Aigestan;
- Gubadli city - Sanasar;

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<sup>3</sup> [http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy\\_06\\_a.html?](http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy_06_a.html?)

<sup>4</sup> Source: <http://news.lent.az/news/112796>

- Lachin city - Berdzor;
  - Jabrayil city – Jrakan and etc.
  - Ahmadli village - Kherik; Henk (Lachin region);
- **Preservation of Armenian written versions of some of the toponyms renamed during the former Soviet era.** For example:
    - Khojavend city – Martuni city;
    - Khankendi city. – Stepanakert city;
    - Yukhari Yemishdjan village - Verin Sznek v.; Almaly v. - Khindyrystan v .; Daghyurd v. - Sarushen v., (Khojaly region);
    - Aghbulag v. - (Khojavand region).
  - **Partly changed toponyms and names of other places of the republic which were infringed and distorted, beside the toponyms of the territories under occupation.** For example:
    - Barda city- Partav city;
    - Ganja city – Gandzak city;
    - Zod mountain pass - pereval Sotskiy;
    - Shahveledli v.- Shahveli v. (Dashkesen region);
    - Mushavak v. - Mushavan (Dashkesen region).
  - **Names changed as a result of calque (literal translation).** For example:
    - Aghbulag v. - Aknaxbyur v. (Khojavand region);
    - Nakhchivanli v. - Navsepavan v. (Khojaly region);
    - Boyuk Taghlar v. - Mets Taghlar v. (Khojavand region);
    - Chaykend v. – Getashen v. (Dashkesen region) and etc.
  - **Toponyms currently preserved as they are by subjecting to some phonetics alteration.** For example:
    - Gurzallar v. - Gurzalar v.; - Buzlug v. – Buzug v. (Goranboy region);
    - Vangli v. – Vank v. (Kalbajar region) and etc"<sup>5</sup>.

The new administrative-territorial units are created in the occupied territories under the decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, and toponyms are changed under the pretext of "Return of historical names." Under the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic dated 2 December, 1993, Kashadagh region which covers the occupied<sup>6</sup> Lachin, Gubadli and Zangilan regions was created and Lachin city was declared as a region center by renaming to “Berdzor”. The occupied territories of the Khojali and Aghdam regions are identified as the territory of the Hadrut region together with territories of Askeran, Fuzuli and Jabrail regions which are also under occupation. Until recently, the names of over 120 Azerbaijani settlements were renamed by the Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the so-called NKR. Aghdam city was named as "Akn", Fuzuli city as "Varanda", Zangilan city as "Kovsakan", Gubadli city as "Sanasar", Kalbajar city as "Karvacar", and Jabrayil city as "Crakan". The city of Khojaly, which was exposed to the genocide before very eyes of the world, was named "Ivanyan" as a tribute to the former general of the Russian army, Christopher Ivanyan, who drafted the occupation plan of the city.

<sup>5</sup> Source: <http://news.lent.az/news/112796>

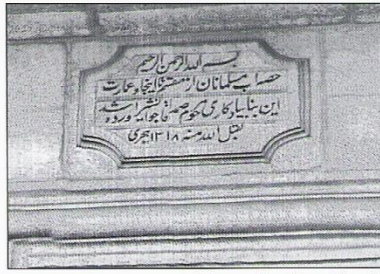
<sup>6</sup> Source: <http://nazimmustafa.info/?p=359>

The Republic of Armenia seriously violated international norms by changing the names of the administrative-territorial units in the occupied territories. These actions of Armenia contradict the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Humanitarian Law Principles and all international humanitarian laws.

