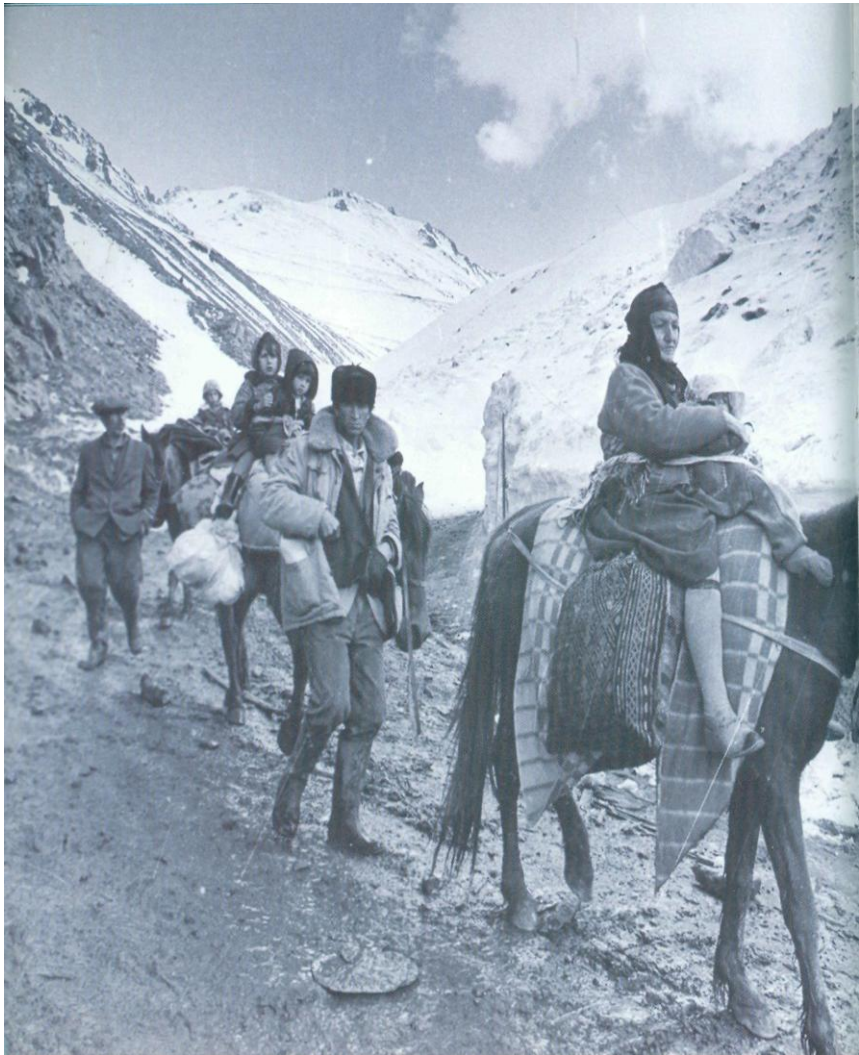


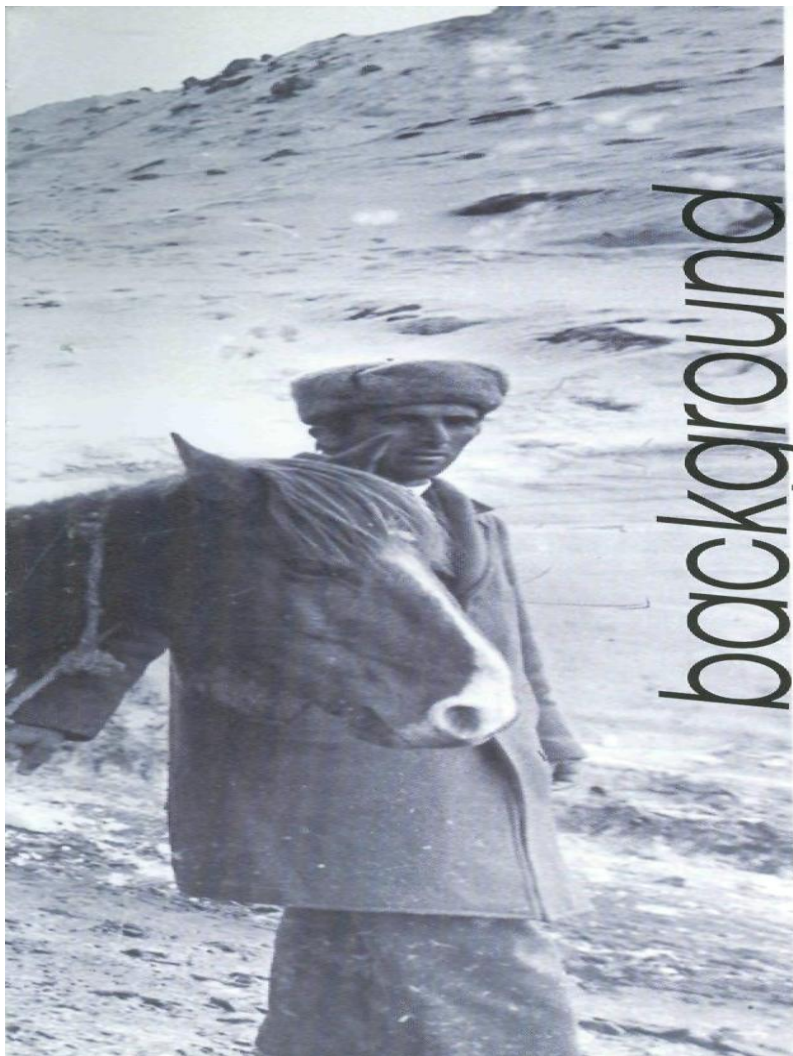
...The Khojaly massacre is a bloody episode. It is a continuation of the ethnic cleansing and genocide policies that the Armenian chauvinist-nationalists have been progressively carrying out against the Azerbaijanis for approximately 200 years. These accursed policies, supported by the authorities of some states, were constantly pursued by Tsarist Russia and the Soviets. After the demise of the USSR these policies led to the displacement of Azerbaijanis from their homelands, exposing them to suffering on a massive scale. In all, two million Azerbaijanis have at various times felt the weight of the policies of ethnic cleansing and genocide pursued by aggressive Armenian nationalists and stupid ideologues of "Greater Armenia".

...Today the Government of Azerbaijan and its people must bring the truth about the Khojaly genocide and all the Armenian atrocities in Nagorny Karabakh, their scale and brutality, to the countries of the world, their parliaments and the public at large and achieve the recognition of these atrocities as an act of genocide. This is the humane duty of every citizen before the spirits of the Khojaly martyrs. An international legal and political assessment of the tragedy and proper punishment of the ideologues, organizers and executors are important in order to avoid in future such barbarous acts against humanity as a whole...

Heydar Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
25 February 2002

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background

Khojaly Tragedy - an International View

The Russian and Persian empires signed the treaties of Gyulistan and Turkmanchai in 1813 and 1828 respectively, dividing the territory of Azerbaijan between them. After this, a very rapid mass resettlement of Armenians in Azerbaijani land took place and territory was divided artificially.

Between 1905 and 1907 the Armenians carried out a series of large-scale bloody attacks against the Azerbaijanis. The atrocities began in Baku and then extended over the whole of what was then Azerbaijan, including Azerbaijani villages in the territory of present-day Armenia. Hundreds of settlements were destroyed and wiped from the face of the earth, and thousands of civilians were barbarically killed.

Taking advantage of the situation following the First World War and the February and October 1917 revolutions in Russia, the Armenians began to pursue their plans under the banner of Bolshevism. Thus, under the watchword of combating counterrevolutionary elements, in March 1918 the Baku commune began to carry out a plan aimed at eliminating the Azerbaijanis from the whole of the Baku province. In addition to Baku, thousands of Azerbaijanis were annihilated, solely because of their ethnic affiliation, in the Shemakha and Guba districts, as well as in Karabakh, Zangezur, Nakhchivan, Lenkoran and other regions of Azerbaijan. In these areas, the civilian population was exterminated en masse, villages were burned and national cultural monuments were destroyed and obliterated.

Following the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia in late 1920, the Armenians were presented with a real opportunity to fulfil their age-old dream of creating an Armenian state on the territories of other nations. Over the 70 years of Soviet rule, the Armenians succeeded in expanding their territory at the expense of Azerbaijan, using every possible means to expel the Azerbaijanis from their lands. During this period, the policy was implemented systematically and methodically. On 30 November 1920 the Bolsheviks "granted" the region of Basarkechar (renamed Vardenis by the Armenians) and Vedibasar, south of Irevan (Yerevan), as well as the western part of Zangezur region (a total area of 9,800 square kilometers) to the Armenians, as a result of which Nakhchivan became an exclave separated from the main body of Azerbaijan. In 1923 they managed to secure the status of autonomous province for the mountainous part of Karabakh within the Azerbaijani SSR. Thus, an artificial entity was created on the territory of Azerbaijan, while the Azerbaijani population living in Armenia at that time were not granted similar rights.

Azerbaijanis, ousted from their native lands in Kalbajar.

Photo: Oleg Litvin

On the pretext of resettling Armenians coming from abroad, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted on 23 December 1947 and 10 March 1948 special decisions on the resettlement of collective-farm workers and other members of the Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Araks lowlands in the Azerbaijani SSR. Under these decisions, between 1948 and 1953, more than 150,000 Azerbaijanis were forcibly resettled from their historical homelands - the mountainous regions of Armenia - to the then waterless steppes of Mugan and the Mil plateau.

The current stage of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan may be regarded as having formally begun on 20 February 1988, when the Soviet of the People's Deputies of the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Region adopted a decision to petition the Supreme Soviets of the Azerbaijani SSR and the Armenian SSR for the transfer of the region from Azerbaijan to Armenia.

Before the adoption of this decision, already at the end of 1987, Azerbaijanis had been subject to attacks in Khankendi (known during the Soviet period as Stepanakert) and Armenia, and this had resulted in a flood of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons.

On 22 February 1988 near the settlement of Askeran on the Khankendi-Aghdam highway, Armenians opened fire on a peaceful demonstration by Azerbaijanis protesting against the decision of the Soviet of the People's Deputies of the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Region. Two Azerbaijani youths lost their lives in consequence, becoming the first victims of the conflict.

On 26-28 February 1988, 26 Armenians and Azerbaijanis were killed in disturbances in Sumgayit. It is notable that one of the leading figures in these events was a certain Edward Grigorian, an Armenian and native of Sumgayit, who was directly involved in the killings and violence against Armenians and the pogroms in Armenian neighbourhoods. The Criminal Division of the Supreme Court of the Azerbaijani SSR, on 22 December 1989 sentenced Grigorian to 12 years' imprisonment. The court found Grigorian to be one of the organizers of the unrest and massacres. Depositions by witnesses and victims show that he had a list of flats inhabited by Armenians and, together with three other Armenians, called for reprisals against Armenians in which he took part personally. His victims (all Armenians) identified Grigorian as one of the organizers and active figures in the violence. In fact, the events in Sumgayit had been planned in advance. They were necessary to the Armenian leadership as a means of launching an extensive anti-Azerbaijani campaign and justifying their ensuing aggression against Azerbaijan.

In 1988-89 more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to leave Armenia. During the ethnic cleansing at least 216 Azerbaijanis were killed.

On 20 January 1990 Soviet troops were brought into Baku to suppress popular protests against the unjust and prejudiced policy pursued by the leadership of the then USSR, as well as the incompetent performance of the local leadership. As a result, hundreds of the capital's residents were killed or wounded, mutilated and subjected to various forms of physical pressure.

In 1991 central law-enforcement agencies of the then USSR apprehended dozens of Armenian armed groups that were operating outside Nagorno Karabakh. Chaykend village in Azerbaijan's Khanlar district had been turned by Armenian armed groups into a criminal hub from which they bombed and shelled surrounding villages and roads, terrorizing the local Azerbaijani population. From 1989 to 1991, in Chaykend and adjacent areas 54 people fell victim to Armenian armed groups. In 1992 Azerbaijan regained its control over Khanlar district.

In late 1991 and early 1992 the conflict entered a military phase. Taking advantage of the political instability that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the internal squabbles in Azerbaijan, Armenia initiated, with external military assistance, combat operations in Nagorno Karabakh.

In February 1992, an unprecedented massacre was committed against the Azerbaijani population in the town of Khojaly. This bloody tragedy, which became known as the Khojaly genocide, involved the extermination or capture of thousands of Azerbaijanis; the town was razed to the ground. During the night of 25 to 26 February 1992 Armenian armed forces, with the help of infantry regiment No. 366 of the former USSR, seized Khojaly, a small town situated in the Nagorno Karabakh region with a total area of 0.94 sq. km. and a population before the conflict of 23,757.

The inhabitants of Khojaly who remained in the town before the tragic night (about 2,500 people) tried to leave their houses when the assault began in the hope of finding their way to the nearest place populated by Azerbaijanis. But they failed. The invaders destroyed Khojaly and wreaked a particularly brutal carnage on its civilian population.

The savage annihilation of hundreds of innocent residents of Khojaly was one of the most heinous crimes during the armed conflict in and around the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Armenian armed forces and foreign military units spared virtually none of those who had been unable to flee Khojaly and the surrounding area. As a result, 613 people were killed, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly people. A total of 1,275 inhabitants were taken hostage, while the fate of 150 persons remains unknown to this day. In the course of the tragedy 487 residents of Khojaly were severely maimed, including 76 young children. Six families were completely wiped out, 26 children lost both parents, and 130 children one of their parents. Of those who perished, 56

people were killed with especial cruelty: they were burnt alive, scalped, beheaded or had their eyes gouged out, and pregnant women were bayoneted in the abdomen.

Armenian officials deny their responsibility for the crimes committed during the conflict, including against the population of Khojaly, airily falsifying facts and sharing their own interpretations of them, which deviates not only from reality but also from elementary logic. Nevertheless, even the subtlest propaganda will never manage to disprove the facts that speak of a situation diametrically opposite to that presented by the Armenian side.

Apart from the considerable information in the possession of the law-enforcement agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the responsibility of Armenia is also documented by numerous independent sources and eyewitnesses to this tragedy.

This booklet presents most of the articles

published in the international media and reports by international NGOs about the Khojaly tragedy, excerpts from books dedicated to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict by foreign specialists, the impressions of eyewitnesses to the tragedy, reports by official agencies and forensic medical examination of the people killed in Khojaly. The aim is to provide impartial and disinterested information for the world community and to assist an independent assessment of the tragedy. Works of art created under the influence of the tragedy are also presented.



Funeral procession in the Azerbaijani capital Baku after dozens of families were massacred by Armenians in Khojaly, 09 March 1992. Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films

THE WASHINGTON POST
28 February 1992
"Nagorno-Karabakh Victims Buried
in Azerbaijani Town - Refugees
Claim Hundreds Died in Armenian Attack"
By Thomas Goltz, Agdam, Azerbaijan, 27 February

Officials of the main mosque in this town just east of the embattled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh said they buried 27 bodies today, brought from an Azerbaijani town in side the enclave that was captured Wednesday by Armenian militiamen. Refugees fleeing the fighting in Khojaly, a town of 6,000 north-east of the enclave's capital, Stepanakert, claimed that up to 500 people, including women and children, were killed in the attack. No independent estimate of deaths was available here. The Agdam mosque's director, Said Sadikov Muan, said refugees from Khojaly had registered the names of 477 victims with his mosque since Wednesday.

Officials in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, estimated the deaths in Khojaly at 100, while Armenian officials in their capital, Yerevan, said only two Azerbaijanis were killed in the attack. An official from Baku said here that his government fears Azerbaijanis would turn against it if they knew how many had been killed.

Of seven bodies seen here today, two were children and three were women, one shot through the chest at what appeared to be close range. Another 120 refugees being treated at Agdam's hospital include many with multiple stab wounds. The Armenians who attacked Khojaly Tuesday night "were shooting, shooting, shooting", said Raisa Aslanova, who reached Agdam Wednesday night. She said her husband and a son-in-law were killed and her daughter was missing. Among the refugees who fled here over the mountains from Nagorno-Karabakh were two Turkmen soldiers from former Soviet Interior Ministry forces who had taken refuge in Khojaly after deserting from their unit last Friday because, they said, Armenian non-commissioned officers had beaten them "for being Muslims". The two deserters claimed their former unit, the 366th Division, was supporting the Armenian militia men who captured Khojaly. They said they tried to help women and children escape. "We were bringing a group through the mountains when the Armenians found us and opened fire", said Agamehmet Mutif, one of the deserters. "Twelve were killed".

Khojaly, computer graphic by Etibar Aslanov

THE INDEPENDENT

29 February 1992

By Helen Womack

Elif Kalian, a Renter correspondent in Agdam, reported that after a massacre on Wednesday, Azeris were burying scores of people who died when Armenians over ran the town of Khojaly, the second-biggest Azeri settlement in the area. "The world is turning its back on what's happening here. We are dying and you are just watching", one mourner shouted at a group of journalists.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

1 March 1992

**"Armenian Soldiers Massacre
Hundreds of Fleeing Families"**

By Thomas Goltz, Agdam, Azerbaijan

Survivors reported that Armenian soldiers shot and bayoneted more than 450 Azeris, many of them women and children. Hundreds, possibly thousands, were missing and feared dead.

The attackers killed most of the soldiers and volunteers defending the women and children. They then turned their guns on the terrified refugees. The few survivors later de scribed what happened: "That's when the real slaughter began", said Azer Hajiev, one of three soldiers to survive. "The Armenians just shot and shot. And then they came in and started carving up people with their bayonets and knives".

"They were shooting, shooting, shooting", echoed Rasia Aslanova, who arrived in Agdam with other women and children who made their way through Armenian lines. She said her husband, Kayun, and a son-in-law were massacred in front of her. Her daughter was still missing.

One boy who arrived in Agdam had an ear sliced off.

The survivors said 2000 others, some of whom had fled separately, were still missing in the gruelling terrain; many could perish from their wounds or the cold.

By late yester day, 479 deaths had been registered at the morgue in Agdam, and 29 bodies had been buried in the cemetery. Of the seven corpses I saw awaiting burial, two were children and three were women, one shot through the chest at point blank range.

Agdam hospital was a scene of carnage and terror. Doctors said they had 140 patients who escaped slaughter, most with bullet injuries or deep stab wounds.

Nor were they safe in Agdam. On Friday night rockets fell on the city

which has a population of 150,000, destroying several buildings and killing one person.

THE TIMES
2 March 1992
"Corpses Litter Hills in Karabakh"

Anatol Lieven comes under fire while flying to investigate the mass killings of refugees by Armenian troops. As we swooped low over the snow-covered hills of Nagorno-Karabagh we saw the scattered corpses. Apparently, the refugees had been shot down as they ran. An Azerbaijani film of the places we flew over, shown to journalists afterwards, showed dozens of corpses lying in various parts of the hills.

The Azerbaijanis claim that as many as 1000 have died in a mass killing of Azerbaijanis fleeing from the town of Khodjaly, seized by Armenians last week.

A further 4,000 are believed to be wounded, frozen to death or missing. The civilian helicopter's job was to land in the mountains and pick up bodies at sites of the mass killings.

The civilian helicopter picked up four corpses, and it was during this and a previous mission that an Azerbaijani cameraman filmed the several dozen bodies on the hillsides.

Back at the air field in Agdam, we took a look at the bodies the civilian helicopter had picked up. Two old men and small girl were covered with blood, their limbs contorted by the cold and rigor mortis. They had been shot.

The Washington Times
2 March 1992
**"Armenian Raid Leaves Azeris
Dead or Fleeing"**

About 1,000 of Khojaly's 10,000 people were massacred by the Armenian Army in Tuesday's attack. Azerbaijani television showed truck loads of corpses being evacuated from the Khojaly area.

The New York Times
3 March 1992
"Massacre by Armenians
Being Reported"
Agdam, Azerbaijan, March 2 (Reuters)

The last of the former Soviet troops in the Caucasus enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh began pulling out today as fresh evidence emerged of a massacre of civilians by Armenian militants. The Itar-Tass press agency said the 366th Motorized Infantry Regiment had started its withdrawal, in effect removing the last frail buffer separating the region's two warring ethnic groups, Armenians and Azerbaijanis. The two sides made no attempt to interfere, it added.

Nagorno-Karabakh is within the Republic of Azerbaijan, but most of its population is Armenian.

Shelling in town reported

The Azerbaijani press agency Azerinform reported fresh Armenian missile fire on the Azerbaijani populated town of Shusha in Nagorno-Karabakh on Sunday night. It said several people had been wounded in another attack, on the settlement of Venjali, early today. The Republic of Armenia reiterated denials that its militants had killed 1,000 people in the Azerbaijani populated town of Khojaly last week and had massacred men, women and children fleeing the carnage across snow-covered mountain passes.

