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SOME LEGAL PROBLEMS IN ENSURING HUMAN SECURITY IN THE CONDITIONS OF INFORMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE (SECOND ARTSAKH WAR CASE)

Abstract

The quality of opposition and penetration possibilities are also altering in the rapidly changing world. In parallel with the technical and technological development, it seems that in pre-war, wartime and post-war proceedings, the informative and psychological components, if are not pushed to the forefront, do not concede to the military actions with their significance of influencing the opponent.

The second war of Artsakh, which lasted from September 27 to November 9 in 2020 and the military crimes carried out by the Turk-Azerbaijani tandem during the war, shows that the policy towards Armenians implemented by both Turks and Azerbaijani has not been changed over a century. That is, since 1918, all the tools with the military, informational, and psychological components used by Azerbaijan are initially targeted not only at the azerbaijanization of the territories but also against the statehood of Artsakh and human rights.

In this regard, it is imperative for the Armenian side to clearly and objectively convey the available information of inhuman policy against Armenians to the international community.

Keywords: the Republic of Artsakh, war, COVID-19, state institutions, psychological warfare, information warfare, human rights.

Introduction

Although the concept of information and psychological warfare appeared recently, the theory of information and psychological influence began to form in the ancient centuries. Moreover, the tools of information and psychological influence are developing to this day, without losing relevance, both from the point of view of research activities and from the point of view of conducting successful wars in modern conditions.

As the experience of all the wars that humankind has waged shows, the outcome ultimately depends on material and moral factors. Experienced military leaders and statesmen, since ancient times, knew that it is possible to fight the enemy not only by armed means but also by purposeful influence on the consciousness and psy-

che of people. For that goal, they used information and psychological influence through the purposeful production and dissemination of certain information that had a direct impact on the functioning of the information and psychological environment of society, the psyche and behaviour of the population, and military personnel to weaken the morale and combat power of the enemy.

The most ancient way to undermine the enemy's morale is to intimidate him with his combat power. For example, the Mongol leader Genghis Khan and the Carthaginian general Hannibal, before the battle began, deliberately spread rumours about "new secret weapons" - war elephants, "fire snakes", poisonous smoke, etc. Moreover, the Persian commander Xerxes spread rumours about the number of his troops in order to maximize the emotional impact on the

enemy before the campaign in Greece in 480 BC (Historical aspects of the theory and practice of information and psychological influence). Information and psychological warfare, with some changes, was actively conducted in the subsequent years of human history. It was conducted during the Crimean War of 1853-1856, the First World War of 1914-1918, the Second World War of 1939-1945, etc.

The tools of information and psychological warfare, with some modernizations, are actively used today. A striking example of this is the second Artsakh war, during which the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem used all information and psychological warfare tools. Moreover, during and after the aggressive war against the people of the Republic of Artsakh, which Azerbaijan launched during the pandemic, illegal tools were used that infringed on fundamental human rights and endangered the lives and health of the civilian population. Information and psychological warfare tools are also used during the Ukrainian crisis, which has turned into war since the end of February.

It follows from the above that if in ancient times, information and psychological wars were mainly fought before the war and during the war, in modern times, information and psychological wars in a more extensive and modified version will be introduced in the post-war period. This is done without any doubt for the population's moral and psychological crush and the final destruction of the enemy's defensive power.

Methodology

The research methodology is based on a comprehensive method, including analysing scientific and normative literature. The study uses comparative, historical, systematic, statistical and field research methods. The following approaches are used to solve the identified problems: institutional, political-legal, historical-legal, value, etc. Methods of quantitative and qualitative content analysis and monitoring are used to form the

empirical base of the study. The use of data processing software is significant in the latter case. The study involves the integration of various scientific fields (law, political management, psychology, etc.).