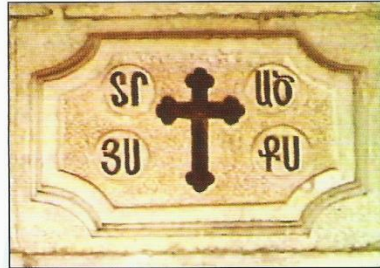
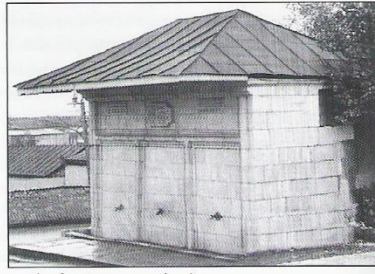
## **DESTRUCTION OR ARMENIANIZATION OF CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS AND ARCHEOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS FOUND AS A RESULT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

The occupied by Armenia Azerbaijani territories are lands with very ancient history, rich in cultural and architectural buildings, and religious temples of centuries. Every monument, every building in this region shows clearly that these territories belonged to the Azerbaijani (Turkic) people since ancient times. That is why, after occupation the Armenian army firstly destroyed most of the monuments to cover up their traces. The Armenians, have radically changed the structure of the most monuments, including the religious temples and armenianized them. They destroyed the Arabic graphic inscriptions written on these buildings and replaced them with Armenian writings.

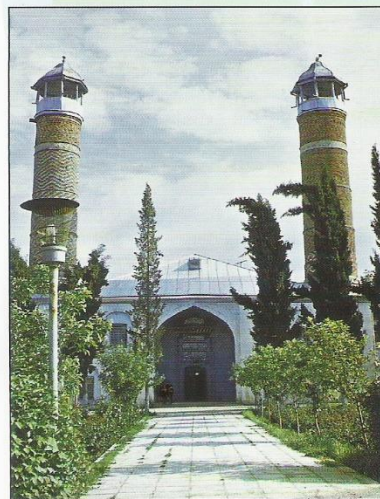
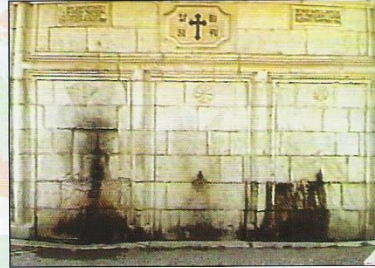




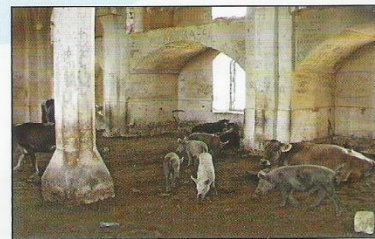
Mamayi spring, Shusha town (before occupation)



Mamayi spring, Shusha town (after occupation)



Mosque, Aghdam town (before occupation)



Mosque, Aghdam town (after occupation)

The results of this vandalism are more apparent in the findings of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan revealed as a result of the research conducted together with other institutions.

The famous Azikh and Taghlar caves, the most famous first human habitats, Garakopek, Uzarliktepe mounds which are located in the occupied territories, are currently being destroyed deliberately by being used for military purposes. Along with the mounds in Khojaly, Aghdam, Aghdara, Fuzuli and Jabrail regions, the cemeteries, tombs, grave monuments, mosques, temples, monuments of Caucasian Albania and other national monuments located in the occupied territories of Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar, Gubadli, Zangilan, Fuzuli are being destroyed.

In the territory of Shusha Historical Architecture, the occupying vandals have destroyed the mosques of Ashaghi and Yukhari Govheraga, Kocharli, Mardinli, Juma, house-museums of genius composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov, Bulbul who was a founder of professional vocal art, Palace complex of Khurshud Banu Natavan, estates of Firudin bey Kocherli and Zohrabbeyovs, the house of poet, painter, scientist Mir Movsum Navvab, most of the houses built in the national style reflecting the eastern architecture of the reserve city, the ancient cemetery located in the city, tomb of the great Azerbaijani poet, vizier of Garabagh khan M.P.Vagif, mansion of Panah Khan and Juma Mosque in Aghdam, Hamza Sultan and Soltan Ahmed palaces, mosques, sanctuaries and temples, stone sculptures, ancient tombs, mounds, historical monuments and living buildings in

Lachin region, as well as plundered and transported the movable material cultural monuments to Armenia.