But dozens of bodies scattered over the area lent credence to Azerbaijani reports of a massacre. Azerbaijani officials and journalists who flew briefly to the region by helicopter brought back three dead children with the backs of their heads blown off. They said shooting by Armenians had prevented them from retrieving more bodies. "Women and children had been scalped", said Assad Faradzhev, an aide to Nagorno-Karabakh's Azerbaijani Governor. "When we began to pick up bodies, they began firing at us".

The Azerbaijani militia chief in Agdam, Rashid Mamedov, said: "The bodies are lying there like flocks of sheep. Even the fascists did nothing like this".

Two trucks filled with bodies

Near Agdam on the out skirts of Nagorno-Karabakh, a Reuters photographer, Frederique Lengaigne, said she had seen two trucks filled with Azerbaijani bodies. "In the first one I counted 35, and it looked as though there were at most as many in the second", she said. "Some had their heads cut off, and many had been burned. They were all men, and a few had been wearing khaki uniforms". Ethnic violence and economic crisis threaten to tear apart the Commonwealth of

Independent States, created by 11 former Soviet republics in December. The commonwealth has been powerless in the face of the ethnic hatred rekindled in the age-old dispute between Christian Armenia and Muslim Azerbaijan, which are members. Four years of fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh have killed 1,500 to 2,000 people. The last week's fighting has been the most savage yet. The 366th Regiment, based in Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, has been caught at the centre of fighting in which at least three of its soldiers were killed late last month.

Speaking to his Parliament in Yerevan, the Armenian capital, President Levon Ter-Petrosyan criticized the withdrawal from the enclave of the commonwealth's last troops. "This regiment, though not involved in military operations, was a stabilizing factor", Mr. Ter-Petrosyan said.



Children, who have lost their parents in Khojaly.
Foto: Azertaj

THE TIMES
3 March 1992
“Massacre Uncovered”
Bu Anatol Lieven

More than sixty bodies, including those of women and children, have been spotted on hillsides in Nagorno-Karabakh, confirming claims that Armenian troops massacred Azeri refugees. Hundreds are missing. Scattered amid the withered grass and bushes along a small valley and across the hillside beyond are the bodies of last Wednesday's massacre by Armenian forces of Azerbaijani refugees. In all, 31 bodies could be counted at the scene. At least another 31 have been taken into Agdam over the past five days. These figures do not include civilians reported killed when the Armenians stormed the Azerbaijani town of Khodjaly on Tuesday night. The figures also do not include other as yet undiscovered bodies Zahid Jabarov, a survivor of the massacre, said he saw up to 200 people shot down at the point we visited, and refugees who came by different routes have also told of being shot at repeatedly and of leaving a trail of bodies along their path. Around the bodies we saw were scattered possessions, clothing and personnel documents. The bodies themselves have been preserved by the bitter cold which killed others as they hid in the hills and forest after the massacre. All are the bodies of ordinary people, dressed in the poor, ugly clothing of workers.

Of the 31 we saw, only one policeman and two apparent national volunteers were wearing uniform. All the rest were civilians, including eight women and three small children. Two groups, apparently families, had fallen together, the children cradled in the women's arms.

Several of them, including one small girl, had terrible head injuries: only her face was left. Survivors have told how they saw Armenians shooting them point blank as they lay on the ground.



Morning News at 07:37,
Tuesday, 3 March 1992

ABBC reporter said on air that he saw more than 100 bodies of Azeri men, women and children as well as a baby who had been shot through the head at close range.



**Morning News at 08:12,
Tuesday, 3 March 1992**

A very disturbing picture shows many civilian corpses on a mountainside. The reporter said he, a cameraman and Western journalists had seen more than 100 corpses of men, women, children, massacred by Armenians. They had been shot in the heads from as close as 1 meter. Azerbaijan said that more than 1,000 civilians has been massacred by Armenian forces.

**The Washington Times
3 March 1992 "Atrocity Reports Horrify Azerbaijan"
By Brian Killen, Agdam. Azerbaijan**

Dozens of bodies lay scattered around the killing fields of Nagorno-Karabakh yesterday, evidence of the worst massacre in four years of fighting over the disputed territory.

Azeri officials who returned from the scene to this town about nine miles away brought back three dead children, the backs of their heads blown off.

At the local mosque, six other bodies lay stretched out, fully clothed, with their limbs frozen in the positions in which they were killed. Their faces were black from the cold.

"Telman!" screamed one woman, beating her breast furiously over the body of her dead father, who lay on his back with his stiff right arm jutting into the air.

Those who returned from a brief visit by helicopter to Khojaly, captured by the Armenians last week, said they had seen similar sights - only more. One Russian journalist said he had counted about 30 bodies within a radius of 50 yards from where the helicopter landed. Armenia has denied atrocities or mass killings of Azeris after its well-armed irregulars captured Khojaly, the second-biggest Azeri town in Nagorno-Karabakh, last Wednesday. Azerbaijan says 1,000 people were killed.

"Women and children had been scalped", said Assad Faradzhev, an aide to Karabakh's Azeri governor.

Mr. Faradzhev said the helicopter, bearing Red Cross markings and escorted by two MI-24 helicopters of the former Soviet army, succeeded in picking up only the three children before Armenian mili-tants opened fire. "When we began to pick up bodies, they started firing at us", he said. Mr. Faradzhev said they

were on the ground for only 15 minutes. "The combat helicopters fired red flares to signal that Armenians were approaching and it was time to leave. I was ready to blow myself up if we were captured", he said pointing to a grenade in his coat pocket. Reuters photographer Frederique Lengaigne saw two trucks full of Azeri corpses near Agdam. "In the first one, I counted 35, and it looked as though there were almost as many in the second. Some had their heads cut off and many had been burned. They were all men, and a few had been wearing khaki uniforms", she said. In Agdam's mosque, the dead bodies lay on mattresses under a naked light bulb. People screamed insults at Azerbaijan's president, Ayaz Mutalibov, saying he had not done enough to protect Karabakh's Azeri population. Hundreds of people crowded out side chanting Islamic prayers. Some wept uncontrollably and collapsed near their dead relatives, brought to the town by truck only minutes eadier. Chilling film of dozens of stiffened corpses scattered over a snowy hillside backed accounts of the slaughter of women and children sobbed out by refugees who made it safely out of the disputed Caucasus enclave.

Azerbaijani television showed pictures of one truck load of bodies brought to the Azeri town of Agdam, some with their faces apparently scratched with knives or their eyes gouged out. One little girl had her arms stretched out as if crying for help.

"The bodies are lying there like flocks of sheep. Even the fascists did nothing like this", said

Agdam militia commander Rashid Mamedov, referring to the Nazi invaders in World War II. "Give us help to bring back the bodies and show people what happened", Karabakh Gov. Musa Mamedov pleaded by telephone to the Soviet army base in Gyandzha, Azerbaijan's second largest city. A helicopter pilot who took cameramen and Western correspondents over the area reported seeing some corpses lying around Khojaly and dozens more near the Askeran Gap, a mountain pass only a few miles from Agdam.

The Boston Globe

3 March 1992

By Paul Quinn-Judge, Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan charged yesterday that Armenian militants massacred men, women and children after forcing them from a town in Nagorno-Karabagh last week.

Azerbaijani officials said 1000 Azeris had been killed in town of Khojaly and that Armenian fighters then slaughtered men, women and children fleeing across snow-covered mountain passes.

Armenian officials disputed the death toll and denied the massacre report. Journalists on the scene said it was difficult to say exactly how many people had

been killed in surrounding areas. But a Reuters photographer said he saw two trucks filled with Azeri corpses, and a Russian journalist reported massacre sites else where in the area.

Azeri officials and journalists who flew briefly to the region by helicopter recovered the bodies of three dead children who had been shot in the head, Reuters said, but Armenians prevented them from retrieving more bodies. There were growing signs that many civilians were killed during the capture of Khojaly. Footage shot by Azerbaijan Television Sunday showed about 10 dead bodies, including several women and children, in an improvised morgue in Agdam. An editor at the main television station in Baku said 180 bodies had been recovered so far. A helicopter flying over the vicinity is reported to have seen other corpses, while the BBC quoted a French photographer who said that he had counted 31 dead, including women and children, some who appeared as though they were shot in the head at close range. Meanwhile, the mayor of Khojaly, Elmar Mamedov, said at a news conference in Baku that 1000 people had died in the at tack, 200 more were missing, 300 had been taken hostage, and 200 were injured. Armoured personnel carriers of the 366th spear headed the attack, Mamedov charged, and cleared the way for Armenian irregulars.

THE AGE

6 March 1992

By Helen Womack, Agdam, Azerbaijan, Thursday

The exact number of victims is still unclear, but there can be little doubt that Azeri civilians were massacred by Armenian Army in the snowy mountains of Nagorno-Karabakh last week.

Refugees from the enclave town of Khojaly, sheltering in the Azeri border town of Agdam, give largely consistent accounts of how Armenians attacked their homes on the night of 25 February, chased those who fled and shot them in the surrounding forests. Yesterday, I saw 75 freshly dug graves in one cemetery in addition to four mutilated corpses we were shown in the mosque when we arrived in Agdam late on Tuesday. I also saw women and children with bullet wounds in a make shift hospital in a string of railway carriages.

Khojaly, an Azeri settlement in the enclave mostly populated by Armenians, had a population of about 6000. Mr. Rashid Mamedov, Commander of Police in Agdam, said only about 500es caped to his town. "So where are the rest?" Some might have taken prisoner, he said, or fled. Many bodies were still lying in the mountains because the Azeris were short of helicopters to retrieve them. He believed more than 1000 had perished, some of cold in temperatures as low as minus 10 degrees.

When Azeris saw the Armenians with a convoy of armoured personnel

carriers, they realized they could not hope to defend them selves, and fled into the forests. In the small hours, the massacre started.

Mr. Nasiru, who believes his wife and two children were taken prisoner, repeated what many other refugees have said that troops of the former Soviet army helped the Armenians to attack Khojaly. "It is not my opinion, I saw it with my own eyes".

The New York Times
6 March 1992
A Final Goodby in Azerbaijan

[Photo by Associated Press]: "At a cemetery in Agdam, Azerbaijan, family members and friends grieved during the burial of victims massacred by the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Chingiz Iskandarov, right, hugged the coffin containing the remains of his brother, one of the victims. A copy of Koran lay atop the coffin".

The Washington Post
6 March 1992
Final Embrace

[Photo by Associated Press]: "Chingiz Isgenderov, right weeps over coffin holding the remains of his brother as other relatives grieve at an Azerbaijani cemetery yesterday amid burial of victims killed by Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh".

THE SUNDAY TIMES
8 March 1992

Thomas Goltz, the first to report the massacre by Armenian soldiers, reports from Agdam. Khojaly used to be a barren Azeri town, with empty shops and treeless dirt roads.

Yet it was still home to thousands of Azeri people who, in happier times, tended fields and flocks of geese. Last week it was wiped off the map.

As sickening reports trickled in to the Azerbaijani border town of Agdam, and the bodies piled up in the morgues, there was little doubt that Khojaly and the stark foothills and gullies around it had been the site of the most terrible massacre since the Soviet Union broke apart. I was the last Westerner to visit Khojaly. That

was in January and people were predicting their fate with grim resignation. Zumrut Ezoya, a mother of four on board the helicopter that ferried us into the town, called her community "sitting ducks, ready to get shot". She and her family were among the victims of the massacre by the Armenians on February 26.

"The Armenians have taken all the outlying villages, one by one, and the government does nothing", Balakisi Sakikov, 55, a father of five, said. "Next they will drive us out or kill us all", said Dilbar, his wife. The couple, their three sons and three daughters were killed in the massacre, as were many other people I had spoken to. "It was close to the Armenian lines we knew we would have to cross. There was a road, and the first units of the column ran across then all hell broke loose. Bullets were raining down from all sides. We had just entered their trap". The Azeri defenders picked off one by one. Survivors say that Armenian forces then began a pitiless slaughter, firing at any thing moved in the gullies. A video taken by an Azeri cameraman, wailing and crying as he filmed body after body, showed a grizzly trail of death leading to wards higher, forested ground where the villagers had sought refuge from the Armenians.

"The Armenians just shot and shot and shot", said Omar Veyselov, lying in hospital in Agdam "I saw my wife and daughter fall right by me", he said.

People wandered through the hospital corridors looking for news of the loved ones. Some vented their fury on foreigners: "Where is my daughter, where is my son?" wailed a mother. "Raped. Butchered. Lost".

Le Monde
14 March 1992

A foreign journalist in Aghdam saw women and three children who had been scalped and had their nails pulled out among those who had been killed. This is not "Azerbaijani propaganda", but reality.

Newsweek
16 March 1992

"The face of a massacre"

By Pascal Privat with Steve Le Vine in Moscow

Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary-Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on February 25-26. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were

scalped. While the victims' families mourned.

TIME

16 March 1992

"Massacre in Khojaly"

By Jill Smolowe Reported by Yuri Zarakhovich/Moscow

While the details are argued, this much is plain: something grim and unconscionable happened in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly two weeks ago. So far, some 200 dead Azerbaijanis, many of them mutilated, have been transported out of the town tucked in side the Armenian-dominated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for burial in neighbouring Azerbaijan. The total number of deaths - the Azerbaijanis claim 1,324 civilians have been slaughtered, most of them women and children - is unknown.

Video tapes circulated by the Azerbaijanis include images of defaced civilians, some of them scalped, others shot in the head...



mass media

Agdam, Azerbaijan, 4 March 1992, Azerbaijani women who escaped death in Khojaly.
Photo: Klaus Reisinger/COMPASS Films

СВОБОДА
Russian newspaper
12 June 1992

"A Tragedy Whose Perpetrators Cannot be Vindicated"

A report by Memorial, the Moscow-based human rights group, on the massive violations of human rights committed in the taking of Khojaly on the night of 25-26 February 1992 by armed units of Khojaly on the night of 25-26 February 1992 by armed units The report of Memorial on the massive violations of human rights committed in the taking of Khojaly says of the civilians' flight from the town: "The fugitives fell into am bushes set by the Armenians and came under fire. Some of them nonetheless man aged to get into Agdam; others, mostly women and children (exactly how many it is impossible to say), froze to death while lost in the mountains; others still, according to testimony from those who reached Agdam, were taken prisoner near the villages of Pirdzhamal and Nakhichevanik. There is evidence from inhabitants of Khojaly who have already been ex changed that some of the prisoners were shot. Around 200 bodies were brought into Agdam in the space of four days. Scores of the corpses bore traces of profanation. Doctors on a hospital train in Agdam noted no less than four corpses that had been scalped and one that had been be headed. State forensic examinations were carried out in Agdam on 181 corpses (130 male and 51 female, including 13 children): the findings were that 151 people had died from gun-shot wounds, 20 from shrapnel wounds and 10 from blows inflicted with a blunt instrument. The records of the hospital train in Agdam, through which almost all the injured inhabitants or defenders of Khojaly passed, refer to 598 cases of wounds or frost bite (cases of frostbite being in the majority) and one case of live scalping".

THE INDEPENDENT
(London), 12 June 1992
By Frederique Lengaigne/Reuter

Aref Sadikov sat quietly in the shade of a cafe-bar on the Caspian Sea esplanade of Baku and showed a line of stitches in his trousers, torn by an Armenian bullet as he fled the town of Hojali just over three months ago, writes Hugh Pope.

"I'm still wearing the same clothes, I don't have any others", the 51-years-old carpenter said, beginning his account of the Hojali disaster. "I was wounded in five places, but I am lucky to be alive".

Mr. Sadikov and his wife were short of food, with out electricity for more than a month, and cut off from helicopter flights for 12 days. They sensed the Armenian noose was tightening around the 2,000 to 3,000 people left in the

straggling Azeri town on the edge of Karabakh. "At about 11pm a bombardment started such as we had never heard before, eight or nine kinds of weapons, artillery, heavy machine-guns, the lot", Mr. Sadikov said.

Soon neighbours were pouring down the street from the direction of the attack. Some huddled in shelters but others started fleeing the town, down a hill, through a stream and through the snow into a forest on the other side.

To escape, the towns people had to reach the Azeri town of Agdam about 15 miles away. They thought they were going to make it, until at about dawn they reached a bottle neck between the two Azeri villages of Nakhchivanik and Saderak. "None of my group was hurt up to then... Then we were spotted by a car on the road, and the Armenian out posts started opening fire", Mr. Sadikov said. Mr. Sadikov said only 10 people from his group of 80 made it through, including his wife and militiaman son. Seven of his immediate relations died, including his 67-years-old elder brother.

"I only had time to reach down and cover his face with his hat", he said, pulling his own big flat Turkish cap over his eyes. "We have never got any of the bodies back".

The first groups were lucky to have the benefit of covering fire. One hero of the evacuation, Alif Hajjef, was shot dead as he struggled to change a magazine while covering the third group's crossing. Mr. Sadikov said.

Another hero, Elman Memmedov, the mayor of Hojali, said he and several others spent the whole day of 26 February in the bushy hillside, surrounded by dead bodies as they tried to keep three Armenian armoured personnel carriers at bay.

As the survivors staggered the last mile into Agdam, there was little comfort in a town from which most of the population was soon to flee. "The night after we reached the town there was a big Armenian rocket at tack. Some people just kept going", Mr. Sadikov said. "I had to get to the hospital for treatment. I was in a bad way. They even found a bullet in my sock".

*An Azerbaijani woman mourns her son,
killed in Khojaly. Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films
Nurses struggle in primitive condition to save a wounded man in a make
shift operating theatre set up in a train carriage.
Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films*





THE INDEPENDENT
(London), 12 June 1992
"Painful search"

The true extent of February's killings of Azeris by Armenians in the town of Hojali is at last emerging in Azerbaijan - about 600 men, women and children dead. The State Prosecutor, Aydin Rasulov, the chief investigator of a 15-man team looking into what Azerbaijan calls the "Hojali Massacre", said his figure of 600 people dead was a minimum on preliminary findings. A similar estimate was given by Elman Memmedov, the mayor of Hojali. An even higher one was printed in the Baku newspaper Ordu in May - 479 dead people named and more than 200 bodies reported unidentified. This figure of nearly 700 dead is quoted as official by Leila Yunusova, the new spokeswoman of the Azeri Ministry of Defence. Francois Zen Ruffinen, head of delegation of the International Red Cross in Baku, said the Muslim imam of the nearby city of

Agdam had reported a figure of 580 bodies received at his mosque from Hojali, most of them civilians. "We did not count the bodies. But the figure seems reasonable. It is no fantasy", Mr. Zen Ruffinen said. "We have some idea since we gave the body bags and products to wash the dead".

Mr. Rasulov endeavours to give an unemotional estimate of the number of dead in the massacre. "Don't get worked up. It will take several months to get a final figure", the 43-years-old lawyer said at his small office.

Mr. Rasulov knows about these things. It took him two years to reach a firm conclusion that 131 people were killed and 714 wounded when Soviet troops and tanks crushed a nationalist uprising in Baku in January 1990.

Officially, 184 people have so far been certified as dead, being the number of people that could be medically examined by the republic's forensic department. "This is just a small percentage of the dead", said Rafiq Youssifov, the republic's chief forensic scientist. "They were the only bodies brought to us. Remember [the chaos and the fact that we are Muslims and have to wash and bury our dead within 24 hours]. Of these 184 people, 51 were women, and 13 were children under 14 years old. Gunshots killed 151 people, shrapnel killed 20 and axes or blunt instruments killed

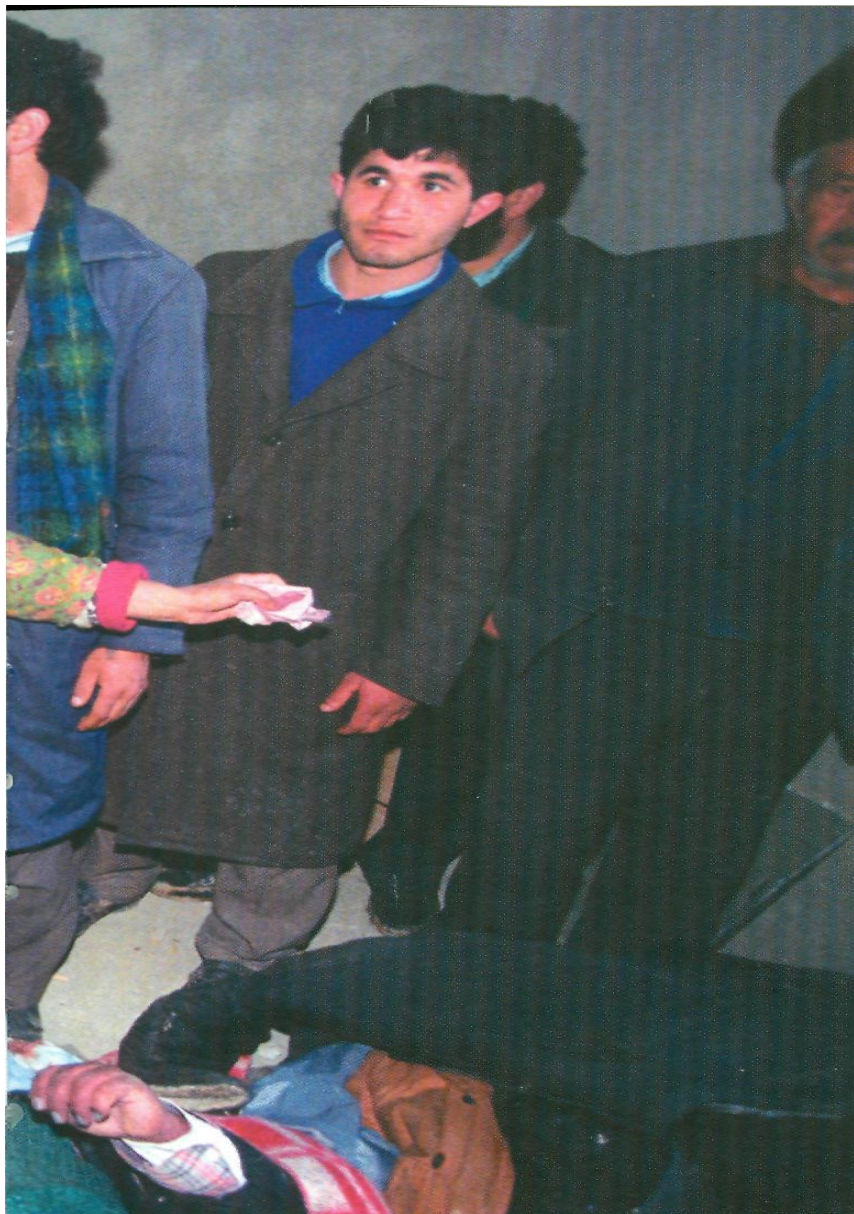
Agdam, Azerbaijan, 2 March 1992, Azerbaijani men look at their dead relatives outside a makeshift morgue in the mosque of Agdam village after dozens of families were massacred by Armenians in the nearby village of Khojali in Nagorno Kharabakh. Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films

10. Exposure in the highland snows killed the last three. Thirty-three people showed signs of deliberate mutilation, including ears, noses, breasts or penises cut off and eyes gouged out, according to Professor Youssifov's report.

