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Urgency of preventing the complete destruction of the Armenian Mediaeval Cemetery of the Old Town of Julfa in the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan of Azerbaijan

Written question No 480 to the Committee of Ministers
presented by Mr. Shavarsh Kocharyan (ALDE, Armenia)

Despite the Synopsis of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education of PACE (Synopsis No. 2003/51m, 4 April 2003 and AS/Cult/AA (2005)) addressing the problem, as well as Written Question N 440 to the Committee of Ministers on the matter, the authorities of Azerbaijan, using the army, have recently been completely destroying the cross-stones (khachkars) and graves in the Mediaeval Cemetery of the Old Town of Julfa.

Such barbaric actions are not only directed against one of the main objectives of the Council of Europe which is to preserve the World Heritage, but also are hindering the peaceful regulation of the Natorno Karabakh problem and torpedoing the positive achievement in the negotiation process.

Mr. Shavarsh Kocharyan
To ask the Committee of Ministers:

- Finally, is the Committee of Ministers intending to send an inspection mission to the Old Town of Julfa, which should pursue the objectives of reporting the facts of destruction and salvaging the historical and cultural values from demolition, which are not only values of the Armenians, but also of the World Heritage?
- For how long will the structures of the Council of Europe tolerate the membership of a state which destroys cultural monuments, advocates hatred between two peoples, makes militaristic statements at the highest level of the state government, and does not respect the main obligations and commitments with regard to establishing democracy in Azerbaijan, the proof of which were the recent parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan.

Signed ¹:

KOCHARYAN, Shavarsh, Armenia, ALDE

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group