The process of destruction of our material cultural heritage is still going on in the occupied territories. The occupiers carry out large-scale, non-professional archaeological excavations, destroy the mounds, and take their findings to Armenia. The survived artifacts in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding regions which are the ancient Azerbaijani lands occupied by Armenian terrorists include 13 universal value (6 architectural and 7 archeological), 292 country value (119 architectural and 173 archeological) and 330 local value (270 architecture, 22 archeological monuments, 23 gardens, parks, monumental and memorial monuments, 15 decorative art samples) historical and cultural monuments.

In addition, 22 museums with over 40,000 historical exhibits, 927 libraries with 4.6 million book fund, 808 clubs, 4 theaters and 2 concert centers, 8 cultural and recreational parks, 4 art galleries, 85 music schools, 103.2 thousand units of furniture equipment, 5,640 musical instruments, 481 cinema equipment, 20 movie cameras, 423 video recorders, 5,920 sets of national men and women clothes, 40 sets of audio amplifier, 25 large and 40 small-sized rides remained under occupation<sup>7</sup>. As a result of the heavy artillery and missile-firing during the aggression by Armenia, buildings in residential areas, including museums, historical monuments, and religious sites were ruined. For example, Aghdam Bread Museum, the only one in the former USSR, was destroyed by the city's bombardment.

More than 13,000 valuable and rare items of the world famous Kalbajar Historical and Ethnographic Museum, and more than 5,000 valuable and rare items from the Lachin Historical and Ethnographic Museum have been transported to Armenia.

As a result of the seizure of Shusha, our morality was severely damaged. 8 museums, 31 libraries, 17 clubs and 8 culture houses were damaged and destroyed only in Shusha city.

About 5,000 items from Shusha's historical museum, about 1,000 items from the Shusha branch of State Museum of Carpet and Applied Art, State Museum of Garabagh history, as well as the funds of memorial museums of composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov, founder of professional Azerbaijani music, (over 300 items), the great singer Bulbul who is a founder of our vocal art (about 400 items), outstanding musician and artist Mir Movsum Navvab (more than 100 items), Aghdam Historical and Ethnographic Museum (over 2,000 items), Gubadli Historical and Ethnographic Museum (over 3,000 items), Zangilan Historical and Ethnographic Museum (up to 6,000 items) have been robbed<sup>8</sup>.

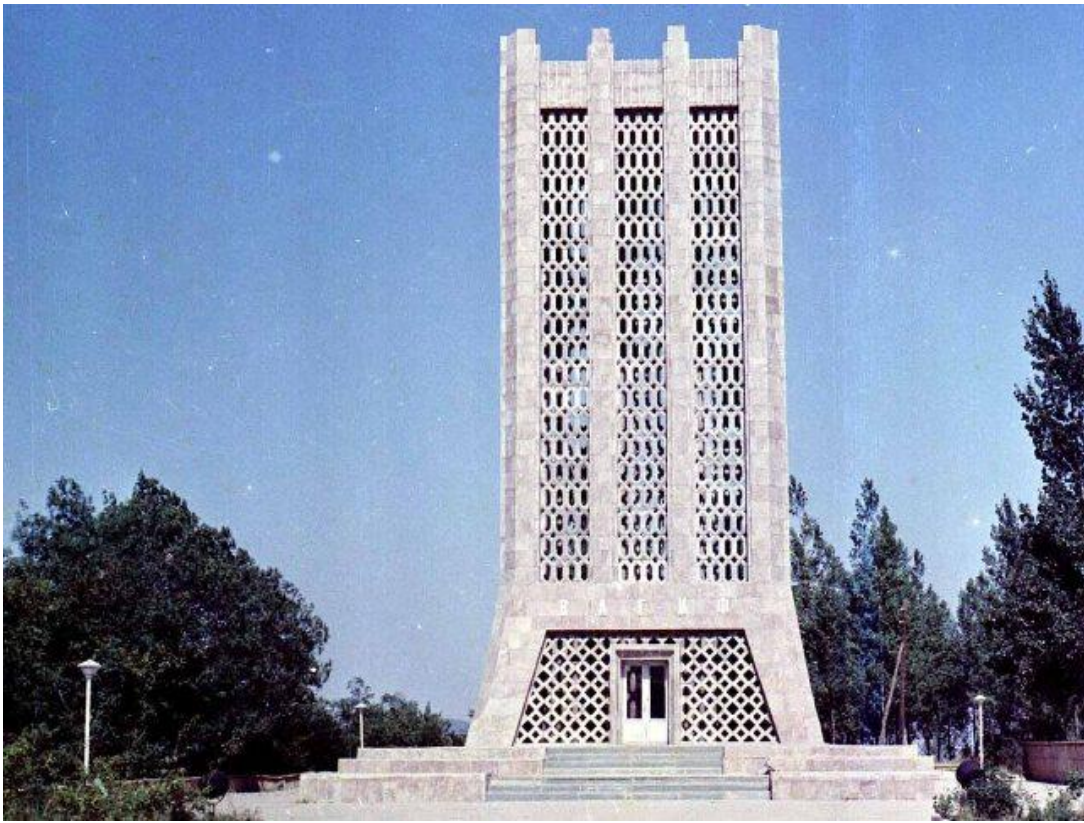
The occupiers systematically destroyed everything linked to the names of prominent people who lived in the occupied territories. The reason for this vandalism is to cover up all the traces of what proves that Karabakh is historical Azerbaijani land. Although Armenian population has been inhabited in these areas for the past 150 years, there were no world-renowned figures among them. However, from the Middle Ages, many well-known poets, scientists, art figures have been grown among the Azerbaijanis living in these areas. Garabagh was the capital of music and art in Azerbaijan. That is why the Republic of Armenia destroyed buildings and monuments connected with famous people when occupying these territories.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: [http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy\\_06\\_a.html?](http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy_06_a.html?)