Those 184 bodies examined were less than a third of those believed to have been killed, Mr. Rasulov said. "There were too many bodies of dead and wounded on the ground to count properly: 470-500 in Hojali, 650-700 people by the stream and the road and 85-100 visible around Nakhchivanik village", Mr. Manafov wrote in a statement counter signed by the helicopter pilot. "People waved up to us for help. We saw three dead children and one two-years-old alive by one dead woman. The live one was pulling at her arm for the mother to get up. We tried to land but Armenians started a barrage against our helicopter and we had to return".

There has been no consolidation of the lists and figures in circulation because of the political upheavals of the last few months and the fact that nobody knows exactly who was in Hojali at the time - many inhabitants were displaced from other villages taken over by Armenian forces.





KOMMEPCANT
Kommersant newspaper
(Moscow) 27 February 2002

Over the night from 25 to 26 February 1992 the Khojaly town (Nagorno Karabakh), inhabited mainly by Azerbaijanis, was subjected to the massive attack from the Armenian side. The units of the Russian 366th infantry guards regiment took part in the attack. As a result, 613 persons dead, 487 wounded, 1275 imprisoned, 150 persons are missing. The Khojaly events have radically changed the nature of the conflict - afterwards the military operations from both sides have actually turned into ethnic cleansings.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
Human Rights Watch World Report 1993*
The Former Soviet Union: Azerbaijan

...During the winter of 1992, Armenian forces went on the offensive, forcing almost the entire Azerbaijani population of the enclave to flee, and committing unconscionable acts of violence against civilians as they fled. The most notorious of these attacks occurred on February 25 in the village of Khojaly. A large column of residents, accompanied by a few dozen retreating fighters, fled the city as it fell to Armenian forces. As they approached the border with Azerbaijan, they came across an Armenian military post and were cruelly fired upon. At least 161 civilians are known to have been murdered in this incident, although Azerbaijani officials estimate that about 800 perished. Armenian forces killed unarmed civilians and soldiers who were hors de combat, and looted and some times burned homes...

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Hsw-07.htm>

Mother survived with her baby in Khojaly. Photo: Chingiz Mustafayev



HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1994'
"Azerbaijan: Seven Years of Conflict
in Nagorno-Karabakh"

The massacre of hundreds of Azeri civilians in Khojali, NKAO, by Karabakh forces with alleged support of the 366th Regiment of the Russian army" was one of the major events characterized the war in 1992.

In February 1992, Karabakh Armenian forces-reportedly backed by soldiers from the 366th Motor Rifle Regiment of the Russian Army-seized the Azeri-populated town of Khojali. More than 200 civilians were killed in the attack, the largest massacre to date in the conflict. Footnote 28: There are no exact figures for the number of Azeri civilians killed because Karabakh Armenian forces gained control of the area after the massacre. While it is widely accepted that 200 hundred Azeris were murdered, as many as 500-1000 may have died.

"Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. Azerbaijan: Seven Years of Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. New York. 1994 "Khojali"

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH CENTER "MEMORIAL"
"Khojali"

...Since autumn of 1991 Khojali has been practically blocked by Armenian armed formations and after withdrawal of internal troops from Nagorno Karabakh, full blockade of Khojali was imposed. Beginning from January 1992 electrical energy transfer to Khojali was stopped. Part of inhabitants left blocked city, however, despite insistent requests of head of executive power of Khojali city E.Mamedov, total evacuation of peaceful population was not organized. On February 25 Armenian armed formations began assault of Khojali.

Participants of assault

...Units of Artsakh National Liberation Army participated in the assault using armored equipment - armored troop carriers, combat infantry cars and tanks.

Course of assault

Artillery firing of Khojali began about 11 p.m. on February 25. Barracks located in housing estate and outposts were destroyed first of all. Entering of infantry units into the city took place from 1 a.m. till 4 a.m. in the morning on February 26.

...The last resistance was broken by 7 a.m. in the morning.

<http://vvvvvv.memo.ru/hr/hotpoints/karabah/Hojaly/>

...As a result of firing of the city unknown number of peaceful inhabitants was killed on the territory of Khojali during the assault.

The "free corridor" for population leaving

60 people fled from Khojali during the city assault were questioned by "Memorial" observers in Aghdam and Baku questioned 60 people fled from Khojali during the city assault. Only one man of all questioned people said that he knew about existence of "free corridor".

...These refugees proceeded along the "free corridor" situated on the territory adjoined to Aghdam district of Azerbaijan were fired, that resulted in death of many people.

Fate of the inhabitants who stayed in the city

After the occupation of the city by Armenian armed formations about 300 peaceful inhabitants including 86 TurksMeskhets were in the city.

... According to information received from both sides over 700 captive inhabitants of Khojali took as hostages in the city and on the way to Aghdam were passed to Azerbaijani side by March, 23 1992. Among them were mainly women and children.

Fate of property of Khojali inhabitants

Inhabitants of Khojali who could flee had no possibility to take with them even the most necessary part of their property. The inhabitants who were taken, as captives by members of Armenian armed formations also had no possibility to take the part of their property.

Observers from "Memorial" Human Rights Watch Center became witnesses of active unlimited marauding in the occupied city. The property left by Khojali inhabitants got out from the city by inhabitants of Khankendi (Stepanakert) and neighbouring settlements. The names of new owners were written on the gates of the most of houses.



NGO reaction

Azerbaijani men look for their dead relatives in a makeshift morgue in the mosque of Agdam after dozens of families were massacred by Armenians in Khojaly.
Photo: Klaus Reisinger/COMPASS Films

Estimation of findings

Mass violence against peaceful population of Khojali city took place during implementation of the military operation on the occupation of the city.

...The majority of Khojali inhabitants were not informed about existence of the "free corridor".

...Mass murders of peaceful inhabitants in the zone of the "free corridor" and adjacent territory cannot be justified by any circumstances.

...Servicemen of infantry guard's regiment No 366 belonged to Commonwealth of Independent States troops have participated in Khojali assault.

..."Memorial" Human Rights Watch Center establishes that actions of Armenian armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh towards Khojali peaceful inhabitants during the assault of Khojali city roughly violate Geneva conventions as well as the following articles of Human Rights Declaration (adopted by UN General Assembly on December, 10 1948):

Article 2, declaring that "every person must have all rights and all freedoms, declared by this declaration without any distinction of...language, religion, national...origin, ... or any other position";

Article 3, admitting rights of every person to life, freedom and personal immunity;

Article 5, forbidding brutal, inhuman or humiliate treatment of person;

Article 9, forbidding arbitrary arrests, detention or expatriation;

Article 17, declaring right of every person to have property and forbidding to deprive arbitrary the person of his property.

Actions of armed formations roughly violated Declaration on protection of women and children in emergency and during armed conflicts (declared by UN General Assembly on December, 14 1974)".

Azerbaijani men stare into a makeshift morgue, set up to take the bodies of victims of the Khojaly massacre.

Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films

**Human Rights Watch
Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 24 March 1997**

**"Letter by Holly Cartner, Executive Director
of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, Addressed to Mr. Alexander
Arzoumanyanyan,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia"**

Dear Mr. Arzoumanyanyan,

As Executive Director of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki (formerly Helsinki Watch), I wish to respond to the March 3 Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement regarding the 1992 slaughter of Azeri civilians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno Karabakh. In it, the Ministry argues that the Popular Front of Azerbaijan was responsible for the civilian deaths, supporting this argument by referring to an interview with former President Ayaz Mutalibov and, incredibly, to a 1992 report by our organization. The report, *Bloodshed in the Caucasus: Escalation of the Armed Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh*, documents violations of humanitarian law in the conflict committed by both Azerbaijani and Karabakh Armenian forces. Neither our overview and version of the events, nor the individual interviews with Azeri refugees from Khojaly and other villages in Nagorno Karabakh published in the report could possibly support the notion that Azerbaijani forces will fully prevented the evacuation of civilians or that they shot their own citizens. We are deeply distressed that the Ministry has, wittingly or unwittingly, linked our report to views which we reject and which our report does not reflect. The Ministry statement reads: "... the militia of the Azerbaijani National Front actively obstructed and actually prevented the exodus of the local population through the mountain passages specifically left open by Karabakh Armenians to facilitate the flight of the civilian population. On this matter, the September 1992 Helsinki Watch non-governmental organization report quotes an Azerbaijani woman who says that Armenians had notified the Azerbaijani civilian population to leave the town with white flags raised, in fact the Azerbaijani militia shot those who attempted to flee."

Our report indeed found that many residents of Khojaly may have had advance warning of the impending military operation, since Armenian forces had given an ultimatum to Alif Gajiyev, then head of the Khojaly militia, who in turn warned civilians. Our research and that of the Memorial Human Rights Centre found that the retreating militia fled Khojaly along with some of the large groups of fleeing civilians. Our report noted that by remaining armed and in uniform, the Azerbaijani militia may be considered as combatants and thus endangered fleeing civilians, even if their intent had been to protect them. Yet we place direct responsibility for the civilian deaths with Karabakh Armenian forces. In deed, neither our report nor that of Memorial includes any evidence to support the argument that Azerbaijani forces obstructed the flight of, or fired on Azeri civilians. For clarity's sake I cite our 1992 report (page 24):

... Thus, a party that intersperses combat' ants with fleeing civilians puts those civilians at risk and violates its obligation to protect its own civilians... [T]he attacking party [i.e., Karabakh Armenian forces] is still obliged to take precautionary measures to avoid or minimize civilian casualties. In particular, the party must suspend an at tack if it becomes apparent that the attack may be expected to cause civilian casual ties that are excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated." "The circumstances surrounding the attack ... on those fleeing Khojaly indicate that [Karabakh] Armenian forces and the troops of the 366th CIS regiment ... deliberately disregarded this customary law restraint on at tacks. Nagorno Karabakh officials and fighters clearly expected the inhabitants of Khojaly to flee since they claim to have informed the town that a corridor would be left open to allow for their safe passage... Under these circumstances, the killing of fleeing combatants could not justify the forsee-ably large number of civilian casual ties." Please allow me to clarify another reference to our 1992 report, regarding the 1988 Sumgait pogrom. Our report reads: "The most brutal of these events was the anti-Armenian pogrom in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, which took the lives of thirty-two Armenians, wounded hundreds more, and intensified the fears of ethnic Armenians living in other parts of Azerbaijan," which differs from the citation used in the Ministiy statement. We further cited the estimate of 300,000 - 350,000 ethnic Armenians who fled Azerbaijan, not 600,000 as the Ministry statement seemed to attribute to our report.

We welcome the use of our reports by governments and intergovernmental organizations, and we sincerely hope that there will be no further misrepresentation regarding the contents of our 1992 report.

I thank you for your attention. Yours sincerely.

Holly Cartner Executive Director

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki

cc: Mr. Hasan Hasanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Mr. Rouben Shugarian, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the United States

Mr. Hafiz Pashayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States

Ambassador Peter Tomsen, United States Ambassador to Armenia
Ambassador Richard Kauzlarich, United States Ambassador to Azerbaijan.

**Congressman Dan Burton's
Speech in the US House**

of Representatives, 17 February 2005

Mr. Burton of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, for years a number of distinguished Members of this House have come to the Floor of this Chamber every April to commemorate the so-called Armenian Genocide - the exact details of which are still very much under debate today almost 90 years after the events. Ironically and tragically, none of these Members has ever once mentioned the ethnic cleansing carried out by the Armenians during the Armenia-Azerbaijan war which ended a mere decade ago.

Khojaly was a little known small town in Azerbaijan until February 1992. Today it no longer exists, and for people of Azerbaijan and the region, the word "Khojaly" has become synonymous with pain, sorrow, and cruelty. On February 26, 1992, the world ended for the people of Khojaly when Armenian troops supported by a Russian infantry regiment did not just attack the town but they razed it to the ground. In the process the Armenians brutally murdered 613 people, annihilated whole families, captured 1275 people, left 1,000 civilians maimed or crippled, and an other 150 people unaccounted for in their wake. Memorial, a Russian human rights group, reported that "scores of the corpses bore traces of profanation. Doctors on a hospital train in Agdam noted no less than four corpses **that had** been scalped and one that had been be headed... and one case of live scalping:" Various other witnesses reported horrifying details of the massacre. The late Azerbaijani journalist Chingiz Mustafayev, who was the first to film the aftermath of the massacre, wrote an account of what he saw. He said, "Some children were found with severed ears; the skin had been cut from the left side of an elderly woman's face; and men had been scalped."

Human Rights Watch called the tragedy at the time "the largest massacre to date in the conflict." The New York Times wrote about "truckloads of bodies" and described acts of "scalping." This savage cruelty against innocent women, children and the elderly is unfathomable in and of itself but the senseless brutality did not stop with Khojaly. Khojaly was simply the first. In fact, the level of brutality and the unprecedented atrocities committed at Khojaly set a pattern of destruction and ethnic cleansing that Armenian troops would adhere to for the remainder of the war. On November 29, 1993, Newsweek quoted a senior US Government official as saying "What we see now is a systematic destruction of every village in their (the Armenians) way. It's vandalism."

A child watches his mother crying on the grave of his father, killed in Khojaly. Photo: Azertaj

This year, as they have every year since the massacre, the leaders of Azerbaijan's Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities issue appeals on the eve

of commemoration of the massacre of Khojaly urging the international community to condemn the February 26, 1992 blood shed, facilitate liberation of the occupied territories and repatriation of the displaced communities. And every year, those residents of Khojaly, who survived the massacre - many still scattered among one million refugees and displaced persons in camps around Azerbaijan - appeal with pain and hope to the international community to hold Armenia responsible for this crime. I am pleased to say that on January 25, 2005 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe overwhelmingly adopted a resolution highlighting that "considerable parts of Azerbaijan's territory are still occupied by the Armenian forces and separatist forces

are still in control of the Nagorno-Karabakh region." It also expressed concern that the military action between 1988 and 1994 and the widespread ethnic hostilities which preceded it, "led to large-scale ethnic expulsion and the creation of mono-ethnic areas which resemble the terrible concept of ethnic cleansing."

Mr. Speaker, this is not the ringing condemnation that the survivors of Khojaly deserve but it is an important first step by an international community that has too long been silent on this issue. Congress should take the next step and I hope my colleagues will join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate the tragedy of Khojaly. The world should know and remember.

An Azerbaijani woman refugee and her children take refuge in an abandoned train in the village of Agdam, after dozens of families were massacred by Armenians in Khojaly.

Photo: Frederique Lengaigne/COMPASS Films

Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
Doc. 9066 2nd edition 14 may 2001

**Recognition of the genocide perpetrated against the Azeri population
by the Armenians**

Written Declaration No. 324

2nd edition, originally tabled on 26 April 2001

This written declaration commits only the members who have signed it

Genocide became an integral part of the Azeri history starting from the partition of the Azeri lands with the treaties of Gulustan in 1813 and Turkmenchay in 1828.

The Armenians carried out massacres against the Azeris in 1905-1907 in order to achieve "the Greater Armenia".

In March 1918 the Armenians purged the Azeris from Baku, Shamakhy, Guba, Garabakh, Zangczur, Nakhchivan, Lankaran and other regions of Azerbaijan.

With the help of the Soviet regime, Armenia annexed Zangczur and other Azeri lands in 1920.

The Communist regime deported the Azeri population from their historical lands in Armenia to Azerbaijan from 1948-1953.

From the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 1988 hundreds of thousands of Azeris were deported from their historical lands.

On 26 February 1992, Armenians massacred the whole population of Khodzjaly and fully destroyed the city.

Armenian separatism in Nagorno-Karabakh and the ongoing Armenian occupation of 20 per cent of the Azeri territory has resulted in thousands of deaths and more than a million refugees.

The undersigned, members of the Assembly, appeal to all the members of the Parliamentary Assembly to take the necessary steps to recognise the genocide perpetrated by the Armenians against the Azeri population from the beginning of the 19th Century.

* Signed¹: Aliyev I, Azerbaijan, EDG, Akcali, Turkey, EDG, Akgonenc, Turkey, EDG, Aliyev G., Azerbaijan, EDG, Begaj, Albania, SOC, Cerrahoglu, Turkey, EDG, Davis, United Kingdom, SOC, Dokle, Albania, SOC, Glesener, Luxembourg, EPPCD, Gul, Turkey, EDG, Giilek, Turkey, SOC, Giirkan, Turkey, SOC, Hajiyeva, Azerbaijan, EPPCD, Huseynov R., Azerbaijan, EPPCD, ibrahimov, Azerbaijan, UEL, irtemcelik, Turkey, EDG, Iwinski, Poland, SOC, Kalkan, Turkey, EDG, Loutfi, Bulgaria, LDR, Mutman, Turkey, SOC, Polozhani, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", EDG, Saele, Norway, EPPCD, Saglam, Turkey, EPPCD, Seyidov, Azerbaijan, EDG, Shakhtakhtinskaya, Azerbaijan, EDG, Tanik, Turkey, EDG, Taylor, United Kingdom, EPPCD, Telek,

Turkey, EDG, Vakilov, Azerbaijan, EDG, Jones, United Kingdom, SOC,
*Total = 30 - SOC: Socialist Group; EPPCD: Group of the European
People's Party; EDG: European Democratic Group; LDR: Liberal, Democratic
and Reformers' Group; UEL: Group of the Unified European Left; NR : Not
registered in a group.*

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Fifty-eighth session. Agenda item 9

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Letter dated 23 April 2002 from the Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of .Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights

With reference to documents ECN.42002164, ECN.42002165, ECN.42002166 and ECN.42002167 of 2 April 2002, circulated by the delegation of Armenia under item 9 of the agenda of the fifty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, I am compelled once again to note with regret that the delegation of Armenia continues to submit grossly distorted information which does not correspond to the facts.

In connection with the documents circulated by the delegation of Armenia, I wish to state that they contain the usual barefaced propagandist[^] lies which are characteristic of the representatives of Armenia.

I would like to point out that the myth of Armenia's non-participation in the occupation of my country is used by that country with one single purpose - to justify its own crimes perpetrated during the aggression against Azerbaijan. Furthermore, what can be the true worth of the circulated documents and all the statements made by representatives of Armenia, in view of the fact that, in 1989, the Parliament of Armenia, in violation of all the principles and norms of international law, adopted a decision to annex part of the territory of another State - the Nagorny-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan?

By depicting Armenia's claims over the territory of another independent State Member of the United Nations as the struggle of the Armenian population of the Nagorny-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan for self-determination, the representatives of Armenia are attempting to consign to oblivion the well-known facts concerning participation by the armed forces of their country in military operations on Azerbaijani territory, the holding of a significant number of citizens of Azerbaijan in Armenia as hostages and prisoners of war, and many cases of murder and aggression against them. Nor must we forget the terrorist acts committed by Armenia against citizens of my country both in Azerbaijan and in

other States.