Psychological Warfare:

From Ancient Times to the Modernity

Psychological warfare has a long history. Psychological warfare has been defined as a war waged psychologically; that is, military operations are conducted carefully considering the enemy's policies, opinions, and morale. It is not in this sense that the term was used in American practice during World War II. In a narrower sense, psychological warfare was defined as propaganda, which includes the use against the enemy of such operational components of a military-political nature that may be required to achieve goals. Imperial powers such as Ancient Rome, the Mongols of the Middle Age and the European colonial empires of the nineteenth century used highly effective military strategies with a substantial psychological component. At the same time, psychological strategies have often proved attractive to weak States, forcing them to rely on diplomatic manoeuvres and deception for their survival. Since prehistoric times, military and political leaders have recognized the importance of weakening opponents' morale. In the Battle of Pelusium (525 BC) between the Persian Empire and Ancient Egypt, Persian troops used cats and other animals as psychological tactics against the Egyptians, who avoided harming cats because of religious beliefs and spells. Modern tactics of psychological warfare were first used during the First World War. Technological advances in electronic and print media have made it easier for Governments to spread propaganda through mass-circulation newspapers. On the battlefield, aviation achievements made it possible to drop leaflets behind enemy lines, and special non-lethal artillery shells were developed to spread propaganda. Postcards dropped by British

pilots over German trenches contained notes, presumably handwritten by German prisoners, praising the humane treatment of them by British jailers.

It should be noted here that the tools of information and psychological warfare are actively adopted by states and terrorist organizations. In today's ongoing war on terrorism, the jihadist terrorist organization ISIS uses social media sites and other online sources to conduct psychological campaigns aimed at recruiting

Information-Psychological Warfare in Modernity: Second Artsakh War Case

As you know, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international importance (Statement on the second meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)), and on March 11 - a pandemic (WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020, 2020). Following the WHO announcement, the UN Secretary-General called on all the conflicting parties to stop wars and fight against the common enemy - COVID-19, as the most vulnerable, suffer from military conflicts: women, children, the disabled, and refugees. That is, the population segment primarily becomes a victim of the COVID-19 pandemic, while the health care systems of the warring countries are in a state of collapse due to wars (UN chief urges to end wars and fight against common enemy COVID-19, 2020).

However, despite the most difficult epidemiological situation in the world and the call of the UN Secretary-General, and taking advantage of the overburdened health system of the Armenian side, on the morning of September 27, the Azerbaijani armed forces, with the close support of the Turkish army and the Turkish military-political leadership, unleashed a large-scale aggres-

sive war on the entire territory of the Republic of Artsakh. The war, which was supposed to have started as a result of the formation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918 and continues to this day, with some pauses and changes in the geography and involvement of the military-human potential.

Immediately after the resumption of hostilities, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry spread information that the Armenian military began firing at the positions of the Azerbaijani army along the entire front line with large-calibre weapons, mortars and artillery installations (Escalation in Karabakh: tanks, helicopters and vehicles of air defence are hit, 2020), but further militaristic statements and actions of the Azerbaijani side and, in particular, President Aliyev, prove that Azerbaijan planned to launch an aggressive war against the call of the UN Secretary General, and the negotiation process on the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. That is why, on October 3, he began to "dictate" the terms of the cessation of hostilities and the truce (Aliyev called the withdrawal of the Armenian military from these territories a condition of the ceasefire in Karabakh, 2020). At a meeting on December 12 with the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, after the war, he said that the Minsk Group did not play any role in settlement of the conflict and Azerbaijan itself solved it by military-political means (Ilham Aliyev to the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs: I did not invite you, 2020).

