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## Massive fires in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan committed by Armenia

Written question No 533 to the Committee of Ministers  
presented by Ms Ganira PASHAYEVA

After the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven other regions of Azerbaijan and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis therein, followed by seizure and misappropriation of Azerbaijani cultural heritage as well, Armenian forces have recently launched another unprecedented horrible crime against humanity. It should be recalled that at the beginning of June 2006, the Armenian occupational forces and Nagorno-Karabakh separatist forces controlled by them had initiated the massive burning in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. There is nothing left of thousands of hectares of vegetation on this land. Houses, buildings, historical and cultural monuments, religious shrines and places of worship belonging to Azerbaijanis have been completely destroyed. In the area of 132.2 sq. kms a number of towns, villages, agricultural lands, cultural and historical monuments, existing flora and fauna and dwellings have been destroyed or burnt by the fire. According to the calculations, as a result of only recent fires, the amount of environmental damage is estimated at millions of US dollars.

Despite the challenges, recommendations and efforts made by international organisations (OSCE, PACE, etc.) directed to prevent fires being committed at that time, Armenia has continued to commit fires in the territories occupied by it and in the frontline.

The burning of the forest is an ecological catastrophe not only for the South Caucasus but also for the whole of the south-eastern part of Europe. Taking into account the fires that have taken place this summer (summer 2007) in the occupied territories, it has particularly increased the danger of ecological disaster. This action will definitely lead to the creation of ecological dead zones in Europe. One fact that should be recalled is that to this day nearly 40.000 hectares in the Azerbaijani area have been destroyed due to the fires committed by Armenia.

The massive fires are deliberately made on the territories occupied by Armenian armed forces near the frontline so that in windy weather they would rapidly spread to the unoccupied Azerbaijani territories. Spreading rapidly to the Azerbaijani villages the fires completely ruin the agriculture, as it is the season of summer.

Considering all of this, Ms Pashayeva asks the Committee of Ministers:

What concrete and resolute steps can the Committee of Ministers take within its competence to force Armenia to stop inflicting damage on the flora and fauna as well as the Azerbaijani cultural heritage in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan?

*Signed:*

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