In this connection I wish to point out that the Republic of Armenia supports terrorism at the State level. Much could be said about the fond friendship between the authorities and ideologues of independent Armenia and Armenian international-style terrorists. I will dwell on only one example: as early as the mid-1990s a campaign was conducted to collect signatures in support of the terrorist Varuzhan Karapetyan, who had been convicted by a French court to life imprisonment for an explosion at a Turkish Airlines luggage counter at Orly Airport in Paris in 1983. The terrorists had calculated that the bomb would explode in the air, but by happy accident the flight was delayed and the deadly device went off on the ground. Eight people died as a result, including six French nationals. There should have been many more victims, according to the terrorists' calculations. As the Armenian mass media boasted, 1,227,473 signatures were collected from Armenian citizens in support of the terrorist. Moreover, in Armenia a school was named after this terrorist, and in Echmiadzin, the "Vatican of Armenia", an exhibition of his works of art was held. These efforts were crowned with success, and in May 2001 the French authorities released the terrorist from prison. Varuzhan Karapetyan then set off for Armenia, where he was welcomed as a national hero. Comments are superfluous, I think.

Concerning the expression "no people - no problem", which representatives of Armenia have added to their armoury and often make use of, I would like to remind you that in 1918 more than half a million Azerbaijanis lived in what is now Armenia. I would like to enquire of the representatives of Armenia as to the fate of these people. I hope the representatives of Armenia are not going to claim that they willingly left the places where they had always lived. Is this not eloquent testimony of the fact that the so-called principle of "no people - no problem" has long since been used in a planned way by the official authorities of Armenia itself?

One of the most monstrous crimes committed by the Armenian occupiers during what we call the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was the savage killing of the Azerbaijani population of the town of Khojaly. In a single night from 25 to 26 February 1992, 613 peaceful inhabitants were slaughtered, including 106 women and 83 children; 487 citizens suffered injuries of various kinds (including 76 minors); and 1,275 people were taken hostage. Although most of them managed to return to their motherland, the fate of 150 individuals is still unknown. Ten years have already passed since the day of that terrible tragedy, the scale and nature of which are fully in keeping with the definition of genocide which was reflected in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948.

The events in the town of Khojaly were witnessed and recorded by independent international sources, who confirmed that Armenia had committed genocide against the Azerbaijani population of the town. The testimony of the independent sources has been circulated by the delegation of Azerbaijan at the current session of the Commission under item 9 of the agenda in document ECN.42002151 of 22 March 2002. I hoped that the representatives of the Armenian delegation would not deny this fact, which was confirmed by documentary evidence from witnesses from independent international sources.

However, Armenia continues to deny its responsibility for the act of genocide committed against the inhabitants of the town of Khojaly, attempting to falsify the facts and supply its

own interpretation of them.

Proof may be found in this excerpt from a letter sent to Alexander Arzoumanian, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, on 24 March 1997, by Holly Cartner, the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch Helsinki:

"As Executive Director of Human Rights Watch Helsinki (formerly Helsinki Watch), I wish to respond to the March 3 Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement regarding the ...slaughter of Azcri civilians in the town of Khojaly in Nagorno Karabakh. In it, the Ministry argues that the Popular Front of Azerbaijan was responsible for the civilian deaths, supporting this argument by referring to an interview with [the] former President [of Azerbaijan Mr.] Ayaz Mutalibov and, incredibly, to a 1992 report by our organization. The report, Bloodshed in the Caucasus: Escalation of the Armed Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, documents violations of humanitarian law in the conflict committed by both Azerbaijani and ...Armenian forces. Neither our overview and version of the events, nor the individual interviews with Azcri refugees from Khojaly and other villages in Nagorno Karabakh published in the report could ...support the notion that Azerbaijani forces wilfully prevented the evacuation of civilians or that they shot their own citizens. We are deeply distressed that the Ministry has, wittingly or unwittingly, linked our report to views which we reject and which our report does not reflect.

"Yet we place direct responsibility for the civilian deaths with ...Armenian forces. Indeed, neither our report nor that of Memorial includes any evidence to support the argument that Azerbaijani forces obstructed the flight of, or fired on Azeri civilians.

"We welcome the use of our reports by governments and intergovernmental organizations, and we sincerely hope that there will be no further misrepresentation regarding the contents of our 1992 report."

I would also like to refer to the same authoritative independent source, concerning whose impartiality the representatives of Armenia can hardly harbour any doubts. In its publication Seven Years of Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, Human Rights Watch states that from the legal viewpoint, the participation of Armenian armed forces in military actions on the territory of Azerbaijan makes Armenia a party to an international armed conflict, specifically that between the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

I should also like to draw your attention to the fact that the delegation of Armenia is circulating for a second time, without modification, the information contained in document ECN.42002164 of 2 April 2002. I wish to emphasize that this is at variance with the established procedure concerning the submission of material to the secretariat and its distribution.

Concerning the issue of the events in Sumgait, which was raised by the Armenian delegation, I wish to remind you that the leading figure in the pogroms in Sumgait was a certain Edvard Grigoryan, an Armenian born in the town of Sumgait, who took an active and direct part in the killings and attacks on Armenians during the pogroms in the Armenian neighbourhoods.

On 22 December 1989 the Supreme Court of the Azerbaijani Republic sentenced Grigoryan to 12 years' imprisonment. The court found him to be one of the organizers of the disorder and large-scale slaughter. Written evidence from witnesses and victims showed that Grigoryan had a list of flats in which Armenians lived. All his Armenian victims agreed that Grigoryan was one of the organizers of and active participants in the pogroms and violence which occurred in Sumgait.

Concerning the issue of peace talks under the auspices of the CSCE Minsk group, which was raised by the representatives of Armenia, it must be recognized with regret that as a

result of Armenia's destructive position, the negotiating process is currently deadlocked.

I wish to underline once again that, despite the extremely uncompromising and aggressive stance adopted by Armenia, Azerbaijan remains committed to the peaceful settlement of the armed conflict. The relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the decisions of CSCE and other international organizations on the conflict continue to form the basis for the settlement of this tragic conflict.

Armenia must acknowledge that it can guarantee its own security only by establishing relations of good neighbourliness and cooperation with all the States in the region.

We call on Armenia to take a civilized approach to the settlement of the conflict on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized frontiers of States, and also for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that Armenia's membership of the Commission on Human Rights runs counter to common sense. I have no doubt that the time will come when Armenia will receive its due at the hands of the international community.

I request you to circulate this letter as an official document of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Murad NAJAFOV Charge d'affaires a.i.



Thomas Goltz,
"Azerbaijan Diary"
M.E. Sharpe, 1998, Armonk, NY, pp.117430
Khojali Eyewitness Account from the Following Day

February 26th, 1992 seemed like a regular working day. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was back in Baku to finally bestow diplomatic recognition on Azerbaijan, as well as to respond to the recent comments by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III about the growing threat of Iranian influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The wiry Iranian emissary insisted that it was not the Islamic Republic of Iran that posed a threat to the region, but rather the United States of America. In addition to being the country most responsible for the continued bloodshed throughout the world, it was America, he proposed, that was actively fomenting the conflict in Karabakh. By way of contrast, he noted that the Islamic Republic was interested in peace between nations and peoples. To that end, Dr. Velayati had brought a peace plan for the increasingly bloody and senseless conflict in Karabakh - and one that both Armenia and Azerbaijan had agreed to sign. He himself was planning to visit Karabakh the next day.

That was news. I was getting ready to file a story with the Washington Post when Hijran, my wife, came rushing in. She had been on the telephone with the Popular Front and had heard some very distressing news. Sources in Aghdam were reporting a stream of Azeri refugees filling the streets of the city, fleeing a massive attack in Karabakh.

There had been many exaggerated reports about the conflict from both sides. I wondered if this was just another example, but I thought it best to start working the phone. Perhaps they were all at the Gulistan Palace having dinner with the Iranian delegation. I waited a while, and then started trying to contact people at home. Around midnight, I got through to Vafa Guluzade [an advisor to President Mutalibov]. "Sony for calling so late," I apologized. "But what about this rumor"

"I can't talk about it," said Vafa, cutting me off and hanging up.

An ominous feeling filled my gut. Vafa was usually polite - to a fault. Perhaps he had been sleeping?

*Refugees from the Karabakh War, frantic to get away from the
invading Armenian troops. In their haste, they had to leave almost
all of their possessions behind. Photo: Azertaj*

I decided to call back again anyway, but the number stayed busy for the next half hour. Maybe he had left the phone off the hook, I thought. I made one last effort. Finally, the call got through.

"Vafa," I said, again apologizing. "What's going on?"

"Something terrible has happened," he groaned.

"What?"

"There's been a massacre," he said.

"Where?"

"In Karabakh, a town called Khojali," he said, and then he hung up the phone again.

Khojali?!

I had been there before. Twice, in fact. The first time was in September [1991], when a number of reporters and I had staked out the airport waiting for Russian President Boris Yeltsin to come through. The last time had been just a month before - in January 1992. By that time the only way to get to Khojali was by helicopter because the Armenians had severed the road link to Aghdam. I remembered that little adventure all too well.

Skeptical of the many reports coming from the Armenian side that the Azeris were massively armed and that their helicopters were "buzzing" Armenian villages, I had traveled to Aghdam with Journalist Hugh Pope, then of the [London] Independent to chat with refugees about their situation.

Refugees were easy to find in Aghdam. In fact, they were all over the place. The greatest concentration was at the local airfield for the simple reason that many of the refugees were tired of being refugees: they wanted to go back home to Khojali. Pride had overpowered their common sense. One was a 35-year-old mother of four by the name of Zumrud Eyvazova. When I asked why she was returning, she said it was better "to die in Karabakh than beg in the streets of Aghdam."

"Why can't the government open the road?" shouted Zumrud in my ear over the roar of the nearby chopper's engines, "Why are they making us fly in like ducks-easy targets to shoot at?"

I didn't have an answer.

Then someone lurched toward me from across the airfield. It was Alif Hajiyev, Commander of Airport Security at Khojali and the gentleman who had saved us

from the Aghdam drunks during Yeltsin's visit three months earlier. He had been pretty chipper then, but despite the broad smile that he gave me, I could see that it was no longer fun and games. I asked him how the situation was in his hometown.

"Come on," said Hajiyev. "Let's go to Khojali - you'll see for yourself and you can write the truth-if you dare."

Behind him an MI-8 helicopter waited, its blades slowly turning. A mass of refugees were clawing their way aboard. The chopper was already dangerously overloaded with people and foodstuffs. There was even more luggage waiting on the tarmac, including a rusted 70mm cannon and various boxes of ammunition.

"I'm not going," said Pope, "I've got a wife and kids."

The blades began spinning faster, and I had to make a quick decision.

"See you later," I said, wondering if I ever would.

I climbed on board, one of more than 50 people on a craft designed for 24, in addition to the numerous munitions and provisions.

"This is insane," I remember telling myself. "There's still time to get off."

And then it was too late. With a lurch, we lifted off and my stomach rushed up to my ears. I could see Pope waving at me as he walked off the field. Somehow I wished I had stayed behind with him on "terra firma". The MI-8 wound its way up to a flight altitude of 3,500 feet-high enough to sail over the Asgaran Gap to Khojali and avoid Armenian ground fire. Two dozen helicopters had been hit during the past two months. In November [1991], one helicopter had crashed, resulting in the deaths of numerous top officials.

Another "bird" had been hit the week before. Even the machine we were flying in had picked up a round in the fuel tank just a week before. That's what the flight engineer told me. Luckily, the fuel supply had been low and the bullet had come in high. This was all so very reassuring to learn as we plugged on through the Asgaran Gap, bucking headwinds and sleet.

Through breaks in the cloud cover I could see trucks and cars on the roads below. They were Armenian machines, fueled by gas and diesel brought in via their own air-bridge from Armenia (or, perhaps, even purchased from Azeri war profiteers). Finally and I should add, "mercifully", after a journey that seemed to take hours but really only lasted maybe 20 minutes, we began our circular descent to the Khojali airfield. Any one who has ever been aboard such a flight can appreciate the relief I felt when the wheels touched ground.

"I'm alive!" I wanted to shout, but thought it most appropriate to stay cool and act like I did such things twice a day.

"How do you feel?" Alif Hajiyeu asked me.

"Normalno," I lied in Russian, cool as cake.

Meanwhile, the chopper was mobbed by residents - some coming to greet loved ones who had returned, others trying to be the first aboard for the helicopter's return trip. Everyone had gathered to hear the most recent news about the rest of Azerbaijan - newspapers, gossip, rumors.

No phones were working in Khojali. In fact, nothing worked there. No electricity. No heating oil. No running water. The only link with the outside world was the helicopter that was under constant threat with each run. The isolation of the place became all too apparent as night fell. I joined Hajiyeu and some of his men in the makeshift mess hall of the tiny garrison, and while we were dining by the light of flickering candlelight on Soviet army Spam with raw onions and stale bread, he gave me what might be called a front-line briefing.

The situation was bad and getting worse, a depressed Hajiyeu told me. The Armenians had taken all the outlying villages, one by one, over the previous three months. Only two towns remained in Azeri hands: Khojali and Shusha, and the road between them had already been cut. While I knew the situation had been deteriorating, I had no idea it was so bad.

"It's because you believe what they say in Baku," Alif jeered. "We're being sold out. Utterly sold out!

"Baku could open the road to Aghdam in a day if the government wanted to," he said. He now believed the government actually wanted the Karabakh business to simmer on in order to distract public attention while the elite continued to plunder the country.

"If you write that and attribute it to me, I'll deny it," he said. "But it's true."

The 60-odd men under his command lacked both the weapons and training to defend the perimeter. The only Azeri soldiers worth their salt were four veterans of the Soviet war in Afghanistan who had volunteered to try to bring some discipline into the ranks.

The rest were green horns. If the Armenians shot off a single round, they answered with a barrage of fire, wasting half of their precious ammunition. And thus we passed the night. Around 2 a.m., I was awakened by a distant burst of fire coming from the direction of a neighboring Armenian town called Laraguk, about 500 yards away from a part of Khojali called, ironically enough, "Helsinki Houses."

The Armenian sniper fire was returned with at least 100 rounds from the Azeri side, including bursts of cannon fire from an old B 1 R, newly acquired from some Russian deserter. It was the only mechanized weaponry that I saw in the hands of the Azeris. The firefight continued sporadically until dawn, making it impossible to sleep.

No one knew when the Armenians would make their final push to take the town, but everyone knew that one night they would. Khojali controlled the Stepanakert [Khankandi] airport and was clearly a major objective for the Armenians. They had to take it. I remember thinking to myself: "I would, if I were them." With that thought came another that made me very uneasy: "What would the residents do when the Armenians did attack?"

In the morning, people were just standing around - literally. There was not a single teashop or restaurant in which to idle away the time. Men stood in small knots along the mud and graveled streets, waiting. The only person I saw actually doing something was a rather fat girl who worked as a sales clerk in the one fabric shop where there was nothing to sell. I spotted her waddling in to work at nine that morning. She was so intense about what she was doing that I decided to follow her into the shop. But the next time I saw her was when I was viewing a video. She was lying dead on the ground amidst a pile of other corpses - but that would come later. The rest of the townspeople just hung around, waiting for the ax to fall. I just prayed that it wouldn't happen while I was there.

We wiled away the morning, hanging around the airport. A photographer from an Azeri news agency happened to be around, so the military boys put on a good show, rolling out of their bunkers and running behind the old BTR, guns blazing.

"Let's do it again, but this time, let me take pictures from the front," the cameraman had suggested.

I felt sick and refused to have anything to do with such theatrics.

"These guys are going to die," I told myself. "And I don't want to die with them just because they're stupid enough to be shooting at shadows that fire back."

Alif Hajiyeve seemed to agree. We sat together in silence, watching his men pose for the camera, running hither and yon, full of bravado.

"Let's try that one again!" crowed the photographer.

I felt sick and refused to take a single photo or write a single note.

Finally, around noon, I heard the telltale whine of the chopper approaching from over the gap. Thank God! I let out a sigh of relief while trying to look indifferent. Then I made my way toward the airfield, just in time to see the overloaded bird disgorge its cargo of food, weapons and returning refugees. One kid got off with a canary in a cage, or maybe he was getting on. There were so many people at the airport, trying to get on and off that lone bird. I was merely one of them.

It seemed more were trying to get on than off. I desperately wanted on myself. I didn't care that the chopper was carrying twice or three times its weight limit, nor that part of the weight was a corpse -one of Hajiyeve's boys picked off by a sniper the night before. I wondered if we had shared that Soviet-style Spam dinner together by candlelight the night before, but thought it too impolite to pull

back the death sheet to stare. The engines gunned and whined, and we lifted with a lurch - but this time I was not afraid of the flight. I just wanted out. We climbed and climbed, circling high in the sky and blowing over the Asgaran Gap at 3,500 feet with tail winds. Maybe we took some ground fire; I don't know. But I did know one thing: I would never go back to Khojali again.

There was no need for vows. The last helicopter into Khojali - that town that had already been surrounded by Armenians - flew on February 13th.

The last food, except for locally grown potatoes, ran out on the 21st. The clock was rapidly ticking toward doom. It struck on the night of February 26th-the date that Armenians commemorate the attack on Armenians at Sumgayit in 1988.

We left Baku by car at seven in the morning and drove as quickly as we could across the monotonous flats of central Azerbaijan. Brown cotton fields stretched along the horizon. As we roared by, hunters standing along the roadside held up ducks that they had just bagged. We stopped for gas in a town named Tartar and asked the local mayor what was happening in Aghdam. He said he didn't know anything. We stopped again in another town called Barda and again took a moment to inquire about events and rumors. Clueless looks greeted us.

We were starting to think that the whole thing was a colossal bum steer when we arrived in Aghdam and drove into the middle of town, looking for a bite to eat. It was there that we ran into the refugees. There were 10, then 20, then hundreds of screaming, wailing residents -all from Khojali. Many of them recognized me because of my previous visits to their town. They clutched at my clothes, babbling out the names of their dead relatives and friends, all the while dragging me to the morgue attached to the main mosque in town to show me their deceased loved ones.

At first we found it hard to believe what the survivors were saying. The Armenians had surrounded Khojali and delivered an ultimatum: "Get out or die." Then came a babble of details about the final days, many concerning Commander Alif Hajiyev.

Sensing doom, Alif had begged the government to bring in choppers to save at least a few of the civilians, but Baku had done nothing. Then, on the night of February 25th, Armenian "fedayeen" hit the town from three sides. The fourth side had been left open, creating a funnel through which refugees could escape. Arif gave the order to evacuate: the soldiers would run interference along the hillside of the Gorgor River Valley, while the women, children and "aghsaggals" [gray-bearded ones - wise elders of the village] escaped. Groping their way through the night under fire, the refugees had arrived at the outskirts of a village called Nakhjivanli, on the cusp of Karabakh, by the morning of February 26th. They crossed the road there and began working their way downhill toward the forward Azeri lines and the city Aghdam, now only some six miles away via the

Azeri outpost at Shelli.

It was there in the foothills of the mountains even within sight of safety, that the greatest horror awaited them - a gauntlet of lead and fire.

"They just kept shooting and shooting and shooting," sobbed a woman named Raisa Aslanova. She said her husband and son-in-law were killed right in front of her eyes. Her daughter was still missing.

Scores, hundreds, possibly even a thousand had been slaughtered in a turkey-shoot of civilians and their handful of defenders. Aside from counting every corpse, there was no way to tell how many had died. Most of the bodies remained inaccessible, in the no-man's land between the lines that had become a killing zone and a picnic for crows.

One thousand slaughtered in a single night? It seemed impossible. But when we began cross-referencing, the wild claims about the extent of the killing began to look all too true. The local religious leader in Aghdam, Imam Sadigh Sadighov, broke down in tears as he tallied the names of the registered dead on an abacus. There were 477 that day, but the number did not include those missing and presumed dead, nor those victims whose entire families had been wiped out and thus had no one to register them. The number 477 represented only the number of confirmed dead by the survivors who had managed to reach Aghdam and were physically able to fulfill, however imperfectly, the Muslim practice of burying the dead within 24 hours.



A child orphaned in Khojaly. Photo: Azertaj

Elif Kaban of Reuters was stunned into giddiness. My wife, Hijran, was numb. Photographer Oleg Litvin fell into a catatonic state and would only shoot pictures when I pushed him in front of the subject: corpses, graves, and the wailing women who were gouging their cheeks with their nails. The job required stomach. Now was the time to work - to document and report: a massacre had occurred, and the world had to know about it.

We scoured the town, stopping repeatedly at the hospital, the morgue and the ever-growing graveyards. We moved out to the edges of the defensive perimeter to meet the stragglers stumbling in. Then we would rush back to the hospital to check on those recently admitted who had been wounded. Then back to the morgue to witness truckloads of bodies being brought in for identification and ritual washing before burial.

I searched for familiar faces and thought I saw some but could not be sure. One corpse was identified as a young veterinarian who had been shot through the eyes at point-blank range. I tried to remember if I had ever met him, but could never be sure. Other bodies, stiffened by rigor mortis, seemed to speak of execution: with their arms thrown up as if in permanent surrender. A number of heads lacked hair, as if the corpses had been scalped. It was not a pretty day.