In this context, the statement of the US Embassy in the Republic of Armenia is of particular interest in which the US, a day before the war, on the 26th of September, called on its citizens not to visit Artsakh and the areas bordering Azerbaijan (The United States urges its citizens to stay away from the Armenian-Azerbaijani border areas, 2020). That is, the war did not start by chance because the day before the war, the international community, which adopted neutrality during the war, knew about the aggressive, offensive actions of the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem against the people and statehood of the Republic of

Artsakh, for which, on the eve of the war, Turkey transferred about 4 thousand militants and terrorists from the northern regions of Syria to Azerbaijan (CNN claims that it has found confirmation of data on the recruitment of mercenaries close to Turkey to be sent to Nagorno-Karabakh, 2020). This is evidenced by the statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry that Russia has its own data that militants from the Middle East are fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh, which, in turn, was confirmed by the head of the Russian FIS Sergey Naryshkin, adding that "...according to the information available in the FIS, mercenaries from international terrorist organizations fighting in the Middle East, in particular [such as] "Jabhat al-Nusra" (banned in Russia), "Firkat al-Hamza", "Sultan Murad", as well as extremist Kurdish groups are actively moving to the conflict zone" (Naryshkin said that Transcaucasia could become a new bridgehead for hundreds of terrorists, 2020).

The fact of the transfer of international terrorists to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, as well as the support of the command staff of the Turkish army, in turn, shows that initially and regardless of the requirements of international law, the Azerbaijani-Turkish-terrorist forces did not plan to comply with the generally accepted rules of war: from the beginning to the end of the war, they will launch rocket and air strikes on peaceful settlements and civilian infrastructure throughout Artsakh, including the capital (Azerbaijan bombs Stepanakert, authorities urge people to hide in shelters, 2020) (An air alert is again declared in Stepanakert, 2020).

During the military actions, the Azerbaijani-Turkish forces targeted not only the armed forces of Artsakh but also the civilian population and vital infrastructure, including power plants, schools, cultural and youth centres, medical institutions, bakeries, gas pipelines, food warehouses, as well as interstate and inter-regional roads, including bridges of strategic importance (Azerbaijan strikes at civilian infrastructure in Stepanakert: Schools and kindergartens are targeted,

2020).

Moreover, in gross violation of international humanitarian law, the norms and principles of customary law, the Geneva Conventions, as well as the provisions stipulated by the relevant conventions and documents of the UN, the Azerbaijani-Turkish armed forces used prohibited ammunition against the civilian population of the Republic of Artsakh, in particular, cluster bombs (Azerbaijan: Cluster Munitions Used in Nagorno-Karabakh, 2020) and phosphorous weapons (Azerbaijan used phosphorous weapons in Karabakh - Defense Army of NK, 2020) containing elements of chemical weapons, thus continuing the cycle of war crimes. It is enough to note the terrorist attack in the city of Hadrut when a disabled child was killed in front of his parents. Then the parents themselves (Azerbaijani saboteurs killed a disabled mother and son in Hadrut, 2020), an unarmed elderly man and a young man who accompanied him were publicly shot (Azerbaijanis shot dead two civilians in Hadrut, according to the Ombudsman, 2020).

This shows that the ultimate goal of the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan and Turkey is not only the conquest of the territory of Artsakh but also the destruction of the people of Artsakh. Without going into the history proving the linearity of the policy of the Azerbaijani leadership towards the Armenian people from the first day of the formation of the Republic of Azerbaijan to this day, it is enough to cite as an example the remark of Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Valdai Forum, where the latter noted that the Karabakh conflict did not begin as an interstate conflict and a struggle for territories, it began with an ethnic confrontation (Putin said that the death toll in Karabakh is approaching 5 thousand, 2020).

The anti-Armenian policy at the highest level was characteristic of all the authorities of the newly created Azerbaijan. It is not by chance that one of the main reasons for the declaration on the proclamation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on September 2, 1991 (State Independence Dec-

laration of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic, 1992) was the policy of apartheid and aggregation carried out in Azerbaijan, which ultimately created an atmosphere of hatred and intolerance towards the Armenian people, which periodically led to armed clashes and human casualties.