<sup>8</sup>Source: [http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy\\_06\\_a.html?](http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy_06_a.html?)







Molla Panah Vagif's mausoleum in Shusha - before and after the occupation<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Source: <http://modern.az/az/news/71678#gsc.tab=0>





Aghdam monumental statue - before and after the occupation <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Source: <http://modern.az/az/news/71678#gsc.tab=0>





A monument of Sari Asug in Lachin - before and after the occupation <sup>11</sup>

Famous Azerbaijani musician Gurban Pirimov's memorial museum in Aghdam region, historical-ethnographic museums in Jabrayil, Fuzuli and Khojali regions have also been destroyed. There were valuable artifacts related to the history and culture of the Azerbaijani people, works of painting and sculpture, world-famous Azerbaijani carpets, carpet products, memorial items of prominent figures of Azerbaijan, and other valuable materials in the museums plundered by Armenian aggressors.

The funds of Shusha, Lachin and Gubadli art galleries which included the works of prominent artists and sculptors of Azerbaijan have also been destroyed.

The Armenian aggressors violently transported the statues of the great figures of Azerbaijani music such as Uzeyir Hajibeyov and Bulbul, as well as of a poetess Khurshud Banu Natavan to the territory of Armenia from Shusha. These monuments have been brutally shot and harmed by heavy equipment, in contravention of all moral norms. Those monuments were brought to Baku with great difficulty, and are currently being exhibited at the Art Museum<sup>12</sup>.

**Armenia seized cultural property in the occupied territories and transported them to Armenia and transferred them to the property of Armenian museums. The Republic of Armenia has grossly violated all the provisions of the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.**

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<sup>11</sup> Source: <http://modern.az/az/news/71678#gsc.tab=0>

<sup>12</sup> Source: [http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy\\_06\\_a.html?](http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Karabakh/Social/socialEconomy_06_a.html?)



All the museums, mosques and monuments belonging to the Islamic culture were destroyed as a result of the occupation by Armenia of the Karabakh region distinguished by its rich material and cultural monuments. Not only the monuments of Islamic culture, but also other monuments have been destroyed. The famous Azikh and Taghlar caves, the most famous first human habitats, Garakopek, Uzarliktepe mounds are currently being destroyed deliberately by being used for military purposes. Along with the mounds in Khojaly, Aghdam, Aghdara, Fuzuli and Jabrail regions, the cemeteries, tombs, grave monuments, mosques, temples, monuments of Caucasian Albania and other national monuments located in the occupied territories of Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar, Gubadli, Zangilan, Fuzuli are being destroyed.