Toward late afternoon, someone mentioned that a military helicopter on loan from the Russian garrison at Ganja would be making a flight over the killing fields, and so we traveled out to the airport. No flight materialized, but I did find old friends.

"Thomas," a man in military uniform gasped, and grabbed me in an embrace, and began weeping, "Nash Nachalnik..." [Our Commander]

I recognized him as one of Alif Hajiyev's boys, a pimply-faced boy from Baku who had described himself as a banker before he had volunteered for duty in Karabakh. He was speaking in Russian, babbling, but I managed to understand one word above his sobs: the commander...

A few other survivors from the Khojali garrison stumbled over to me. Of the men under Alif Hajiyev's command, only 10 had survived. Dirty, exhausted and overcome with what can only be described as survivor's guilt, they pieced together what had happened during that awful night and the following day. Their commander - Alif Hajiyev - had been killed by a bullet to his brain while defending the women and children. And about the women and children - most of them had died, too.

Towards evening, we returned to the government guesthouse in the middle of town searching for a telephone. There we met an exhausted Tamerlan Garayev. A native of Aghdam, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament was one of the few government officials of any sort that I found there. Tamerlan was interrogating two Turkmen deserters from the Stepanakert-based 366th Motorized Infantry

Brigade of the Russian Interior Ministry forces that had descended on Khojali the week before. The last missing link of the tragedy suddenly fit into place: not only had the doomed town been assaulted by the Armenians, but the Russians had been undeniably involved as well.

"Talk, talk!" Tamerlan demanded, as the two men stared at us.

"We ran away because the Armenian and Russian officers were beating us because we were Muslims," one of the men, named Agha Mohammad Mutif, explained. "We just wanted to return home to Turkmenistan."

"I then what happened?" Tamerlan wanted to know.

"Then they attacked the town," the other explained. "We recognized vehicles from our unit."

The two had tried to flee along with everyone else in town and were helping a group of women and children escape through the mountains when they were discovered by the Armenians and the 366th.

"They opened fire and at least twelve men in our group were killed," Mutif recounted. "After that, we just ran and ran."

Could such a thing have really happened: a Russian-backed assault by Armenians on an Azeri town, which resulted in up to 1,000 dead?

This was news. But as we started to file our stories, we became aware of something very strange. No one seemed interested in the story. Apparently, the idea that the roles of the good guys had been reversed was too much: Armenians slaughtering Azeris?

"You're suggesting that more people died in this single attack in Karabakh than the total number that we have reported killed over the past four years?" observed BBC's Moscow correspondent when I tipped him on the bloodbath. "That's impossible," he replied. "Take a look at Reuters!" "There's nothing on the wire." Indeed, there wasn't. Although Elif Kaban had been churning out copy on her portable Telex, nothing was appearing on the wires. Either someone was spiking her copy, or was rolling it into a larger, anodyne regional report of "conflicting allegations".

To be fair, the government and press in Baku didn't exactly assist our efforts to get the story out. While we had been off in Aghdam trying to break the news, the presidential spokesman was claiming that Khojali's feisty defenders had beaten back an Armenian attack and that the Azeris had suffered only two casualties. They were pitching it as just an ordinary night in Mountainous Karabakh. We knew differently, but it was the three of us against the Azerbaijani State propaganda machine.

Finally, I managed to get a call through to the Moscow Bureau of the Washington Post and told them that I wanted to file a story. The staffers said they were too busy to take a dictation. When I insisted, they reluctantly patched me through to the Foreign Desk in Washington. I used the number of 477 people to

indicate how many had died. After all, that was the figure that had been so carefully determined by Imam Sadighov. Though the figure turned out to be low, the editors "dragged me over the coals." Where had I gotten such a figure, since Baku was reporting that only two people had died? Had I seen all the bodies? They cautioned balance. Besides, the Armenian press was reporting that there had been a "massive Azeri offensive."

"Why wasn't that in my report?" The editors wanted to know.

I was about to defend my position that I had not written such because it simply had not happened when suddenly the first of many Kristal missiles started raining down on Aghdam and landing only about a mile away from the Government Guest House that I was calling from. Other missiles followed, and when one crashed into the building next door and blew out all the windows in our building, we thought it best to get down to the basement before we were blown to smithereens.

An hour later, crawling out from under the mattresses, we came up for air and decided we had better get out of Aghdam as fast as possible. About 60,000 other people had the same idea, and we suddenly found ourselves in the middle of a mass exodus of trucks, cars, horses and people on bicycles, all rushing to flee east in the direction of Baku.

I broke the news about the Khojali massacre with a world-exclusive story on February 27th. It made an inside page of the Washington Post. London's Sunday Times took the story more seriously - maybe because they were Europe - and gave it front-page coverage. By then, the international hack-pack had started parachuting in to count bodies and confirm that something awful had really happened. The first Western reporter who managed to arrive in the killing fields and perform the grisly task of counting the dead was Anatol Lieven of the London Times. His companion was the late Rory Peck of Frontline News - another cool professional and dear friend. [Less than two years later, Rory would be shot to death in front of Ostankino TV in Moscow on October 3, 1993, when Boris Yeltsin decided to restore democracy in Russia through the barrels of guns.]

Others performed less well. One reporter from Agence France-Press, best left nameless, arrived in Aghdam the night we left and found the city "quiet," apparently confusing the silence that followed the missile-induced exodus of 60,000 people with an aura of peace and tranquility.

The government of Azerbaijan, meanwhile, made a complete about-face on the issue. The same people who had remained inaccessible during the early days of the crisis were suddenly asking me to provide telephone numbers of foreign

correspondents in Moscow whom they could invite down - at government expense - to report on the massacre.

That didn't set well with me. I almost hauled off and assaulted the Presidential Press Secretary, accusing him of lying. He, in turn, started a rumor that I was an Armenian spy sent to Khojali to ferret out "military secrets" during my January visit to the doomed town. Consequence: I was temporally detained, causing me to slide into a very black mood. When I was released, I went downtown and found myself sitting at a shop with a bunch of black marketeers, who were vaguely waiting for me to exchange my dollars for rubles. Then the whole situation hit me and hit me **hard**.

The evening streets were still filled with light-hearted shoppers, apparently oblivious or, perhaps, indifferent to the fate of the citizens of Khojali. The men seemed to be all look-alikes in leather jackets, and the women had far too much rouge on their cheeks. They were all smiling and laughing and parading around. I have to confess: I hated every one of them. Maybe they didn't know what I had done. Maybe they did know but didn't care, lest it drive them insane. It wasn't clear, nor was my brain.

I canceled the dollar deal, walked out of the shop and wandered the streets. I think it was raining, but I can't remember for sure. I meandered the streets, unable to stop anywhere or see or talk to anyone for hours and hours.

"Ha ha," someone cackled, as he leaned toward his sweetheart and switched on the motor of his car.

"Ho ho," another chortled, as he lurched out of a "Komisyon" shop, a bottle of Finnish vodka under arm.

I wanted to slash their tires, smash their noses, burn their houses. I wanted to do something - something violent. Instead, I ended up wandering the streets in a daze. Finally, I arrived home and sat down and poured myself a long drink. Hijran asked me where I'd been.

"Khojali," I answered in a voice that I didn't recognize. I had been in that dump of a town with ghosts and no food to speak of, no water to wash with. And all the people from there that I had known were dead, dead, dead. I broke down and cried and cried and cried vowing that I would remember Commander Alif and all the others, whose names I had never known, but whose faces would be etched forever in my memory.



The memorial devoted to the Khojaly massacre.
Photo: Oqtay Aydinoqlu

X-O-C-A-L-I

How to Spell Khojali

Trying to spell Azeri words in English is often tricky, especially for those letters that have sounds that don't correspond to the English alphabet. The name "Khojali" is a typical case. In Azeri, this town is spelled Xocalı°. Azeri "x" sounds like a hard "kh" as in the Scottish word "Loch Ness". Azeri "c" sounds like English "j", and the undotted "i" (°) sounds somewhat like a short "i" in English.

When we spell Azeri names in the magazine through English, we usually write the Azeri "x" (kh), the "c" (j) and the undotted "i" (i, not y). However, on the Internet, we found that Khojali is being spelled in many different ways - at last count, more than 20.

Most Web sites write it as "Khojali" or "Khojaly", but we found a wide variety of other spellings, including: Hocali, Hodjali, Hodjaly, Hojali, Hojaly, Khocali, Khocaly, Khodjali, Khodjaly, Khojally, Xocali, Xodjali, Xodjaly, Xojali and Xojalli. But that's not all-through Armenian; it's also spelled Khodjalu, Khojalu, Xocalu and Xojalu. And don't forget Cyrillic and Armenian scripts.

Is there any wonder that so few people in the world know about the terrible tragedy that took place in this Azerbaijani town, when there are so many ways to spell it?

Charles van der Leeuw, "Azerbaijan: A quest for identity: a short history"

New York: St. Martin Press, 2000, pp. 171

In the early morning of February 26, the Artsakh Self-Defence Forces stormed the town of Khojaly, on the road between Stepanakert and Agdam, which appeared to have been left almost undefended. Taken by surprise, the population tried to escape but a large number were caught on the way, many slaughtered then and there and many more taken to perish under torture. In total, at least a thousand civilians are thought to have died in the atrocity or else have been reported missing with no hope of survival. More than half of the victims consisted of women, children and elderly.



Khojaly survivors.
Photo: Azertaj

**Thomas de Waal, "Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through
Peace and War"
New York & London: New York University Press, 2003, pp. 169-172**

Beginning in the New Year of 1992, the Armenians began to break out of the Karabakhi capital, Stepanakert. They captured the Azerbaijani villages that surrounded the town, expelling the hundreds of Azerbaijanis who remained there. Their main target was now Khojali...

The Armenian assault began on the night of 25-26 February, a date probably chosen to mark the anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms four years earlier. Armoured vehicles from the Soviet 366th Regiment lent their support. They surrounded Khojali on three sides before Armenian fighters went in and overwhelmed the local defenders...

In the middle of the night, a large crowd fled through the woods, which were ankle deep in snow, and started to descend the valley of the small Gargar River. In early morning, the crowd of Khojali civilians, interspersed with a few militiamen, emerged onto open ground near the Armenian village of Nakhchivanik. There they were hit by a wall of gunfire from Armenian fighters on the hillside above... More fleeing civilians kept on coming onto a scene of appalling carnage...

An Armenian police officer, Major Valery Babayan, suggested revenge as a motive. He told the American reporter Paul Quinn-Judge that many of the fighters who had taken part in the Khojali attack "originally came from Sumgait and places like that".¹

Asked about the taking of Khojali, the Armenian military leader Serzh Sarkisian² said carefully, "We don't speak loudly about these things". "A lot was exaggerated" in the casualties and the fleeing Azerbaijanis had put up armed resistance, he claimed. Sarkisian's summation of what had happened, however, was more honest and more brutal:

¹ See Paul Quinn-Judge, "Armenians, Azerbaijanis tell of terror; Behind an alleged massacre, a long trail of personal revenge", Boston Globe, 15 March 1992.

² Currently takes up the post of the Defense Minister of Armenia.

But I think the main point is some thing different. Before Khojali, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereo type]. And that's what happened. And we should also take into account that amongst those boys were people who had fled from Baku and Sumgait. Sarkisian's account throws a different light on the worst massacre of the Karabakh war, suggesting that the killings may, at least in part, have been a deliberate act of mass killing as intimidation".

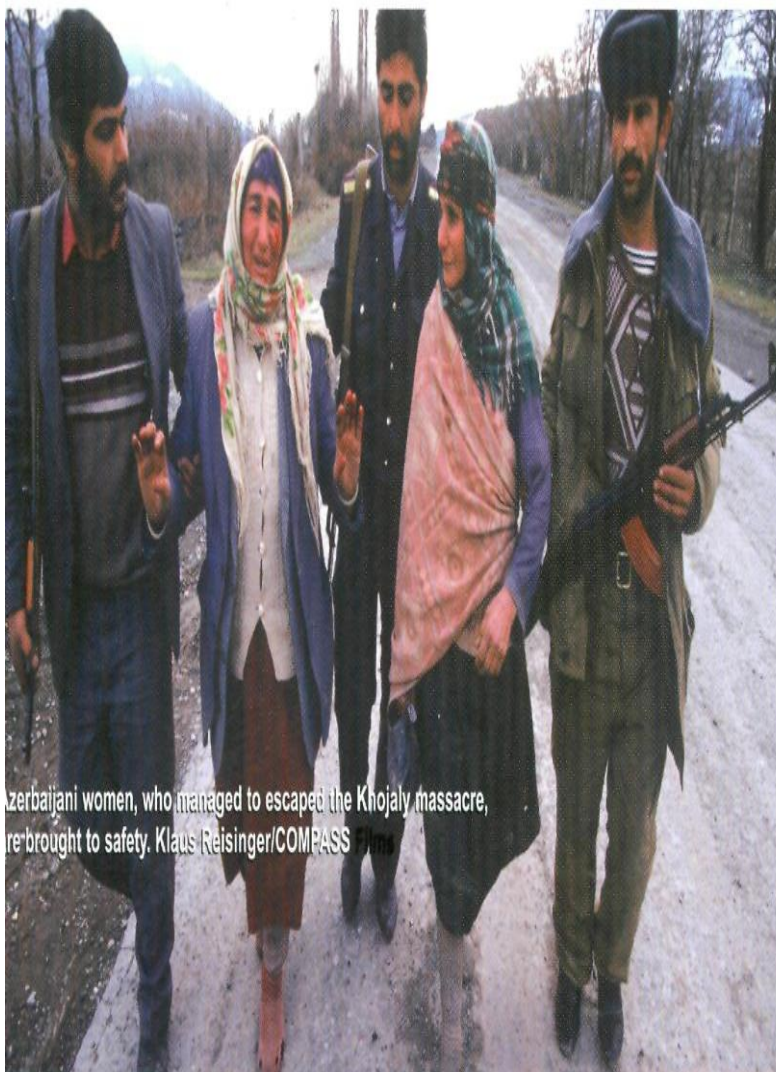


Injured children in Khojali, Mubariz Hamidov and Mubariz Mahmudov.
Photo: Azertaj

**Daud Kheyriyan, “For the sake of the Cross...”
Beirut, Ash-Sharg (East) agency, pp. 24, 62,**

...Sometimes we happened to march on dead bodies. In order to cross a swamp near Dashbulag, we paved a road composed of dead bodies. I refused to march on dead bodies. Then Colonel Oganyan ordered me not to be scared. It is one of the military laws. I pressed one foot onto the breast of a wounded girl aged 9 or 10 and marched... My legs, my camera were in blood...

... the Armenian group Gaflan (that dealt with the burning of corpses) collected 100 dead bodies of Turks (Azerbaijanis) and burned them in a place one kilometre west of Khojaly on 2 March... I saw a girl aged 10 and wounded in the hands and head lying in the last truck. Her face was already blue. But she was still alive despite her hunger, cold and wounds. She had little breath. I cannot forget her eyes fighting with death... Suddenly a soldier called Tigranyan took the body and threw it on the other corpses... Then they burned the corpses. It seemed to me that someone was crying in the fire between the dead bodies... After all I could not go further. But I wanted to see Shusha... I returned. And they continued their battles for the sake of the Cross...



Azerbaijani women, who managed to escape the Khojaly massacre, are brought to safety. Klaus Reisinger/COMPASS Films

**Ednan Agaev, "Azerbaijan: the next battle -ground between
EAST and WEST"
Paris: Office d'Edition Impression Librairie, F.-X. de Guibert, 2005,
pp. 121-122**

Located a stone's throw from Khankendi (Stepanakert for the Armenians), the capital of Upper Karabakh, the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly, population 2,500, has the only airport in the enclave. A strategic place par excellence in the conflict, Khojaly piqued the interest of Armenia, which decided to take the town by force. During the night of February 25 to 26th, 1992, militia of the Autonomous Republic of Upper Karabakh, backed by the motorized infantry of the 366th regiment of the ex-Soviet Union, the majority of whose officers are Armenian in origin, shelled the town. Then, carrying out a policy of ethnic cleansing decided by Armenia against Azerbaijan, mounted a bloody attack. After a few hours of fierce combat, Khojaly surrendered. It was completely destroyed, a shell of a town, a ghost town. Its luckiest inhabitants were able to escape, but the losses were very heavy: 613 people, of which 63 were children, 106 women and 70 aged people were killed, and 487 others seriously wounded.



**Yuri Pompeyev, "Karabakh's Bloody Maelstrom'
Baku, Azerbaijan publishing house, 1992, pp. 8-12
A Cry for Khojaly**

The final straw in the four years of the bloody maelstrom of Karabakh was the wild reprisal against the sleeping inhabitants of the town of Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February. No comparisons with Songmai or Khatyn are relevant: unlike Khojaly, the soldiers then did not collect their victims' scalps or ears. They just killed.

"Only dead people were left there in Khojaly," Moscow News informed the whole world angrily. God seemed really to have left the Khojaly people. Correspondent Victoria Ivleva wrote that she had been in the second wave of attack, not the first. When they approached the town of Khojaly, she saw "...something that resembled a cloud moving towards us". The cloud turned out to be a crowd of half-dressed people: "Last in the crowd was a young woman walking barefoot with three kids. She was walking with difficulty, falling frequently. It was found out that the youngest of her kids was two days old."

What happened to this woman, as well as many others from that "cloud", I could see later on the videotape of which the sound-track consisted of the cameraman's sobs. People had been shot point blank, falling on their backs, with their faces turned to God, who had left them forever.

One of Victoria Ivleva's photos - called something like Victory1 - depicts four Armenian "heroes" standing over the pros-trate bodies of Azerbaijanis; just like the Nazis in their triumphant frenzy against the background of the gallows.

Not daring to suggest to readers that they even look through Victoria Ivleva's photo-report, I want to show how Konstantin Voevodski, a corrupt "democra-cy-monger", rights defender from KriK and, to my regret, my countryman, described the equipment of the "heroes of the national liberation war" whom he saw in these pictures in Pro-Armenia magazine.

"Most of them are wearing black or khaki commando fatigues. They put car-tridge belts around their waists and across their chests. A gun, sometimes two, is a necessary addition as well as pineapple-shaped grenades." Has this scared you enough? If not, then here is a continuation. "There are several small handmade bombs on the tops of the pens in their breast-pockets."

Enough! Aren't these pictures docu-ments for the court in the Hague? And these are not the only samples of the bloody mercilessness. Simply Moscow News, which began to praise the "heroes" initially, could not hide this barbarism from the informed West for more than three weeks as they did with the Chernobyl catastrophe.

This is what I thought at first, but then realised that there will not be any trial, as the executors had carried out the order "Only dead people should be left in

Khojaly" perfectly and were enjoying them-selves with impunity. Like the devil in the maelstrom. Did the Karabakh committee of Russian intellectuals condemn this inhumanity? It seems that the committee has learned how to tell whether this red liquid, pumped by the heart through our bodies, belongs to Muslims or Christians. War is fond of blood; it needs blood. Consider the defend-ers and rights advocates of Karabakh.

My heart breaks, as I remember Krikun Nuykin's shameless acknowledgment: "We fought for Karabakh with our hands."

Now he also has the right to add Khojaly.

It was clear to me, a Russian writer, a month before the ransacking of Khojaly that massive massacres were being prepared for Azerbaijan like in January 1990. On Sunday, 26 January 1992 I wrote in my telegram to Boris Yeltsin and Ruslan Khasbulatov: "Radio and TV are inflam-ing anti-Azerbaijan passions. Mediation has not worked out. It is clear that under Russia's patronage reprisals are being pre-pared in Karabakh, the militias and Russian special regiment are being empow-ered." I called on the Russian authorities to withdraw the 366th regiment from Khankendi (Stepanakert) and to prevent battle preparations.

Victoria Ivleva did not see the soldiers of the 366th motorized infantry regiment, as she was travelling with her camera in the second attack echelon. But she saw the military hardware and gunfire in the town before the occupation.

It is also significant for the story that at that time, on 26-27 February the minister of foreign affairs of Iran, Ali Akbar Vilayeti, was in Ganja on a peace mission for a day and a half. He could not fly to Khankendi, as the Armenian side did not guarantee safe passage, although a cease-fire agreement had been reached. This moratorium was a death sentence for the inhabitants of Khojaly. Vilayeti's visit to the undeclared war zone was interrupted deliberately and brazenly. The professional killers who were Armenian "heroes" and soldiers of the Russian special regiment showed everyone that they did not need any peace mission or agreement. The way they chose to do this was through an esca-lation of aggression and violence.

On Wednesday, 26 February 1992 I wrote in my diary:

"The lack of true information, the flow of commentators' lies keeps the desire for life down. Film sequences of Shusha burn-ing are shown, followed by the texts of Vesti and Novosti about Stepanakert burn-ing. This is not mere chance: according to Radio Liberty, the Azerbaijani side has no Grad rocket launchers, the armed mari-onette forces of the NKR are destroying Shusha, Khojaly and a great number of Azerbaijani villages in the Karabakh plain and also firing projectiles towards their cap-ital. In the centre of Stepanakert they burn old car tyres and rubbish that smokes for weeks.