That is the aggressive war launched on September 27 against the statehood of the Republic of Artsakh – a continuation of Azerbaijan’s long and linear policy towards the peaceful population of Artsakh. This proves the fact that despite the statements of the Presidents of Russia, the United States and France on Nagorno-Karabakh from October 1 (Statement by the Presidents of Russia, the United States and France on Nagorno-Karabakh, 2020), as well as the Foreign Ministers of Russia, France and the US Secretary of State from October 5, 2020 (Joint statement calling for a ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, 2020), in which condemning the escalation of violence in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, the presidents and departmental ministers of the three countries called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and without setting preconditions to resume negotiations on the substance of the settlement with the assistance of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, the Turkish-Azerbaijani side, repeatedly violating the agreements, continued military actions, during which several dozen civilians were killed among the civilian population of Artsakh, about two hundred people, including children, the elderly, women, rescuers, paramedics, and representatives of foreign media were injured in various degrees.

Furthermore, only on the 44th day of the war, on November 9, with the mediation of the President of the Russian Federation, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a trilateral statement on a complete cease-fire and all military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, which consists of 9 points:

1. A complete cease-fire and all military operations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone

will be declared from 00:00 Moscow time on November 10, 2020.

2. The Agdam district is returned to the Republic of Azerbaijan until November 20, 2020.
3. Along the contact line in Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Lachin corridor, a Russian peacekeeping contingent of 1960 soldiers with small arms, 90 armoured personnel carriers, and 380 vehicles and special equipment is being deployed.
4. The peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is being deployed in parallel with the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces. The term of stay of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is 5 years with an automatic extension for the subsequent 5-year periods if none of the Parties declares 6 months before the expiration of the term of their intention to terminate the application of this provision.
5. In order to increase the effectiveness of monitoring the implementation of agreements by the Parties to the conflict, a peacekeeping centre for monitoring the ceasefire is being deployed.
6. Armenia had to return the Kelbajar district to Azerbaijan by November 15, 2020, and the Lachin district by December 1, 2020. The Lachin corridor (5 km wide), which will provide a link between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, remains under the control of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation. Within three years, a plan will be determined to construct a new route along the Lachin corridor, providing a link between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, with the subsequent redeployment of the Russian peacekeeping contingent to protect this route. Azerbaijan guarantees the safety of movement of citizens, vehicles and cargo in both directions along the Lachin corridor.
7. Internally displaced persons and refugees return to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding areas under the control of the Office of the United Nations High Commis-

- sioner for Refugees.
8. Prisoners of war and other detained persons and the dead bodies are exchanged.
 9. All economic and transport links in the region will be unblocked. Armenia guarantees the security of transport links between the western regions of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. Control over transport communication is carried out by the bodies of the Border Service of the FSS of Russia

According to the agreement of the Parties, the construction of new transport communications connecting the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic with the western regions of Azerbaijan will be provided (Statement by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation, 2020).

That is, as a result of the 44-day war, in addition to the adjacent seven districts, except for the Lachin (Berdzor) corridor, which provides a link between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, which came under the control of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation, the entire Hadrud district and the city of Shushi came under the control of the Azerbaijani side.

Despite the trilateral agreement and the deployment of Russian peacekeepers on the territory of the Republic of Artsakh, which was supposed to be the basis for long-term peace, immediately after the suspension of hostilities, the Turkish – Azerbaijani tandem began the second-psychological-informational stage of the war that began on September 27. It is enough to go through the chronology of the Karabakh conflict to understand that this policy is just a continuation of the policy against the people and statehood of the Republic of Artsakh, which began in 1918, the ultimate goal of which is the rejection of the Armenians and the Muslimization of the region.

It was for this purpose that the moral and psychological pressure on the Armenian population and, in particular, the border areas began when starting from November 10, the Azerbaijani side began to put up stencils with the inscription

“Welcome to Azerbaijan” along the entire contact line of the Syunik Marz road of the Republic of Armenia (As a result of the signed trilateral statement, in some areas of the Syunik Marz, the left part of the road passed to Azerbaijan), and the Azerbaijani armed forces, to intimidate the border population, periodically open fire, in the immediate vicinity of the Armenian villages, both with small arms and large-calibre weapons, provoke the Armenian military, bringing forward their posts (The Azerbaijani Armed Forces violates the agreements and puts forward their positions, 2021), repeatedly violating the agreements and conditional borders of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh.