In this way, Armenians want to erase our historical past and spiritual memory from the lands we lived in for millennia<sup>13</sup>.

The list compiled by the State Committee for Work with Religious Associations shows that there are about 403 historical religious monuments in the occupied lands of which 67 are mosques, 144 are temples, and 192 are sanctuaries. The monuments mostly subjected to destruction and demolition by Armenians included the monuments of Islamic religion - mosques, tombs and other places of worship. One of the reasons why the historical monuments belonging to Islamic era were destructed with particular brutality in the occupied territories is writings in Muslim epigraphy on them. That is why it was impossible to armenianize them and to present as non-Azerbaijani monuments. For this reason, 63 Muslim mosques (13 in Shusha, 5 in Aghdam, 16 in Fuzuli, 12 in Zangilan, 5 in Jabrail, 8 in Gubadli and 8 in Lachin) which officially functioned in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding regions have been fully destroyed, while only 4 have been destroyed partially and made useless. As a result of the pressure of international organizations the walls of Aghdam Juma Mosque, Ashagi Govharaga, Yukhari Govharaga and Saatli mosques in Shusha were possible to be preserved. The Armenians demonstrated amorality and their hatred against the Azerbaijanis by keeping domestic animals, including pigs, in the Aghdam Juma Mosque<sup>14</sup>.

## **CHANGE OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES AND EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES UNDER THE LABEL OF ARMENIAN BRAND**

Armenia has been able to do much to change and armenianize the geographical names within the historical territories and existing borders of Azerbaijan during the Soviet Union before the start of active military operations for the occupation of Azerbaijani territories. The Shahdag Ranges, which is one of the highest mountain ranges of the Lesser Caucasus located in Gadabay region far from Nagorno-Karabakh was began to be called the Sevan Ranges. They were able to register that range as the Sevan Ranges in the prepared maps and in some international publications. However, the name of this range is called Shahdag since the ancient times, and there are specific notes in the historical chronicles about it.

The names of other mountain ranges of the Lesser Caucasus, including the Murov Ranges and Gamish, Mixtokan mountain peaks, were also renamed to Armenian names.

The Goycha Lake located in the territory of the present Armenia was renamed as Sevan Lake even since the Soviet era. The Murghuz Range, which is located in the north-east of Goycha Lake, is also renamed to Armenian name.

The name of the world-famous therapeutic Istisu springs, located outside the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province in the Kalbajar region<sup>15</sup> occupied by Armenia in 1993 was also renamed and called Dermajur. Prior to the occupation, one of the largest health centers in the Soviet Union was located in this area; "Istisu" brand mineral waters were sold across the entire

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<sup>13</sup> Source: <http://scwra.gov.az/article/210/>

<sup>14</sup> Source: <http://scwra.gov.az/article/210/>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/822\(1993\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/822(1993))



Soviet Union and exported to the countries included in the socialist bloc. Armenia, presently keeping these territories under occupation, is exploiting it under the fraudulent Armenian name. Other resources of Kalbajar region under Armenian occupation, including gold mines, are being exploited under the Armenian names. The minerals of Nagorno-Karabakh volcanic plateau, including coatings and other construction materials, are being exported or used by Armenia under the name of Armenian brands. All geographical names in the Garabagh Volcanic Plateau have also been armenianized.

## **FACTORS OF RACIAL-DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE CHANGE OF AZERBAIJANI (TURKISH) ORIGIN NAMES**

One of the purposes of the destruction or reconstruction for armenianization of the monuments, cemeteries and other cultural heritages of Azerbaijani (Turkic) nation or destruction of properties belonging to Azerbaijani people is connected with the propaganda of hatred towards the Azerbaijani people in Armenia. The values of the Azerbaijani people are either destroyed or get armenianized to create a wrong impression in the Armenian people about the Azerbaijani people. By this, the Armenian people indoctrinate that the Azerbaijani people did not bring any value to humanity and creates vandal image of Azerbaijanis (Turks).