The truth shows that there are merce-naries among the Armenian fighters. I read about two of them - Alik Kan and Volodya, who were deserters from the

Georgian Army - in one of the issues of *Russkaya Mysl* (Russian Opinion), published in Paris. And *Russkaya Mysl* is not only full of wild spite against Soviet Russians (maybe it is valid, but it also paid very handsomely for it), but also aims to stir up hatred and to set everyone against each other, without exception, Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims, Azerbaijanis and Russians, civilians and militias, realists and vanguards, Russian Church and foreign priests etc, etc Peace in our land is unacceptable for them. The seeds of hostility have to be sown also in the defeated side, mercilessly and shamelessly. *Russkaya Mysl* publishes articles by or interviews with foreigners from KriK in every issue: they are everywhere. The opium of this information blanket causes not only nausea but even heart decay. The stinking lies are dead and poisoning us.

Yelena Bonner challenged the number of Khojaly victims in her hoarse voice: they are few, some dozens, but not hundreds or thousands. And they believed her, Andrey Dmitriyevich Sakharov's widow. Human rights defender Sakharov did not defend the rights of Meskhetian Turks, who exposed repression in the apotheosis of perestroika, but defended the terrorists of the New Armenia party Zatikyan, Stepanyan and Bagdasaryan, who organized the explosion in the Moscow underground, causing the death of dozens of innocent people in January 1977. Why does this Nobel laureate discriminate?

This will be spoken about.

Now, let's remember the words written by a foreign Armenian terrorist, approving once more the participation of Armenian terrorists in Karabakh in the 15th March 1992 edition of *Moscow News*. Asked, "Are there terrorists in the Armenian Diaspora?", Iosif Verdinian answered curtly "Yes, there are." He gave a broad, angry statement by his 34-year-old inter-locutor Vazgen Sisilyan, who had come as a tourist from Lebanon. This fighter of the Armenian Secret Liberation Army, which was found to have been involved in the taking of 60 hostages in Paris and the assassination of the Turkish ambassador, Badraddin Tunbash, in Budapest, now defends his national pride by killing a two-day-old child in Khojaly. Why not? "The law is on the side of might," claimed Vazgen Sisilyan and his Russian protectors from the Russian intelligentsia's Karabakh committee. Do our intellectuals not see the simple truth that the professional murderer and rapist, who chooses to trade in hostages, children and women as his profession (a head for a canister of oil), lost his nationality and dignity long ago?

Journalist Y. Arakelyan said that in 1970 a monument was erected in honour of the communards M. Aliyev, M. Mammadov and S. Shakibayov, who delivered oil, bread and grain to the Armenians and surrendered in 1920. The Armenian stonemason scraped a wise aphorism: "Bread and salt are not shot."

This memorial has now been destroyed. The bread was shot and so was the salt.



KHOJALY IN THE WORDS OF JOURNALISTS

(KHOJALY - THE LAST DAY

Azerbaijan Publishing House, Baku, 1992)

V. BELYKH

"Izvestia" newspaper reporter

...The dead-bodies exchanged for living hostages are occasionally brought to Agdara. You won't see this even in a nightmare: gouged out eyes, cut off ears, scalped heads, cut off heads. Some corpses had been dragged by ropes behind armed personnel carriers. There was no limit to the humiliation...

JEAN-YVES JUNET

journalist (France)

...We happened to be witnesses to the Khojaly massacre, we saw the dead bodies of hundreds of civilians - women, children, old people and defenders of Khojaly. We managed to fly by hel-icopter; we were taking photographs of everything we saw around Khojaly at the height of a bird's flight. However, the Armenians started shooting at our helicopter and we couldn't manage to finish our job. That was a terrible scene. I had heard a lot about wars, about the cruelty of German fas-cists, but the Armenians outdid them, killing fiveor six-year-old children, innocent people. We saw a lot of injured people in hospitals, carriages, even in kindergartens and school buildings. -

An injured family who escaped death in Khojaly.

Photo: Azertaj

CHINGHIZ MUSTAFAYEV, **Azerbaijan Television reporter:**

...Dozens and dozens of people who had been shot dead, children from two to 15, women, old people. The position of the corpses proves that it was cold-blooded slaughter, there were no signs of resistance or attempts to escape.

Some civilians were shot separately, others were killed in groups or families. Some corpses have several wounds but every corpse has at least one wound in the head. It means that the wounded were finished off afterwards.

The camera showed several children with their ears cut off. The skin from the left part of an old woman's face was missing. Men had been scalped. There were corpses with signs of robbery.

We first arrived at the scene of the massacre in two military helicopters on 28 February. From the helicopter we saw about 500 metres of mountainside full of corpses. The pilots were scared to land because the area was controlled by Armenian bandits. However, when we manged to land and stepped out, shooting

started. The Interior Ministry men were to load the corpses onto the helicopter and take them to the next of kin. They managed to load only four corpses. We were all shocked. Two men fainted after seeing so many dead and mutilated corpses. Many people were sick.

The same thing happened on 2 March, when we flew there with foreign journalists. Many dead-bodies were even more mutilated than before. They had been abused for several days...

RORY PECK,
Frontline News journalist, UK

The Khojaly massacre is impossible to justify. Near Nakhichevanik village where we could hardly get by helicopter I saw many disfigured corpses. These were not soldiers but civilian inhabitants of Khojaly who were trying to get to Aghdam through the Armenians' heavy fire. (Frontline news 20.04.92)

KHOJALY IN THE WORDS OF SOLDIERS
(KHOJALY - THE LAST DAY
Azerbaijan Publishing House, Baku, 1992)
YURI YAKHOVITCH,
private in infantry regiment No 366

...They persuaded us that we were Christians and we had to fight against the Muslims. They kept us in awful subhuman conditions, we couldn't bear being there and we had to desert the regiment and escape to Khojaly...

LEONID KRAVETS
officer, major

On 26 February I was taking the wounded out of Stepanakert by helicopter and returning through the Askeran gap. Some bright spots below caught my eye. We started to descend and my co-pilot cried: "Look! There are women and children over there." I saw about 200 corpses scattered down the hillside. Armed men were walking among them. Then we flew there, trying to pick up corpses. A militia captain, I can't remember his name, was with us. He found his four-year-old son

*Prepared on the basis of the records of the criminal case investigated by the
Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

KHOJALY IN THE WORDS OF THE SURVIVORS*

KHATIRA TELMAN ORUJOVA,

(KHOJALY - THE LAST DAY

Azerbaijan Publishing House, Baku, 1992)

Scars remained forever on a soul of this little 8 years old girl will grind a rock... She recalls that awful night...



8 year-old Xatira Orujova, a Khojaly survivor.

Photo: Oqtay Aydinovlu

ewitnesses

We were asleep. Suddenly we heard a strange boom... In that moment, we observed neighboring houses torched... We ran down to tunnels.

How many persons were you?

My dad, mom and four children. My aunt Sevil was with us. Two neighbors and their two children... We spent four hours in tunnel.

Where did you get that you have remained there for four hours?

Our neighbor said that we are here for four hours. Then, a man named Shaig came up and said that other side of neigh-borhood in fire, get away to forest and we ran into there. My little sister named Khayala was in ma's hands and other sister was carrying by my pa.

The night has fallen in forest. Dad said put your watch on six. We were stopped in Nakhichevanik. Guides has gone ahead to ask a route, but they did not get an answer. We remained in deep forest. When sun was rising they shoot my moth-er. Then, the bullets reached my aunt. My mother Irada was twenty six years old. I don't know the age of my father. His name is Telman Orujov...

When Armenians shoot me, my mother was close to me. Her wound didnt let us to run away. I was lying next to my mother. We lost our dad in forest. Then, sud-denly I felt carried by a militia man to Agdam.

Khatira's mother is not with her now to correct her saying. She asked me about her mother... She sent me I replied. She is in hospital of Agdam. She was so thoughtful when asking the surname of her mother...

"Irada Orujova" - came the reply. (I found her surname after she told her story in forest.) She shook her head...

No. My mother holds her maiden sur-name. Then, tell me her hair, are they soft or short? I did not know what to reply...

If I would reply I could convince her. At least, I could to see her quiet while medical treatment... I was so embar-rassed... That was the most awful tragedy... Why I couldn't tell her mother's hair or surname...?

Mushfig ALIMAMEDOV

Khojaly resident. Escaping from the town he was injured and left lying in the snow for two days

...We had guns: machine-guns, rifles, shotguns. We didn't have any ammunition or food. We were exhausted by the long blockade. On 25 February the Armenians started shooting at midnight, armed forces and vehicles launched the attack. They didn't spare anyone, either old people and women or children. Many people were burned alive in their homes, especially near the airport. The awful smell of burnt flesh haunts me even now...

Most of those defending the town were killed in action. The survivors were trying to escape through the woods to the village of Shelli to break through to



Refugee children of Karabakh. Photo: Azertaj

Aghdam. They were ambushed near the Armenian village of Nakhichevanik on the way to Aghdam.

Many people were killed in the ambush near the village. The director of the airport Alif Hajiyeu was killed there. He had gone to rescue the women. He had kept the airport working efficiently. The Armenians had already promised a reward for his life.

MINESH ALIYEVA
50, Khojaly resident,
with a bullet wound in her arm

...We wandered through the woods, falling through the deep snow. When we were crossing the road a bullet lodged in my arm. I fell down and couldn't get up.

Intensive shooting started from the wood and cover. Alif grabbed me and started pulling me to the side of the road. Then he rushed towards the bushes to hide and started shooting in retaliation at the armed Armenians. The shooting from the woods stopped for some time. Alif started shouting at the women lying on the other side of the road and ordered them to cross the road as soon as possible. He would shoot sporadically and every time he did the Armenians stopped shooting. About 20 women managed to run across the road. When Alif started to change the cartridge drum, the Armenians shot in retaliation. At this moment he was shot through the forehead. It was an awful sight...

SARIYA TALYBOVA
Khojaly resident

...They brought us to the Armenian cemetery. It is hard for me to describe what happened there. Four young Meskhetian Turks [who had fled from Uzbekistan to shelter in Azerbaijan] were shot dead on the grave of an Armenian armed man as a sacrifice to him. Then they cut off the dead men's heads. Later the soldiers and Armenian bandits started killing and torturing the children in front of their parents. Then a truck arrived and it took the corpses to the ravine. But they had yet to satisfy their appetites. These predators with a human appearance brought two Azerbaijanis in national army uniform and pierced their eyes with screwdrivers...

ELMAN MAMMEDOV
head of the Khojaly executive authorities

...The storming of the town started with artillery shelling that went on for two hours. Armed Armenian men fired from tanks and armoured personnel carriers using Alazan-type shells. We were blocked from three sides. The only way to break out was through the Askeran gap. When Armenian infantry soldiers launched their attack, everything in Khojaly had been destroyed. Most of its residents had been shot dead.

We defended the town in trenches till 2 a.m. We failed to resist any more, the defenders and civilians started retreating. We crossed the ice-cold river and moved towards Keteen Mountain. A lot of people died on the way in the woods where they froze to death. We were walking until 7 a.m. when we came out of the woods near the Armenian village of Nakhichevanik. We were trapped in a gorge, where Armenians armed with machine-guns and submachine-guns were waiting for us in armoured personnel carriers. That's when the real slaughter began. Armenians just shot and shot innocent, defenceless people. Many children and women were shot dead here. Some people were fleeing towards the village of Gulably where about 200 people were taken hostage. We helped the survivors and some of the residents of the town managed to get to Aghdam. Seven of my friends with me failed to get out of the ambush, it was too late, but we got lucky; we found cover from the firing. We hid there from 9 a.m. till 8 p.m. And only in the evening when it started snow-ing did we manage to get out of it and reach Aghdam early in the morning of 27 February.

SANUBAR ALEKPEROVA
Khojaly resident

...Hasanabad, Mehdikend, Boz-dagy -these are the places they were shooting from. The ground shuddered as armoured infantry vehicles smashed into Khojaly. At first women and children were told to hide in the basements.

Then Elman Mammedov, head of the executive authorities, came and said that we had to escape, otherwise we would be exterminated. Alif Hajiyev, director of the airport, organized a breakout through Armenian lines to lead the civilians to Aghdam. We were trapped in an ambush near the village of Nakhichevanik. I shall never forget what I saw here: mountain-sides filled with corpses. My mother was shot dead. My daughters Hijran and Sevinj were injured. At the same moment a bullet hit me. Young women and chil-dren perished from their wounds on the snow.

We had a radio transmitter with us. We cried, we tried to report what was happening, we begged for help, but nobody helped us.

DJAMIL MAMMEDOV
Khojaly resident

Tanks and armoured personnel carriers destroyed the houses and crushed people.

Russian soldiers were followed by Armenian bandits. I took my five-year-old grandson and 14,000 roubles and ran towards the woods. I took off my clothes and wrapped the child in them so that he wouldn't die of cold. But it didn't help. We had to hide in the snow with the child.

In the morning I realized that the child couldn't stand the cold any more and I started walking towards the nearest Armenian village, Nakhichevanik, where we were trapped by armed Armenian men. I begged them to take my money for the sake of the child and to let us pass to Aghdam. They cursed and beat me in response and brought me to their commander. He ordered that we be locked in the cattle-shed. There were already Azerbaijani women and children there. They kept us in the cattle-shed for four days without any food or water. If it had not been for one kind family who used to secretly bring us some bread and water at night, we could have died, we wouldn't have been able to stand all that torture. But there is no limit to anger. When four days later I was brought to Askeran with my grandson, what I saw there was so awful that the cattle-shed in Nakhichevanik seemed paradise to me.

Foreign mercenaries (I know Armenians and I can tell local Armenians from foreign ones) pulled out my toenails. Negroes who were among the Armenians were jumping high and kicking me in the face. After this torture, I was exchanged for an Armenian. However, they took away my grandson. I know nothing about the fate of my wife and my daughter.

ELSHAD AGAYEV
Khojaly resident

After the seizure of Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992 I had to leave the town with my family. But during the skirmish we lost each other. Later I began to look for them but could find only my sister Durdana, who had been wounded in the leg, in Garagaya in Aghdam district.

On 26 February 1992, at about 8 to 9 a.m., the Armenians opened fire, and we tried to escape and hide in a trench on the way to Garagaya along with five or six men, but we were surrounded and captured. Abusing and beating us with the barrels of machine-guns, pieces of wood and iron they forced us to walk to the highway in

Askeran. The Armenians were throwing stones, pieces of wood and shooting over our heads. They beat and tortured me and my sister Durdana for about 30 minutes and after that they took us to the cells in Askeran Police Department and threw us in a cell full of people. Here they tortured us more cruelly. The torture was led by Karo, an Armenian who was the head of the Fire Prevention Division at the Department. Karo and the other Armenians in military uniform beat people in the cells with batons, the barrels of machine-guns, pieces of wood and iron, dragged women by their hair into the corridors, raped them and then threw them in separate cells.

On 26 February 1992, at about 12 or 1 p.m. seven or eight drunk Armenians in military uniform entered the cell and began to beat Zulfi, Elkhan, Nasib, Khagani and 30-40 inhabitants of Khojaly and Garadagli village, whose names I can't remember now. One Armenian hit my mouth with the barrel of an AKM machine-gun and tore my upper lip. I still have a scar from that injury. A Khojaly resident, tractor driver Huseyn, went mad after being beaten by the Armenians, he was laughing all the time and that's why they killed him there. When the Armenians found out that another Khojaly resident, Elkhan, was an Alazan rifle man, they slashed his belly with a knife and took him away. Later we heard that Elkhan had died from his wounds. They took a young boy, Khagani, away and we haven't heard any-thing about him since then. They took machine-gunner Natig away too.

I remember that on 27 February 1992 I was taken to the cell of the Department. Here the Armenians, following Karo's instructions, stripped people and began to beat them with pieces of iron until they lost consciousness. That night they beat me too, but before they started I saw that they had brought into the cell a young boy, Mobil, who had worked at the bread shop in Khojaly. Karo shot Mobil in the leg and he fell down. Then they began to beat him. I don't know what happened to him later. I think they killed him. The Armenians used pincers to tear the beard from one side of Ilgar's face, leaving the other side hairy, and then began to mock and abuse him. Following Karo's instructions, they did not give us bread and water.

On 1 March 1992 Karo shot Shahmali's son Faiq in the yard of the Police Department for not calling Ganja Kirovabad. I didn't see it myself, but I heard about it from residents of Khojaly whose names I can't remember now. I heard Faiq's screams while Karo and his assistants were torturing him in the adjacent cell. He was a very brave man. He criticized the Armenians for their cruelty, and they began to torture him more severely. In March 1992 they put me, my sister Durdana and two 12-13-year-old girls from Khojaly, whom I didn't know, into a

UAZ jeep and brought us to the Azerbaijani side.

YASHAR ALIMAMMADOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992, after the seizure of Khojaly, I had to leave the town with my wife Saida, my six-year-old son Siraj, my father Shahmali, my cousin Saadat and other relatives. On 27 February 1992, at about 10 or 11 a.m., armed Armenians surrounded and captured us near Pirjamal village. They put sacks on our heads and took us somewhere in a car.

When they took the sacks off, we found ourselves in a stable where cattle, donkeys and sheep were kept. There I saw about 200-300 inhabitants of Khojaly, including women and old people, as well as my son, my father-in-law Jamil, my brother Faiq and others. Then they brought my brother Namiq. The Armenians took money, gold, jewellery and other valuables away from people, put them in a big pot and said that they would use them to buy weapons and kill Azerbaijanis. That day, at 4 p.m., about 20 bearded men in both civilian clothes and military uniforms entered the stable with pieces of reinforced steel, wood and machine-guns, divided us into several groups and began to beat us cruelly, hitting our heads, backs and legs. They were pushing people into one another. There were people with broken ribs, teeth and injured heads. They used pin-cers to pull out my gold teeth. They hit me in my nose with the barrel of a machine-gun and broke it. I lost consciousness because of the pain and when I came round I could not see for a while. After beating us cruelly and threatening us with firearms, they made us stand on one leg for hours and eat soil and cattle dung.

On 1 March 1992 they took us to the Askeran Police Department where we were met by police officer Karo who had worked there as the head of the Fire Prevention Division. Karo told me that I would die. They put us together in a temporary cell and began to search us. Karo ordered me, Isa and Elkhan to stay in the cell and sent the others out. When my son started to cry wishing to stay with me, he cruelly beat him. He knocked me down with a blow from the barrel of a pistol and ordered about 10-12 bearded Armenians to beat me with a baton. I lost consciousness because of these blows. When I came round, Elkhan told me that they had hit me with a baton more than 50 times, even when I lost consciousness.

Early in the morning on 2 March 1992 they released us. After returning from captivity, I heard from Khojaly inhabitants Valeh, my uncle Mammed, Jamil, Janan (now dead), Ilgar, Ilham (now dead), Durdana (she worked as the telephone operator at Khojaly post office), and his brother Elshad, who were taken hostage at the Askeran Police Department, what had happened to Faiq. They said that Karo asked my brother Faiq where he had studied. After he answered "in Ganja", Karo told him to call it Kirovabad, but Faiq again repeated Ganja. Then Karo asked

Faiq, "To whom does Karabakh belong?", and Faiq answered, "Karabakh belongs to us". After that Karo took his gun out and shot him in the chest and throat in the yard of the Police Department and killed him. I am now a second category disabled person because of the injuries I received in captivity.

Torture by Khanlar Ahmadov

ZULFU MAMMADOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians surrounded and shelled Khojaly town. My family and I tried to break out of the encirclement, but the Armenians captured us and put into a cell. There were more than 25 of my countrymen. The Armenians tortured and beat us everyday; some of us were killed, shot and beheaded. I remember the following:

1. Fakhraddin Bahadir Salimov, born in 1960 - one Armenian killed him, hitting his head with the barrel of a machine-gun.
2. Elkhan Nasib, born in 1962 - the Armenians took him from the cell and shot him.
3. Mobil, born in 1968 - the Armenians killed him cruelly by kicking and beating him with batons and the barrels of machine-guns.
4. 55-year-old Huseyn (his mother's name was Marish) - the Armenians took him from our cell to the next cell, beat him cruelly and then shot him.
5. Vidadi, born in 1965, and Murvat, born in 1974 - after taking them out of the cell, the Armenians beheaded them.

My neighbour Faiq Shahmali, born in 1969, was shot by Armenian captain Karo. When we were in Khojaly Karo was known as a hangman. He was the head of the Fire Prevention Division. He was tall, broad-shouldered and had a black moustache.