Disturbing complaints about the fire and the deployment of Azerbaijani armed forces in the vicinity of Armenian villages were sent to the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia, who, after visiting the border areas of Syunik Marz, stated that “the presence of Azerbaijani armed forces in the immediate vicinity of the border areas of Armenia, on inter-communal and interstate roads, poses a real threat to the lives and other vital rights of the civilian population, criminal acts of the Azerbaijani armed forces that threaten the rights of the civilian population to life and health, physical and mental integrity, as well as other internationally recognized rights, must be completely excluded” (Tatoyan, 2021). Disturbing complaints continued during the trilateral meeting in January 2021 of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan leaders. However, this time, the Azerbaijani armed forces opened fire from Shushi in the direction of Stepanakert (The people of Artsakh are sounding the alarm: it was fired from Shushi in the direction of Stepanakert, 2021).

It is no coincidence that MEP Ivan David, presenting evidence from the Second Karabakh War, confirmed that the Azerbaijani and Turkish armies committed genocide in Nagorno-Karabakh: “Genocide has been committed. I have seen video footage of Azerbaijani soldiers killing civilians and prisoners. The Azerbaijanis de-

stroyed the civilian infrastructure, which is a war crime. The Syrian mercenaries were ordered to kill all civilians and spare no one. In addition, the Azerbaijanis used cluster bombs prohibited by international law, as well as phosphorus bombs” (Ankara and Baku committed genocide in Karabakh: it is proposed to create an international tribunal, 2020). Even though the European parliamentarian proposed to create an international tribunal for the crimes committed in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Turkish-Azerbaijani military-political leadership has not changed its intentions.

Without hiding the fact that Azerbaijan and Turkey have jointly waged war against the people of the Republic of Artsakh, on the occasion of the Victory Parade held in Baku on December 10, 2020, in which Turkish President Erdoğan took part, a postage stamp and envelopes of the first day were put into circulation in Azerbaijan under the title “One Nation, Two States. Victory Parade” (New postage stamp is put into circulation in Azerbaijan, n.d.). Moreover, in order to show a “special attitude” to Nagorno-Karabakh, a bill was introduced in the Azerbaijani Parliament allegedly on the allocation of \$ 1.3 billion for the restoration of cities and villages, the creation of modern infrastructure (Azerbaijan intends to allocate more than \$1 billion for the restoration of Karabakh, 2020) in these territories of Nagorno-Karabakh. President Aliyev announced that from now on, any visits to Nagorno-Karabakh, including representatives of international organizations, except representatives of the Red Cross, should be carried out only with the permission of Azerbaijan (Visits of Armenian officials to Nagorno-Karabakh should be carried out only with the permission of Azerbaijan-Aliyev, 2021).

Moreover, despite the condemnation of the international community and, in particular, the resolution adopted by the Belgian House of Representatives on the consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (The House of Representatives of Belgium has adopted a resolution on the

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, 2020), condemning the resumption of hostilities by Azerbaijan on September 27, 2020, and the destructive role of Turkey in the war against Artsakh, despite its demands to stop military intervention in this conflict and refrain from “a destabilizing role in the region”, as well as the call to identify and condemn those responsible for war crimes, observing the ceasefire and negotiating a peace agreement that respects the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh and the right of its people to self-determination, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed a decree on the appointment of “special representatives of the president” in Nagorno-Karabakh, according to which the relevant missions, headed by special representatives of the President of Azerbaijan, will report directly to the head of the country. Despite the fact that, according to the decree, the purpose of this step is to accelerate the construction, restoration and reconstruction of the infrastructure of part of the territory, It is evident that the appointment of special representatives also serves as an instrument of psychological pressure on the population of the Republic of Artsakh (Aliyev signed a decree on his special representatives in Karabakh, 2021).