The propagandistic machine of Armenia has many methods of "truth" making to convince the Armenian people that Azerbaijani people do not have any culture, and to forge that Azerbaijani people do not have any ancient cultural and architectural heritage. The media articles about the matter are given on a regular basis by Armenian mass media.

Articles humiliating and insulting the Azerbaijani people (Turks) are placed on information portals, mass media using the domains of Armenia and different countries. Azerbaijanis are presented as barbaric and savage people.

Saqatel Bakveshinyan's article named "Animals and their offsprings don't have hearts" published in Voskanapat Info-analytical portal states:

*"Transformation of Turks into human beings was hopeless and meaningless from the beginning because we were not then aware of the major touches of genetic science. Turks do not learn from us and other neighbors. Their only source of learning is the wolf genes of the immoral boy who was the ancestor of Black Sheep and White Sheep Oghuzs (hints at White Sheep and Black Sheep tribal federations- author of the report)"*

*"It is not accidental that despite living in the neighborhood for centuries, they have not even learned to build houses; even though the number of floors of these houses is more than 20. Transcaucasia Turks (Azerbaijanis- author -author of the report) are now living in the imitative reality built by themselves and do not understand the meaning of their actions. This behavior of traditional nomads and White and Black Sheep ancestors look very hilarious from outside<sup>16</sup>."*

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<sup>16</sup> Voskanapat Info-analytical portal: <http://voskanapat.info/?p=6380>

The articles and TV programs kindling hatred are the result of Armenia's racist policy. One of the reasons for the destruction of cultural heritage, including monuments, museums and cemeteries belonging to the Azerbaijani people, is related to the Armenian racist policy. By destroying the cultural and natural heritage of Azerbaijani people, Armenia also brutally violates all the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

## **DISREGARD FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW AND VANDALISM AGAINST CULTURAL VALUES**

Cultural objects included to cultural property are specially protected. 1907 Hague Regulations establish precise rules for the prevention of cultural property destruction and sets out a wider scope of protection of cultural and religious institutions in the occupied territories. 1949 Geneva Convention, however, contained no specific provision for the protection of cultural property during armed conflicts.

1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict is the first international treaty focusing exclusively on the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflicts. Unlike previous treaties, the Convention provides commitment on constructive steps to prevent theft of property in the occupied territories along with respect and protection of cultural property. The member states of the Convention have agreed to "undertake to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property." The occupiers are also required to "take measures to preserve cultural property", even to work closely with the national authorities to achieve this<sup>17</sup>.

**Article 5 of 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict states that:** *“Any High Contracting Party in occupation of the whole or part of the territory of another High Contracting Party shall as far as possible support the competent national authorities of the occupied country in safeguarding and preserving its cultural property”*<sup>18</sup>.

The toy government created by Armenia in the occupied territories systematically destroyed these resources namely with the active participation of the Republic of Armenia. The occupiers not only avoided provision of the protection of cultural values, but also transported them to Armenia and completely demolished and destroyed the buildings. By this, the occupying State has grossly violated the requirements of Para.1, Article 5 of the Hague Convention.

Paragraph 1, Article 4 of Hague Convention states that: *“The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect cultural property situated within their own territory as well as within the territory of other High Contracting Parties by refraining from any use of the property and its immediate surroundings or of the appliances in use for its protection for purposes which are likely to expose*

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.unesco.az/files/image/files/dagidilmish%20abideler.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13637&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

*it to destruction or damage in the event of armed conflict; and by refraining from any act of hostility, directed against such property”<sup>19</sup>.*

The facts mentioned above in this report reveal absolute disregard of the Republic of Armenia for international norms, in particular the commitment set out in Paragraph 1, Article 4 of the Hague Convention and that acts of vandalism nature by the occupying Armenia contradict the international treaty fully.