MAMMAD MAMMADOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992, after the seizure of Khojaly by the Armenians, I had to flee with other residents of the town. With Janan Orujov, Faiq Alimammedov, Kamil Mammedov, Kamal, Isa, Ilgar Abishov, Yashar Alimammedov, Mahammed Mammedov, and a group of people, whose names I forgot, we hid in the forest and stayed there till 28 February 1992. That night the Armenians captured me and took me to a farm in Nakhichevanik. There I learnt that they had killed Mammed after capturing him and that other hostages were held there. Karo Babayan headed those who captured us. He was the head of the Fire Prevention Division and a police captain. He tortured people who were held there. There were women and children among us. On 14 March 1992 they gathered 21

hostages in the room of the passport office of the Askeran Police Department. The Armenians from Karo's group beat us up in that room. Later on that day they took us back to the Azerbaijani side. Before exchanging us Karo Babayan killed Faiq Alimammedov in the yard of the Department.



VALEH SAHIB HUSEYNOV
Khojaly resident

Seeing the seizure of Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992, at about 11 p.m., my wife Saadat and I, my uncle Zakariyya Guliyev, his wife Shura, their sons Akbar, Taleh, their grandchildren Sevinj and Samir tried to flee to Askeran. When we reached the area between Shelli and Dahra, the Armenians surrounded us and opened fire. We tried to escape in different directions. Then we lost each other. When I reached Shelli I

Armenian attack on an Azerbaijani school. Photo: Oleg Litvin

found my wife among those who had escaped and returned to her hiding place. There were Salim, Durdana, Saida, Elshad and about 13-14 inhabitants of Khojaly, whose names I can't remember now. WYven a\ our buWets were used up, the Armenians captured us. My wife died from a bullet wound.

On 26 February 1992 they took us to Askeran. On our way they pushed us into the cold water of the Gargar River. They placed us in the Askeran Police Department with 13-14 people at about 10 a.m. There they separated women from men and began to beat us. I remember Elkhan, Natiq, Salim, Vasif (now dead), llgar, Saadat (now dead), Intizam and Mehman, who were kept in my cell. About 15-20 hostages were kept in each ce\\. TViat evening Karo, wno was the head of the Fire Prevention Division at the Police Department and \ed other bearded Armenians, ordered that E\kVian, SaVim, Huseyn, Natiq and I be thrown into a cell and cruelly beat us, striking us with the barrels of machine-guns, chair legs and batons. Cries were heard from the adjacent cells as well. That is how we realized that the Armenians were beating, raping and abusing women held there. On 28 February 1992, at about 4 or 5 p.m., they took me and Elkhan to the cell that was designed for Karo's torture and pulled my nails out of my thumbs and then broke my fingers. During the torture \ost consciousness severaV times. On \ MarcV1 Karo and some ofVier bearded Armenians entered the cell and beat everybody. Following Karo's instructions, one Armenian thrust his knife into Elkhan's chest but not very deep, so Elkhan did not die. Two hours later Karo took Elkhan, Natiq and two people (I can't remember their names) away, and I don't know what happened to them after-wards. Then I learnt that Karo had taken Salim, Huseyn, Araz and Vasif from the ce\ and snot tViem. That day at about 8 or 9 p.m., when he took us to beat us again, Vie sViot a person whose name was Faiq. On 22 March 1992, they brought me back to the Azerbaijani side and exncanged me for tViree Armenians.

ILGAR ABISHOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 Armenians surrounded and shelled Khojaly. We were on duty at that time. During an exchange of fire with the Armenians my cousin Elshad was shot in the head. My mother, four brothers, my aunt's grandsons Zahir, Elmar, his son Klos, Mobil, Guleysha and I were surrounded near Askeran district. We were taken to the Askeran Police Department, and when we tried to escape they shot my aunt's grandson from behind. They tortured us by kicking us and beating us with batons and the barrels of machine-guns. A police officer, Karo, tortured me severely. Natiq, Mehman and Arif were there at the time we were brought in. They were also subjected to torture. About eight days later they took us to a place called Gala and cruelly beat us again. There were Mirza, Yunus, Huseyn, Ibrahim, Ali, my brothers Ilham and Saadat, and two men from Garadagli. They exchanged us with the help of Allahverdi Bagirov.

YUSIF MUSEYIB KARIMOV
Khojaly resident

Before 25 February 1992 I lived in Khojaly with my family - my wife Iltima Mohterem Karimova, son Algayit, and daughters Aynura, Aygun and Yegana.

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 Khojaly was seized. At that time I was on duty with a machine-gun near the railway. I did not see my family when I returned home. I went towards the Gargar River, near which I saw my family and about 20-25 residents of the town, mainly women and children. At that moment the Armenians surrounded us and opened fire. I fired as well, but the barrel of the machine-gun had overheated and smashed to pieces so I threw it into the river. The Armenians wounded me in my right thigh and captured us. They were bearded, I didn't know their names, and among them were several Russians. They cruelly beat us with the barrels of machine-guns and pieces of wood and made us go on foot to the shop in Khojaly. They also brought others there. There were about 30 people. I remember Huseyn Sariyev, Hasan Hasanov, Alasgar, Shargiyya, and her daughters Alima and Irada.

On 26 February 1992, they put us on a bus and took us to the school for the dumb in Khankendi.

We were tortured terribly by the Armenians, whose names I didn't know. One Armenian cut my forehead by beating me with the barrel of a machine gun.

They stripped Irada, the 24-year-old daughter of Shargiyya, raped her and began to beat her. The Armenians also raped my wife Iltima Karimova, cut her

long hair to make her look ugly. The Armenians hit my six-and seven-year-old children against the concrete floor and they still suffer from headaches.

Then the Armenians separated me from the women, threw me in a cellar and tortured me terribly. My four left ribs were fractured as a result of the blows. One Armenian thrust a knife into my left shoulder and pulled it out of my chest, set a piece of paper alight and burned my hair and then threw me back in the cell. There I saw my wife, children and other men and women bleeding and moaning.

On 5 March 1992, they separated me from my family, and along with Huseyn and Elbrus took me to the Khankendi police cells. Here we were beaten by Agajanyan, the head of the Askeran Police Department. Before our eyes they killed the son of Khojaly resident Mammedali. A week later they brought other Khojaly residents, Ganahat, Alif Hajiyev's father Latif Mammedov, Gayim, Gadim, Kamil Huseynov, Abulfat, Ali and his son Nabi. They tortured us there too.

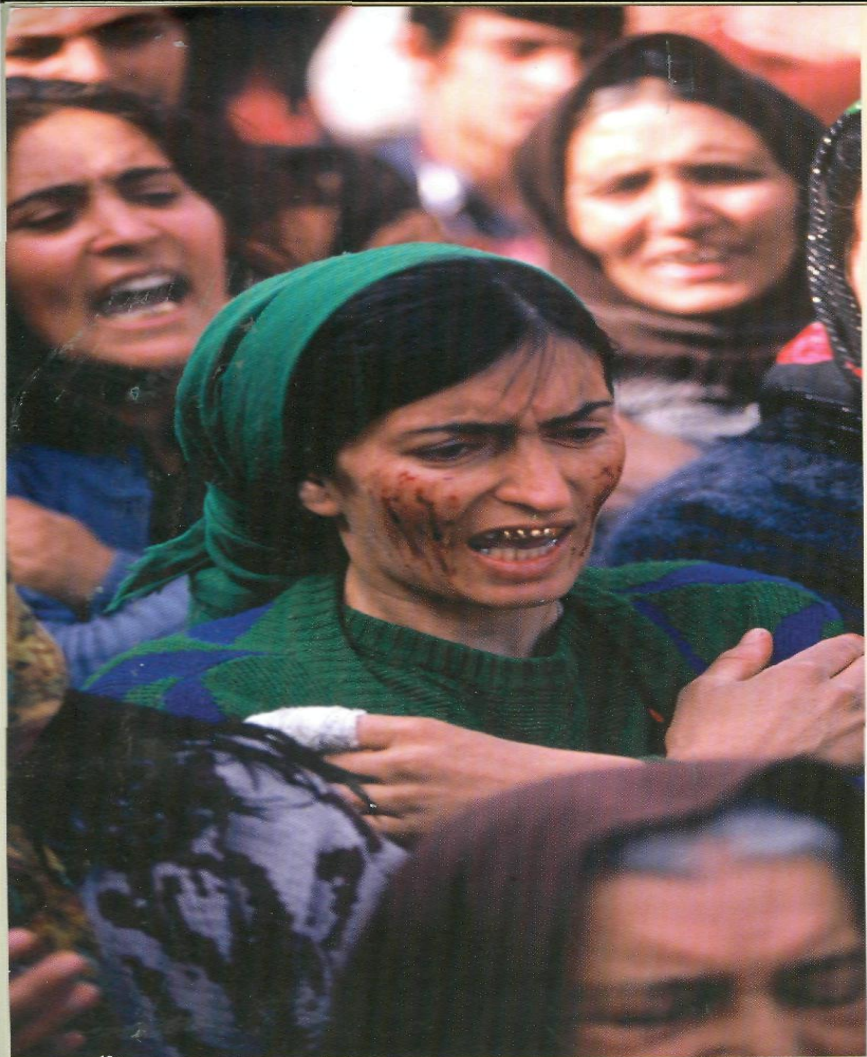
On 16 April 1992, they took me and Kamil to the place called Khanbagi in Khankendi, where Armenians, along with Russian soldiers, beat, abused and tortured us for five days.

On 20 April 1992 they took us to Yerevan, and after that to Goris and Megri. There they kept us in a cellar where we were regularly beaten and abused.

On 24 July 1992 they took me and Kamil Huseynov to Gubadly district and released us. They exchanged my family members in May. Because of the injuries I received during captivity, I have very bad sight and now undergo medical treatment at the Institute of Eye Diseases. Besides, all my property was stolen by the Armenians.

SHAHIDA ALAKBAROVA
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the town of Khojaly was exposed to fire opened from three directions. We had to leave the town. Armenians took us hostage together with nine people in the Garagaya area and took us to the Askeran Police Department. They took all our documents, money and jewellery on the way there. There were about 70 women and children. The Armenians took young girls and tortured them. One day they wanted to take my six-year-old daughter. I didn't let them take her and so they began to torture me. That day my mother was killed for her faith. My sisters Makhmar Huseynova and Mahbuba Abishova, her son Chingiz and daughter Chinara, my brother-in-law Sohrab are still missing. Along with 70 other people we were exchanged for two Armenian corpses. As a result of the seizure of the town, our house and all our property were plundered by the Armenians.



witnesses

Azerbaijani women beat their chests and wail in grief after dozens were massacred by Armenians in Khojaly.
Photo: Klaus Reisinger/COMPASS Films

VUGAR NACAFOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly at about 11 p.m. At that time we were on duty. They surrounded us and we made an attempt to escape trying to move towards Aghdam. Of the 60-70 of us, only 20-30 people survived. The Armenians put us in a house and began to torture us. There was a Meskhetian Turk from Uzbekistan among us whose name was Ahmed. They tied his hands and legs and beheaded him. Then they took me to Khankendi. There they threw me in a cellar, tied my hands and started to beat me until I lost consciousness. They heated a knife and branded my legs. There are numerous scars from knife wounds on my body. After that they forced me to drink yellow medicine. Now I know what medicine it was. I have been married for nine years but I still don't have children. Having tortured many young Azerbaijanis like me, they made us miserable for life. As a result of all this torture, I suffer from a nervous disorder, my kidneys often ache, I can hardly stand on my feet. Our house, property, jewellery and money were plundered by the Armenians.

ADILA ALI NACAFOVA
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly, and so we were forced to leave the town. There were about 150-200 of us. We fled to the forest. About 200 armed Armenians were shooting at us, and there were Russian soldiers among them as well. Approximately 20 of the 150-200 people survived the heavy fire. The Armenians took away our money and jewellery, used pincers to pull out gold teeth, scratched women's ears and took their earrings. My father's and my gold teeth were pulled out as well. They cruelly murdered our neighbour Jalal's wife, daughter, son and his fiancée. They tied a man whose name was Mushfig to a car and dragged him on the ground before our eyes. His face was injured and arms fractured. His own father could not recognize his corpse. We were severely beaten several times a day. Among the Armenians there was a woman whose name was Janna, and she tortured us as well. They did not even let us eat snow.

RAMIL ALAKBAROV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 I left my home town of Khojaly with my parents. I was 12 years old. We left the town and fled to the forest where we stayed for six days. The Armenians surrounded us and began to shoot. I was

wounded in my left leg. There I saw with my own eyes that the Armenians shot 16 young people and dropped them into a well with a tractor. When we wanted to flee to Aghdam, the Armenians caught us and cruelly beat my father. They took our jewellery and money. Then they took us to a farm in Aghdam district and kept us there for three days. As my leg was seriously wounded, my parents bound it with string in an attempt to stop the bleeding. The Armenians severely beat the hostages kept there. In three days they released us. After returning from captivity I was treated in Aghdam hospital, and there are 12 stitches left on my leg. Now I suffer from these injuries. I still can't walk normally. My father suffers from kidney and liver disease as a result of the torture he suffered during captivity.

ASYA BIDZINOVA
Khojaly resident

I had lived in Uzbekistan before. We found refuge in Azerbaijan and were settled in Khojaly.

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly. The people began to flee to the forest. We hid in the basement of our house. The Armenians got into this basement and began to shoot. My husband was also there and died from shot wounds. When I tried to reach him the Armenians hit my back with the barrel of a machine-gun. There is a scar left on my body. They took 64 people, including little children, to Khankendi and kept us there for three days. During captivity they didn't give us even a slice of bread. The Armenians were raping young girls and regularly beating us.

MAHIR KHALILOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians attacked Khojaly. They burnt houses, killed innocent people and looted all our property. We fled to the forest. A day later we reached the village of Abdal-Gulably in Aghdam. There we were surrounded and captured by 30 Armenian soldiers. I was with my father-in-law, mother-in-law, wife, brother-in-law and two daughters. The children were not even a year old. When we were taken hostage, the Armenians beat us cruelly and took us to the village of Dahraz in Askeran district. There we were kept in a cellar for a week. Although there were little children among us, we were kept in the cold without food and water, beaten with the barrels of machine-guns, bludgeons and sticks. I still suffer from these injuries. I suffered a craniocerebral trauma, and my nervous system is damaged. When we left Khojaly our house and jewellery were looted by the Armenians. When we were taken hostage the Armenians took our money. On 3 March we were released. Among those

Armenians who tortured us I remember only Armen who was beating captives with bludgeons, machine-gun barrels and spades.

DILSHAD GULIYEVA
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992 the Armenians seized Khojaly. They killed innocent people, burnt houses and plundered property. Those inhabitants of Khojaly who survived ran away in different directions. We fled to the forest and hid there. After four days of hiding in the forest near Nakhichevanik about 30 Armenian soldiers captured us and took us to the Armenian village. The weather was freezing and they made us go on foot. There were people who died of the cold and hunger.

They threw us in a cellar in the Armenian village and began to beat us cruelly. There they shot seven or eight Azerbaijanis before my eyes. Then they took us to Askeran and threw us into prison. There they kept us without food and water, beat us cruelly, stubbed burning cigarettes on to the bodies of men and women. They took away our money and jewellery. They took my gold necklace, watch, rings and earrings. When we showed resistance they beat us severely. When we left Khojaly all our property was stolen by the Armenians. They also destroyed our house. When we were captured my two brothers-in-law were with us. One of them Mikayil Zahid Guliyev committed suicide. Another one, Azad Zahid Guliyev, was taken hostage by the Armenians and was held in captivity for 28 days. I was exchanged for Armenian captives after being kept for a day in Askeran.

SHAHLA SAFAROVA
Khojaly resident

We were forced to leave Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992. I hid in the forest with my husband and our five children. There we were surrounded by the Armenians. I was wounded in my left arm at the village of Nakhichevanik. We could not move and were captured. The Armenians took us to Askeran and held us at the Police Department. Even though I was wounded, they did not give me any medical help. Though it was very cold, we were kept in a windowless room without food. When we left Khojaly the Armenians stole our house, jewellery, money and all our property. Two days later I was released.

AZAD GULIYEV
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992 and fled to the forest. My brother Mikayil, sister-in-law Dilshad and cousin Asif were with me. My brother Mikayil committed suicide to avoid captivity. We were taken hostage near Nakhichevanik. I was held in captivity in Nakhichevanik, Askeran and Noragekh. The Armenians regularly beat us with the barrels of machine-guns, kept us without food and stubbed out burning cigarettes on our bodies. When I was in Nakhichevanik, the Armenians shot eight Azerbaijanis. I remember Inspector Karen from Askeran and Inspector Samvel from Noragekh. They beat and ruthlessly tortured all the Azerbaijanis. I was held prisoner for 14 days, and then released along with the others.

SATTAR AGAYEV
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. That day I had been on duty. When I returned home I saw nobody there. I went towards the forest and met my family. It was freezing cold. We crossed the Gargar River and got soaked to the skin. I took my 10-year-old son Vusal in my arms and went on. But my son could not stand the cold and died. As my legs froze I could not move. When I was in such a state I was approached by two Armenians, beaten and captured. I wanted to take my son's corpse but they kicked his dead body and did not let me take him. I was held in Dahraz, Khankendi, during my captivity. When I was held in a cellar they asked me if I had a son who had served in the national army. Trying to deceive them I gave a negative answer. Then they showed me his documents but I did not confess again. They beat me, then showed me the corpse of my son, national army soldier Zahid Agayev. When I wanted to embrace him, they beat me cruelly and I lost consciousness. They pulled out all my teeth with pincers. The wounds on my legs began to rot. They did not treat me. After being in captivity for 35 days I was released.

SARDAR AGAYEV
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. Along with armed men we helped civilians to leave the village. We were going towards the forest. Suddenly a skirmish started. I was separated from my friends and captured by the Armenians. They ruthlessly beat me and I lost consciousness. When I came round I found myself in a hen-house. There one Armenian began to beat me cruelly

with the barrel of a machine-gun. He struck me mainly in the head. Everything went dark before my eyes and I fainted. When I came round, I found myself surrounded by my relatives in the village of Abdal-Gulably.



A Khojaly resident who lost his entire family. Photo: Azertaj

SARVAR AGAYEV
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992. I was 12 years old. I was with my two brothers and mother. We stayed in the forest without food for two days. When the cross-fire started, I was separated from my family, captured by two Armenians and taken to the area called Agbulag. There they cruelly beat me and, after threatening me for 24 hours, released me. I was scared and extremely nervous. This is why I often have heart trouble, suffer from nervous disorder and have bad self-control.

RAHILA HAJIEVA
Khojaly resident

The Armenians seized Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. They burnt houses, killed innocent people, plundered our property. People were forced to leave their houses and flee. My husband Vidadi Shafa Mustafayev took part in the battle. He served in the volunteer battalion. We could not leave our house. My daughters Safayat, Ayshan, my son Taleh, my sister-in-law Rahila and the family of Alkhan who worked at the Khojaly Police Department hid in our bathroom. It was snowing and very frosty. Alkhan came to our house at about 4 or 5 a.m. He told us that the Armenians had already occupied Khojaly.

The Armenians got into our house and captured us on 26 February at about 11 a.m. They beat us cruelly. My daughter Safayat cried: "Don't beat my mother." An Armenian grabbed her and threw her from the second **floor**. She injured her knee joint. Then the Armenians started to beat Alkhan. He told us that my husband Vidadi had been wounded during the battle and had given him cartridges to shoot us to avoid captivity. Alkhan asked us to forgive him for being unable to do it and the Armenians beat him to death in front of us. One Armenian took his wife. His two sons were taken with us to the Askeran Police Department. I recognized Ashot from Shushuk among the Armenians who captured us. His father's name was Ata.

They kept us in Askeran for a week. There was an Azerbaijani with the nickname Dumbay who now lives in the hostel of college No 9 in Ganja. They took him away for beating. When he returned he told us that my husband was held in the cellar and the Armenians were planning to torture us to death in front of him. Then the Armenians asked me several times who that man was. I didn't reply and they began to torture me. They heated reinforced steel and burnt my body with it. They cut my left arm and upper jaw with a knife. These scars remain on my body now. Later I learnt that my husband Vidadi and four other Azerbaijanis had been

taken to the graveyard by an Armenian whose 20-year-old brother had been killed in battle, and there he beheaded them on his grave.

My sister-in-law Rahila Shafa Mustafayeva was also taken prisoner. She was 25 years old. We were raped by the Armenians several times. They beat us with the barrels of machine-guns and bludgeons and didn't give us any food. A man whose name was Karo was among the Armenians who tortured us. He was even crueller than the others. He would tie captives' arms and legs and beat them and break them with a baton. He would stick burning cigarettes in their eyes and on different parts of their bodies and rape women. He always wore military uniform. The Armenians took all our jewellery, money and documents.

My sister-in-law Rahila fell seriously ill. As a result of the torture, she started to bleed. It was hard to keep her alive until our release. We were kept in the cold and without food. All my children fell ill. Seven days later we were exchanged for Armenian captives. Although we had medical treatment after our imprisonment, it was impossible to save the lives of my sister-in-law Rahila and my daughter Shafayat. My daughter died at the age of 22, my daughter Ayshan and son Taleh are always ill and are under medical supervision. I myself had to have an operation. Because of a craniocerebral injury, I often suffer from headaches.