Attempts of moral and psychological pressure and violation of the human rights of Armenian soldiers in the most brutal way continue to this day. This is evidenced by the opening of the military trophy park by the President of Azerbaijan on April 12, 2021, where, in addition to military equipment, there are helmets of soldiers, as well as cartoon-like dolls depicting Armenian soldiers and officers (Helmets, clothes and dolls in the form of Armenian soldiers have become exhibits in the Azerbaijani park). However, the Karabakh conflict between Turkey and Azerbaijan serves as a tool for rallying Muslim states around a single idea. Apparently, this fact is the reason why after Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, at a meeting with the Minister of Culture, declared the city of Shushi in Nagorno-Karabakh not only the cultural capital of Azerbaijan but

also of the region (Aliyev declared the city of Shushi in Karabakh the cultural capital of Azerbaijan, 2021), the Secretary General of the International Organization of Turkic Culture “Turkic” Kaseinov, stated that: “By uniting, we, all the Turkic peoples, will give a new life to these lands, ensure the revival of these lands in spiritual and cultural terms on an economic and financial basis. We all have to do this together (Erdogan is concerned about the culture in Karabakh, 2021). “Undoubtedly, the organization established in 1993 by the Ministers of Culture of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey, whose official goal is to strengthen relations between the Turkic peoples, is now a tool for implementing Erdogan’s plans to expand Turkey’s influence around the world.

If we take into account the proposal of the Secretary General of the Turkic Council (members of the Turkic Council: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan, and Hungary participates as an observer in the organization, year of creation: 2009), Baghdad Amreev (The city of Shusha may become the cultural capital of the Turkic world in 2022), on declaring Shushi as the capital of the Turkic world in 2022, which, in his opinion, as a result of cultural events, will emphasize the importance of the city for the entire Turkic and Islamic world, as well as the statement of the leader of the opposition Party of the nationalist movement of Turkey, Devlet Bahçeli, about the permission of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (“Grey Wolves” will open school in Shushi, Erdogan and Aliyev approve, 2021), that he will build a school in Shushi since “the victory in Karabakh is one of the most glorious and epic achievements of the Turkic people in recent years” (Turkey’s opposition party will build a school in liberated Shusha, 2020), it can be concluded that even after the suspension of hostilities, the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem is doing everything possible to transfer the Artsakh-Azerbaijani conflict to a new one – the inter-religious level, showing

that this is an issue of the struggle of all the Turkic states and peoples against the Christian people of Artsakh and the statehood of the Republic of Artsakh, and in the issue of the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, even the far-right nationalist opposition party of Turkey supports the policy of Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Realizing the danger, threats and challenges of the statements mentioned above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh commented on Bahçeli’s statement, noting that: “The intentions of the far-right nationalist Turkish Movement Party and the extremist neo-fascist organization “Grey Wolves” affiliated with it to implement certain projects in the occupied territories of the Republic of Artsakh, in particular, in the city of Shushi, cause the most serious concern. The presence in any form in the occupied territories of Artsakh of foreign forces that preach the ideology of pan-Turkism and neo-Fascism and use terror as the main means of achieving goals poses an extremely great threat not only to the Republic of Artsakh but also to regional and global security. The fact that these forces have received approval for the implementation of their projects in occupied Shushi from the top leadership of Turkey and Azerbaijan indicates the plans of Ankara and Baku to create hotbeds of tension in the region and neighbouring countries, as well as to undermine the efforts of the international community for a peaceful, comprehensive, fair settlement of the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict. The sending of ultra-right neo-fascist forces to the occupied territories of the Republic of Artsakh, as well as the use of international terrorists during the period of armed aggression against Artsakh, are links in the same chain in Turkey’s expansionist policy towards not only Artsakh and the South Caucasus, but also to the regions beyond their borders. This policy of Turkey and Azerbaijan deserves the strictest condemnation. It requires the international community, interested organizations and structures to take appropriate immediate actions to prevent and suppress such destructive initia-

tives” (Comment by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh, 2021).