Paragraph 3 of the same Article states that: *“The High Contracting Parties further undertake to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property. They shall refrain from requisitioning movable cultural property situated in the territory of another High Contracting Party.”<sup>20</sup>*

As stated above, over 13,000 valuable and rare items of the world famous Kalbajar Historical and Ethnographic Museum, and over 5,000 valuable and rare items from the Lachin Historical and Ethnographic Museum have been transported to Armenia.

About 5,000 items from Shusha's historical museum, about 1,000 items from the Shusha branch of State Museum of Carpet and Applied Art, State Museum of Garabagh history, as well as the funds of memorial museums of composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov, founder of professional Azerbaijani music, (over 300 items), the great singer Bulbul who is a founder of our vocal art (about 400 items), outstanding musician and artist Mir Movsum Navvab (more than 100 items), Aghdam Historical and Ethnographic Museum (over 2,000 items), Gubadli Historical and Ethnographic Museum (over 3,000 items), Zangilan Historical and Ethnographic Museum (up to 6,000 items) have been robbed and transported to Armenia. These are only cultural values and are not a complete list. Tens of thousands of cultural values which were in people's private property have been robbed and transported to the Republic of Armenia and subsequently put on sale in different countries around the world.

Article 11 of 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property states that: *“The export and transfer of ownership of cultural property under compulsion arising directly or indirectly from the occupation of a country by a foreign power shall be regarded as illicit.”<sup>21</sup>*

Article 12 of the Convention states that: *“The States Parties to this Convention shall respect the cultural heritage within the territories for the international relations of which they are responsible, and shall take all appropriate measures to prohibit and prevent the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property in such territories.”<sup>22</sup>*

The occupying Armenia and a toy regime created in the occupied territories are responsible for the gross violation of the stated provisions of the Convention and all other relevant articles. In international forums, conferences, and diplomatic meetings, the representatives of Armenia demonstrate cynicism and refute all committed in the occupied territories, and lay the blame for the acts on the so-called regime established in the occupied territories. However, at the same time, they ignore the existence of a number of documents, including the relevant resolutions of the UN

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<sup>19</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13637&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>20</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13637&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/1970-convention/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/1970-convention/>

Security Council, the resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe regarding the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the case of Chiragov and others v. Armenia which include provisions relating to control of the occupied territories by Armenia. All the international documents state that the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are under the effective control of the Republic of Armenia<sup>23</sup>.

Article 6.3, UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage states that: *“Each State Party to this Convention undertakes not to take any deliberate measures which might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage referred to in Articles 1 and 2 situated on the territory of other States Parties to this Convention”*<sup>24</sup>.

For the purposes of this Convention, the following shall be considered as "cultural heritage": monuments, architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science, groups of separate or connected architectural buildings, places of interest created by combined works of nature and man and etc.

The "natural heritage" includes natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation, natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

Hundreds of objects and areas under occupation which locate each of the cultural and natural values or hereditary sites and objects for the purpose of the convention, have been completely destroyed. Rare plants of the region, including trees, plane trees with valuable wood have been cut and transported to Armenia. Despite all warnings made to the Republic of Armenia, this process is still going on. Nuclear wastes from the nuclear power plant located in Armenia are being disposed in the occupied territories without complying with any technical requirements. All architectural monuments were destroyed and the inscriptions on them were stolen. Thus, the Republic of Armenia grossly violates the terms of this Convention as well.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the establishment of a large membership international fact-finding working group to investigate the facts of destruction of cultural and scientific heritage, plunder of movable wealth, destruction of graves continuous requests should be made to international organizations including UN;

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<sup>23</sup>Also see: [file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/001-155353%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/001-155353%20(2).pdf)

<sup>24</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf>

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination should pay special attention to the issue of race hatred and racial discrimination in acts of vandalism and declare its position;

The UNESCO Intergovernmental Commission founded under the Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage should be applied and requested to investigate and report on the cases of destruction of the cultural and natural heritage in the occupied territories;

In order to prove that aggression by the Republic of Armenia is not only the occupation of the territories, and also the genocide policy against the Azerbaijani (Turkic) people, a catalog of destroyed and robbed cultural and natural heritage should be drawn up and translated into different languages of the world.