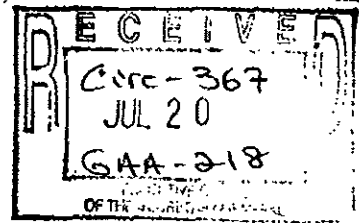


PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
119 East 36th Street, New York, New York 10016



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JUL 20 2012

Office of the USG

New York, July 20, 2012

DESA

NS

Excellency,

I have the honor to transmit herewith the statement by the Delegation of Armenia in the exercise of the right of reply to the statement of Azerbaijan at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 'Rio+20'.

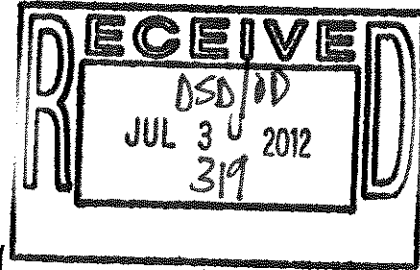
I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 19(a).

Encl. 2 pages

Sincerely,

Garen Nazarian

Ambassador, Permanent Representative



H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon,
Secretary General of the
United Nations

cc SG
DSG
Orig: GAA
cc Mr. Shia
Mr. Feltman
Ms. Kane
cdc | AG | LM |
UN / file

Statement by
Ambassador Vahram Kazhoyan,
Director of the International Organizations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
In the exercise of the right of reply to the statement of Azerbaijan
At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development “Rio+20”
(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 22, 2012)

Ms. President,
Secretary General,
Secretary General of the Conference,
President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

I apologize for taking the floor at this late hour, however the atrocious statement by the representative of Azerbaijan that was strangely devoted mostly to allegations against my country, has forced me to do so. Azerbaijani statement made earlier today was yet another manifestation of Azerbaijan’s hysteric anti-Armenian propaganda, which has become characteristic for each and every international gathering.

The only thing that I would like to say regarding the issue raised about the Metsamor nuclear power plant in Armenia, is that it is definitely not Azerbaijan’s business to falsely evaluate the safety of the Armenian nuclear power plant. It has been evaluated by IAEA, and it is functioning with full security guarantees and under constant supervision by international experts. IAEA knows, at least a little more, than Azerbaijani Deputy Prime-Minister, about the nuclear power safety standards. And believe me, we in Armenia are more interested with the safety of our nuclear power plant.

Now, let me address the last part of the Azerbaijan’s statement. “Rio+20” is not the forum for discussing the Nagorno Karabakh related issues. It should be resolved in direct talks between the parties. We have gathered here to solve the problems of our planet but if a neighbor state cannot live peacefully with its neighbors, they sure cannot contribute to the solution of the worldwide issues.

The harsh reality is simple: Azerbaijan’s authorities having declared Armenian people around the world as their only enemy have embarked upon the annihilation of a part of Armenian people living in Nagorno Karabakh. We have witnessed an unprecedented in the world 20 times growth of the military budget of Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani militaristic stance, adopted at the highest level, pose a real threat to the regional security and stability. The financing of such an unprecedented increase in Azerbaijan’s military budget is coming from the oil money which Azerbaijan is pumping without any whatsoever respect for nature and sustainable development that they were preaching earlier in his statement. The catastrophic results for the nature of this greedy oil-pumping and the consequences are yet to be thoroughly examined but there are already many disastrous effects. They are already fully addressed by the Azerbaijani media, however totally neglected by the authorities.

With such statements, Azerbaijan jeopardizes the peace process under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, headed by Russia, France and USA. Instead of making groundless accusations, it would be much better for Azerbaijani leadership to accept the Minsk Group proposals. It is Azerbaijan who is refusing the numerous calls for the withdrawal of the snipers from the line of contact. The latest incident four days ago claimed the life of yet another teenager.

Instead of reminding others about the UN Security Council resolutions it would be better if Azerbaijan itself implements the requirements of the resolutions that urge "States in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and from any interference or intervention which would lead to the widening of the conflict and undermine peace and security in the region". Contrary to this, almost every day Azerbaijan carries out provocative actions on the line of contact with the forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border.

Azerbaijan is alleging Armenia in the destruction of nature, wildlife and cultural property, as well as causing forest fires. To answer briefly to these allegations, I should only state that there have been a number of fact-finding and monitoring missions by a number of international organizations, and none of them has ever confirmed those groundless accusations.

How come a delegation speak about the destruction of cultural property by others when Azerbaijan is number one most barbaric destroyer of cultural heritage. To mention only the annihilation of thousands of medieval Armenian cross-stones and destruction of a 7th century Armenian church in Nakhijevan, for no other reason than to wipe out anything Armenian from the areas where Armenians constituted majority just decades ago. And these Azerbaijani acts are well documented, *inter alla* with photos and videos, and UNESCO has been duly notified about these destructions.

I could have addressed other issues from the Azerbaijani statement, however taking into consideration the absurdity of the allegations, as well as the late hour of our meeting, and most importantly having respect for the very productive work that we did here in Rio during these last days, I will refrain from any further comments.

I would request that this statement, in the exercise of the right of reply, be included in the report of the conference.

Thank you.