KAMIL HUSEYNOV
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25-26 February 1992. That day I was on duty. I hardly reached home and saw nobody there. I fled to the forest and stayed there for three days with other residents of Khojaly. The weather was very frosty and foggy. That is why we lost direction. We wanted to go to the village of Abdal-Gulably in Aghdam district. But by mistake we came to the village of Dahraz. There about 50-60 Armenian soldiers shot at us.

Many people died there. I was captured and taken to the cells in Khankendi. I remember the names of people who were captured with me: Niftalin, Sattar, Samandar, Mahammed, Kamal, Alish, Abulfat. In captivity they beat us severely with the barrels of machine-guns. Furthermore, they let civilians beat us. I remember very well the inspectors Felix and Arthur who were in the cells. Then they took us to Goris in Armenia. I was held captive at the Yerevan Police Department and suffered ruthless torture. We were kept almost without food. In total, I was held captive for six months. Then they exchanged us for Armenian captives in Gubadli. As a result of the torture I suffered gastroenteritis and later was operated on. After release I was told that my eight-year-old daughter Maral had been killed by the Armenians.

ETIBAR NACAFOV
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25-26 February 1992, at about 10 p.m., the Armenians attacked Khojaly. At that time we were on duty. Early in the morning at about 4 or 5 a.m. the Armenians fired at us from a tank. I was seriously wounded and lost consciousness. When I came round, I saw that the firing had stopped. The Armenians captured me along with other residents of Khojaly and took us to the cells in Khankendi, where we were severely tortured. Although my left leg was seriously wounded, they broke my right leg, striking it with a metre-long iron bar. They pulled out with pincers the gold teeth of a man whose name was Alasgar. He could not stand the torture and died that night. Many people were dying there as they could not stand the torture. As a result of the seizure of the town, our house, jewellery, money, all our property were stolen by the Armenians.

ELMIRA VALIYEVA
Khojaly resident

The Armenians took Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. They burnt houses, killed innocent people. We just managed to flee to the forest and stayed there for five days. The weather was freezing. We were stiff with cold. We were captured in this state and held in captivity for several days. Then they exchanged us. While we were in Askeran, we were severely beaten with batons. The Armenians took my ring, necklace, earrings and money. As a result of my injuries, I often have headaches and suffer from a nervous disorder.

GULOYSHA MAMMADOVA
Khojaly resident

We left Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. My son Farhad and I fled to the forest. After staying there for three days we were captured in the area of Gilinbag and then taken to the Askeran Police Department. There we were held for 10 days. They severely beat us and kept us without food; many young women were tortured and raped. They beat us with bludgeons, pieces of iron and the barrels of machine-guns. I was held hostage for 10 days. I still suffer from the injuries I received while a prisoner. I had a craniocerebral trauma. I can't sleep without taking sleeping pills. I often have severe headaches. I suffer from kidney disease and disease of the stomach and intestines.

SANAM ABDULLAYEVA
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25 to 26 February 1992 I left Khojaly with my father, mother, sisters Hadija, Tazagul, Latafat, my daughters Vusala, Khayala and my nephew Ruslan. We fled to the forest where my father, mother and sister Latafat died. We stayed there for four days. Then we were taken hostage by the Armenians near the village of Pirjamal and kept in a stable along with about 300 residents of Khojaly. While we were being held, armed Armenians killed Faiq Alimammedov and Ismail. The Armenians tortured and beat us with the barrels of machine-guns and bludgeons, and didn't give us any food. We were released in a day.

FARMAN MAMMADOV
Khojaly resident

The Armenians seized Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. We were forced to leave our native land. I was 10 years old then. My mother and I fled to the forest with other civilians. We had to stay there without food in the freezing cold for three days. They severely beat us and took us to Askeran Police Department. There they kept us in a cell for 10 days. There were about 20 to 30 people. Everyday prison guards would beat us with reinforced steel and rape young women. I was a child and when I cried out of fear the Armenians would knock me over and kick me. As a result, I got kidney disease. In 10 days we were released. Since then I received medical treatment until 1996. Our house and property were plundered by the Armenians.

SEVIL ABDULOVA
Khojaly resident

The Armenians seized Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992. My family - my husband and our three children - and I fled to the forest. The Armenians surrounded us. They started to shoot in the direction where people were crowded together. My 12-year-old son Jeyhun and I were wounded and then separated from the other family members near Aghdam in the area called Garagaya. There we were taken hostage by two armed Armenians. A woman from Khankendi whose name was Gulli and her son were with us. This woman burnt all her money. When the Armenians saw it they killed them both. They took money and jewellery out of my bag. They brought us to their house in Khankendi and held

us there for three days. The name of the house owner was Sarkis. His son Karlen Ayrumyan was imprisoned in Azerbaijan. Later we were exchanged for him in Askeran.



This family ousted from their country twice due to the Karabakh conflict.
On the road between Lachin and Shusha (1991), photo by Oleg Litvin

FATMA ZAMANOVA
Khojaly resident

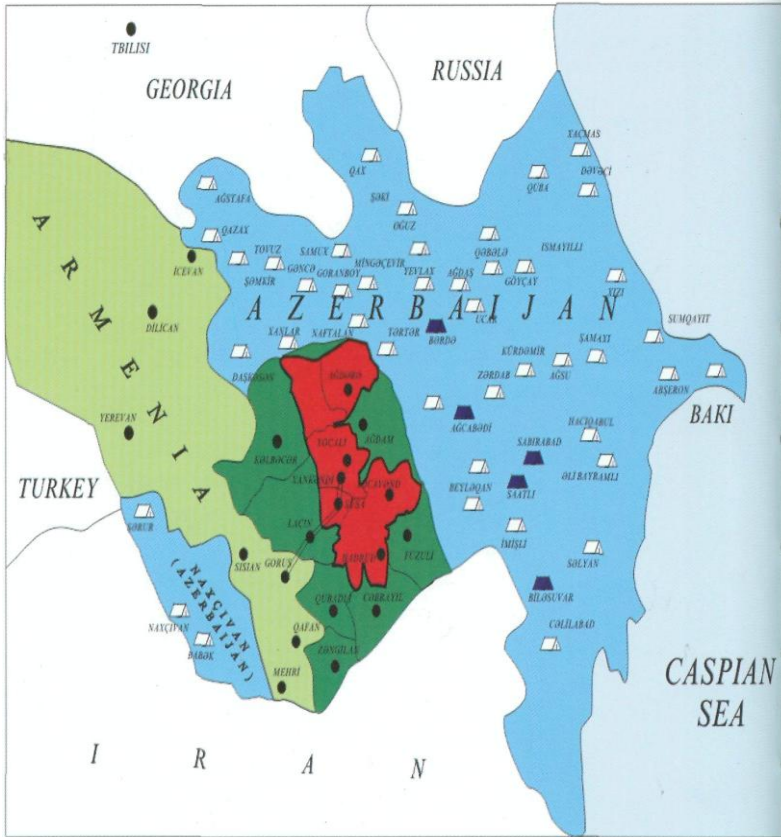
As a result of the seizure of Khojaly during the night of 25 to 26 February 1992, my family fled in different directions. I hid in the basement bomb shelter. There were about 100 women, men, old people and children. Later Armenian and Russian soldiers found us and started to beat us with the barrels of machine-guns, and then kicked us out of the basement. When I saw my husband Novruz Gulu Zamanov's dead body I wanted to go to him, but an Armenian saw me and kicked me down. Then they took us to the village of Mehdi. There they stripped a group of Azerbaijani soldiers and shot them before our eyes, cut their bodies into pieces and put one on top of the other. They said they would not allow Azerbaijani women to bear boys because one day those boys would come with weapons in their hands to kill the Armenians. They smashed glass bottles on women's wombs, knocked them down and jumped on them, breaking bottles on their stomachs and putting old galoshes into their wombs. They cut girls' hair to make them look ugly. They chose 50 girls and took them away to rape them. The Armenians stripped some men and tried to force them to have sexual intercourse with their daughters, threatening to behead them if they refused. I don't remember the names of our torturers. They took those who survived to the cellar of a building in Khankendi, and our torture continued. I was released at the end of March 1992.

SHAKHNAZ BEHBUDOVA
Khojaly resident

During the night of 25 to 26 February 1992 Khojaly was seized. My father-in-law Shura Pashayev and mother-in-law Kubra Pashayeva were with us at that time. After crossing the Gargar River we fled to the forest near the village of Nakhichevanik together with our children and went towards Aghdam. But when we reached the cemetery between Aghdam and Askeran, the Armenians surrounded us and started to shoot from machine-guns. All the people began to flee in different directions. There were about 100 women, children and old people from the town. My husband Elshan Pashayev and father-in-law Shura Pashayev and some other people died when the Armenians opened fire. Lining up the survivors near the river-bed, they started to throw grenades. My mother-in-law Kubra was wounded in her left hand by two bullets and my leg was scraped. Our neighbours Elbrus, Islam, Vugar, Gulnaz, Surayya (she died later) survived. Lining us up again, the Armenians began to strike us with different objects, abused us and then threw us into the basement of the Askeran Police Department. There they kept men separately from women. There were about 40-50 wounded women and children in our cell. They were cutting women's arms, noses and ears, they didn't give us any

food or water,

THE RESULTS OF ARMENIAN AGGRESSION



Refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan	
Refugees from Armenia	- 243 682
Internally displaced persons from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan	- 611 239
Total	- 904 214

The Armed Forces of Armenia deployed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan	
Tanks	- 316
ACV	- 324
Artillery	- 322
Personnel	- 50 000

-  Temporary refugee settlements
-  Tent camps
-  Borders of former NKAO
-  Road Gorus-Laçın-Suşa-Xankəndi

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The occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The Nagorno-Karabakh area

<i>Territory</i>	- 43 888 sq. km
<i>Population (1989)</i>	- 186 610
<i>Armenians</i>	- 138 600 (73,5%)
<i>Azerbaijanis</i>	- 47 500 (25,3%)
<i>Suşa region</i>	
<i>Territory</i>	- 289 sq. km
<i>Population</i>	- 23 156
<i>Azerbaijanis</i>	- 21 726 (93,8%)
<i>Armenians</i>	- 1430 (6,2%)
<i>Occupied</i>	- May 8, 1992

The regions outside the Nagorno-Karabakh area

<i>Laçın region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- May 18, 1992
<i>Kəlbəcər region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- April 2, 1993
<i>Ağdam region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- July 23, 1993
<i>Cəbrayıl region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- August 23, 1993
<i>Qubadlı region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- August 31, 1993
<i>Füzuli region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- October 23, 1993
<i>Zəngilan region</i>	
<i>Occupied</i>	- October 27, 1993

Victims of aggression

<i>Killed</i>	- 20.000
<i>Disabled</i>	- 50.000

Destructions caused by the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan

<i>Settlements</i>	- 890
<i>Houses</i>	- 150.000
<i>Public Buildings</i>	- 7000
<i>Schools</i>	- 693
<i>Kindergartens</i>	- 855
<i>Health Care Facilities</i>	- 695
<i>Libraries</i>	- 927
<i>Temples</i>	- 44
<i>Mosques</i>	- 9
<i>Historical Palaces</i>	- 9
<i>Historical Monuments and Museums</i>	- 464
<i>Museum Exhibits</i>	- 40.000
<i>Industrial and Agricultural Enterprises</i>	- 6000
<i>Motorways</i>	- 800 km
<i>Bridges</i>	- 160
<i>Water Pipelines</i>	- 2300 km
<i>Gas Pipelines</i>	- 2000
<i>Electricity Lines</i>	- 15.000 km
<i>Forests</i>	- 280.000 hec
<i>Sowing Area</i>	- 1.000.000 hec
<i>Irrigation Systems</i>	- 1200 km

*The total damage is estimated as exceeding 60
Billions US \$*

children were crying and wounded people were moaning. Sometimes the Armenians would come to our cell and take away beautiful, young women and upon their return we knew that they had been raped. I heard that some girls had not been released yet. When the girls' mothers wanted to go with their daughters, they were beaten unconscious. The Armenians took all our jewellery. All this torture continued till the next day. We were brought back to the Azerbaijani side in the evening on 27 February 1992.

Name Firangul Karimova

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: F.J. Abbasov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I All limbs, ears, breasts, eyeballs are missing. Wound with clotted blood on the chest, 25 cm x 30 cm.

II All the mentioned injuries were inflicted by a sharp weapon and resulted in blood flow.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether constituted a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

**These are just a few of the post-mortem records collected as part of the criminal case investigated by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan.*

Khojaly inhabitants, slaughtered cruelly by Armenians, while trying to escape.

Photo: Azertaj

Name H.Humbatova

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Bullet wound on the chest. Eyeballs and mammary glands are missing. Round wounds over the area of the eye-sockets, eyeballs, chest and mammary glands.

II Bullet wound was caused by a stray bullet which entered the thoracic cavity. According to the morphological symptoms of the wounds, the eyeballs and mammary glands were excised by a sharp weapon.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether constituted a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Tamara Mammadova

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Bullet wounds on the back. Eyeballs and mammary glands are missing.

II Bullet wounds on the back were caused by firearms. According to the morphological symptoms of the wounds on the site of the eyeballs and mammary glands, they were inflicted by a sharp weapon.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Dilara Nuraliyeva

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: M.F. Khajiyev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Eyes and teeth are missing. Perforation wounds on the chest.

II Eyes and teeth were put out by a blunt object. Perforation woundson the chest were caused by numerous bullets and this resulted in intra abdominal injury and internal haemorrhage.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Azimova

Date of forensic medical examination: 27 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: M.F. Khajiyev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Four bullet wounds to the chest, perforation wound on the left side of the chest.

II Injuries are the result of fire from both the front and back. The wound on the left side of the chest was caused by an explosive bullet and led to internal haemorrhage and blood flow.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which

imminently resulted in death.

Name A.Huseynov

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Third- and fourth-degree burns on about 100% of head and body surface.

II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.

III Aforementioned injuries imminently caused death.

Name Ch. Farzaliyev

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Third-degree burns on the head, body, upper and lower limbs.

II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.

III The described inflicted injuries

altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Igbal Aslanov

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: M.F. Khajiyev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Second-degree burns on the whole surface of the body, both eyes and male genital organs are excised. The cranium has been smashed. Perforation bullet wounds to the chest.

II Burns are result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames. Wounds were inflicted with both blunt and sharp weapons. Bullet wounds were caused by firearms.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Gachay Khalilov

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: M.F. Khajiyev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Cranial bones smashed. Bullet wounds to the chest.

II Destruction of cranial bones was caused by a blow from a blunt object. Bullet wounds were caused by firearms.

III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Agayari Imani

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Third- and fourth-degree burns on about 100% of head and body surface.

II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.

III Aforementioned injuries imminently caused death.

Name J. Rajabov

Date of forensic medical examination: 26 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

- I Third-degree burns on the head, body, upper and lower limbs.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name S.Huseynov

Date of forensic medical examination: 27 February 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Office of the Public Prosecutor for Karabakh

Performed by: E. Musayev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

- I Third- and fourth-degree burns on about 100% of head, body, upper and lower limbs' surface.
- II Injuries are the result of the body being exposed to extremely high temperature and flames.
- III Aforementioned injuries imminently caused death.

Name Halala Orudjeva

Date of forensic medical examination: 28 February 1992

Performed by: S.V. Gasimov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town morgue

Conclusion:

- I Three bullet wounds on the head, chest and left hip, one cut wound on the heart.
- II Bullet wounds were caused by firearms and led to the complete destruction of the head, the cut wound was inflicted by a sharp weapon.
- III The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Aynura Zeynalova

Date of forensic medical examination: 21 February 1992

Performed by: S.V. Gasimov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town morgue

Conclusion:

- I Bullet wounds on the left temple and left upper arm caused by firearms.
- II Injuries led to blood flow and shock.
- III Aforementioned injuries imminently caused death.



Mothers crying over the Khojaly horror, Agdam. Photo: Azertaj

Name Aynur Zeynalova

(six years old)

Date of forensic medical examination: 28 February 1992

Performed by: S.V. Casimov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghdam town mosque

Conclusion:

I Two bullet wounds and one avulsed wound on the chest, one injury on the left side of the forehead.

II Bullet wounds were caused by firearms, avulsed wound was caused by a sharp weapon. Injury on the forehead was caused by shackles.

III Injuries led to blood flow and shock.

The described inflicted injuries altogether presented a lethal injury, which imminently resulted in death.

Name Ziya Abbasov

(two years old)

Date of forensic medical examination: 3 March 1992

On the basis of the decision of: E.A. Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: A.A. Mammedov, medical forensic ex

Place of forensic medical examination: Republican Neurosurgical Hospital

Conclusion:

I One wound on the surface of the right cheekbone and ear.

II Injury was caused by bullet from a firearm.

III The described injury is diagnosed as a mean injury and led to short-term deterioration in health.

Name Gunel Hamzayeva

(three years old)

Date of forensic medical examination: 16 December 1992

On the basis of the decision of: Z.B. Allahverdiyev, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: I.K. Mammedov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: Pathology and Forensic Examination Department of Beylagan district

Conclusion:

I Wound on the left side of the chest.

II This wound was caused by a missile fragment.

III The described injury is diagnosed as a trivial injury and led to a short-term deterioration in health.

Name Mammed Mammedov

(60 years old)

Date of forensic medical examination: / March 1992

On the basis of the decision of: E.A. Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Performed by: M.S. Ismayilov, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: the Aghd am town mosque

Conclusion:

I Simple fractures of 9th and 10th ribs wound on the head.

II Injuries were inflicted by blows from a blunt object.

III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and led to a short-term deterioration in health.

Name Nigar Amirova

(four years old)

Date of forensic medical examination: 29 January 1993

On the basis of the decision of: Z.B. AUahverdiyev, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated 16 December 1992

Performed by: J.T. AUahverdiyev, medical forensic expert

Place of forensic medical examination: General Ambulatory and Pathology and Forensic Examination Department

Conclusion:

I Bullet wounds on the left haunch and on the right hip.

II Injuries were caused by firearms.

III The described injuries are diagnosed as trivial injuries and led to a short-term deterioration in health.

Name Salatin Ahmadova

(one year old)

Date of forensic medical examination: 19 September 1992

On the basis of the decision of: E.A. Mikayilov, Investigator for Particularly Important Cases at the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated 3 March 1992

Performed by: I. Azmammedov, medical forensic expert
Place of forensic medical examination: Emergency clinic

Conclusion:

- I First-and second-degree frostbite of the toes of both feet.
- II Frostbite is the result of the body being exposed to extremely low temperature.
- III The described injuries are diagnosed as mean injuries and led to a long-term deterioration in health.



There are currently almost one million refugees and internally displaced people in Azerbaijan as a result of Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan. The Armenians ethnically cleansed the territory of Armenia proper and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan of the ethnic Azerbaijani population. That is, approximately one out of eight people in the country has been displaced by the conflict. About 20,000 Azerbaijani citizens have

been killed and 50,000 have been wounded or maimed. A total of 900 settlements have been looted and burnt, over 9 million square metres of civilian housing, state enterprises and social facilities have been destroyed. The most serious crimes of concern to the international community, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, constituting the violation of the norms of international law, have been committed during the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The information given above confirms that the deliberate slaughter of the Khojaly town civilians on 25-26 February 1992, including children, women and old people, was aimed at their mass extermination only because they were Azerbaijanis. The town of Khojaly was chosen as a stage for the further occupation and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijani territories, creating panic and fear before the horrifying massacre.

Khojaly ruined by Armenians. Photo: Azertaj

There cannot be true, long-term, sustainable peace without justice, without respect for human dignity, human rights and freedoms. This belief was affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly almost half a century ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which apart from proclaiming that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world", quite correctly pointed out that "disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind".³ Conventions and international instruments concluded within the framework of the United Nations, which require states to "prosecute or extradite", support the argument about the existence of the customary obligation under international law to prosecute those who are alleged to have committed crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. Further argument precluding the possibility of invoking a state discretion to decide whether to adjudicate or not for the commission of the most serious international crimes is based on the jus cogens nature of international legal norms prohibiting these crimes.²

¹Universal Declaration of Human Rights, GA res. 217 A (III), 10 December 1948. For text see UN Centre for Human Rights, Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments, STHRIRev.5, vol. 1 (First Part), New York & Geneva, UN 1994, pp. 1-7, at p. 1.

² For more information see A.Yusifova, "Does international law allow societies in transition from conflict or authoritarian government to choose peace at the expense of justice? Should it?", in "Diplomatiya Alomi" journal, No. 10 (2005), pp. 151-155.





“Khojali Tragedy – an International View” is publication issued by the London Azerbaijan Society and Anglo-Azerbaijan Youth Society on the 15th anniversary of Khojali massacre. The booklet consists of information based on international sources and press photographs. Its aim is to promote the awareness of the world community about Khojali slaughter, gruesome tragedy of the XX century .

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