More dangerous is that the Turkish-Azerbaijani goals do not end with statements. Immediately after the military actions, several dozen Turkish military personnel were sent to Azerbaijan, which, together with the Russian military, are involved in the joint monitoring centre for Nagorno-Karabakh (Turkey announces sending the military to Azerbaijan, 2020). Furthermore, from February 1 to 12, in Kars, on the border with Armenia, the Turkish-Azerbaijani armed forces conducted joint military exercises, the main task of which was to improve field training and work out the management of the coalition group of troops (Turkey teaches Azerbaijan to fight: how the balance of power in Karabakh has changed, 2021), which was followed by the start of 6-week joint Turkish-Azerbaijani exercises under the slogan “One nation - two States”, in which the reconnaissance and sabotage troops of Azerbaijan and Turkey took part this time (Turkey and Azerbaijan will hold joint military exercises again, 2021).

From this point of view, the statement of the CSTO Secretary Stanislav Zas on February 2, 2021, that the CSTO has information about the presence and actions of militants from Syria in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone and called on mercenaries to leave Nagorno-Karabakh is particularly disturbing, since the creation of detachments, militant groups, illegal armed formations directly near the borders of the member states is assessed not only as a risk exclusively for the South Caucasus region, but also for the CSTO member states (CSTO Secretary General urges Syrian mercenaries to leave Karabakh, n.d.).

This, in turn, means that not only the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh and the region but also the CSTO member states are at the crossroads of a new war, and the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem uses the trilateral statement signed on November 9 as a favourable condition for improving and synchronizing joint forces.

In this context, if we analyze the text of the Azerbaijani side’s appeal to the ECHR (European Court of Human Rights) against the Republic of Armenia (Azerbaijan appealed to the ECHR, 2021) and, from this point of view, the further goals of the proposal of the Azerbaijani representative to the International Human Rights Committee, Cochin Akhundzade, to transfer Zangezur to Azerbaijan as compensation (In fact, Zangezur is under threat. The question is already in the ECHR. “People”, 2021), we can state that the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem targets Zangezur. Moreover, let’s take into account the fact that as a result of the second Artsakh war, the sources of the Vorotan-Arpa River, which feeds Lake Sevan, came under the control of Azerbaijan (The Vorotan and Arpa rivers, which feed Lake Sevan, came under the control of Azerbaijan, 2021). We can assume that not only Lake Sevan, but also the life and health of the entire population of the Republic of Armenia are in immediate danger.

Despite the silence during the war and in the post-war period, this fact is also accepted by the international community (“The behavior of Western countries during the war showed that there is no effective agenda, no one needs it,” the European analyst said, 2021). It is no coincidence that US Senator Robert Menendez said that Erdogan helped Azerbaijan during the aggression in Nagorno-Karabakh, which took many lives and was followed by war crimes on the part of Azerbaijan (Azerbaijan has committed war crimes in Artsakh... Robert Menendez, 2021), and then called on the US authorities to take steps to return Armenian prisoners of war from Azerbaijan (Senator Bob Menendez calls for U.S. leadership to make active efforts for return of Armenian POWs, 2021). Moreover, Polish politician Tomasz Lech Buczek, who collected more than 100,000 signatures to judge Aliyev in The Hague, announced that Azerbaijan offered him \$50,000 not to publish a book about Azerbaijan’s war crimes (Two unarmed Karabakh Armenians were beheaded, 2020) against Armenians in

Artsakh (Polish politician from Azerbaijan was offered 50 thousand US dollars for concealing Aliev's war crimes, 2021), which in turn suggests that the Azerbaijani side, even after the war, uses all methods of information blockade to hide crimes against the people of the Republic of Artsakh.

Conclusion

It follows from the above that the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem is not satisfied with the result of the war and can resume military operations at any appropriate moment, endangering the life and health of the population of the Republic of Artsakh again, provoking an aggravation of the situation in the South Caucasus, and the signing of the trilateral statement on November 9 creates favourable conditions for a kind of pause and synchronization of the Turkish-Azerbaijani troops for further joint actions.

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