Parliamentary **Assembly**
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Massive fires in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan committed by Armenia and Mountainous Karabakh separatists during the last 20 days

Motion for a recommendation
presented by Mr Seyidov and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

After the occupation of the Mountainous Karabakh and seven other regions of Azerbaijan and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis therein followed by seizure and misappropriation of Azerbaijani cultural heritage as well as Armenian forces have recently launched another unprecedented horrible crime against humanity. At the beginning of June 2006, the Armenian occupational forces and the Mountainous Karabakh separatist forces controlled by them initiated the massive burning in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The fires were extensively spread particularly in the occupied villages of Aghdam, Fizuli, Jabrayil, Tartar and Khojavand regions. The massive fires covered thousands of hectares of territories as well as causing severe damage to the environment and nature, stretching over the lands being under the control of Azerbaijan.

As a result of the fires of 20 days' duration, the occupied villages of Yusifjanly, Novruzlu, Marzili, Baghbanly, Shabybaly, Sarijaly, Seyidly, Gyulchuluk, Javahirli, Shahbulag, Magsudlu and Bash Garvand of the Aghdam region, have been burnt to the ground. Nothing is left out 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. The fire dispersed over the villages of Shykhbabaly, Marzili, Khidirly, Afatli, Garadaghly, Mahrizly, Kangarli, Chalik, Zangishahly, Chamanli, Ahmadaghaly, Chyragly, Goytapa, Goytapa and the land named Ergi, and burnt all the grasslands and caused considerable damage to greenery.

On the 132.2 sq. kms area a number of towns, villages, agricultural lands, cultural and historical monuments, existing flora and fauna, living dwellings have been destroyed or burnt by the fire. According to the calculations, as a result of only recent fires, the environmental damage amount is estimated at millions of US dollars.

The forest burnings are an ecological catastrophe not only for the South Caucasus, but for the whole of South-Eastern part of Europe as well. Taking into account that the fires in the occupied territories have been made in summer, so it has particularly increased the danger of ecological disaster. This action will definitely lead to the creation of ecological dead zones in Europe.

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

In consequence of recent fires, a number of ancient historical monuments of Azerbaijan have been destroyed. Ancient cultural monument on the territory of Khojavand region, “the Avshars” cemetery, “Nargiz tapa” which is rich in monuments referring to the second millennium at the beginning of our era and is considered as the reserve area, have been completely ruined and have become worthless.

Having expressed its deep concern over the ecological tragedy taking place in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan the Assembly encourages the Committee of Ministers:

- to call immediately on the Council of Europe member states to take the necessary steps to influence Armenia to extinguish fires in the occupied Azerbaijani lands;

- to stop inflicting damage on the flora and fauna as well as Azerbaijani cultural heritage on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan;

- to call on Armenian authorities to give necessary access to the Azerbaijani Ministry of Emergency to immediately overcome the ecological disaster in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Signed [1]:

SEYIDOV, Samad, Azerbaijan, EDG
ABBASOV Aydin Azerbaijan SOC
AÇIKGÖZ Ruhi, Turkey, EDG
BOSAK, Krzysztof, Poland, NRI
ÇAVUŞOĞLU, Mevlüt, Turkey, EDG
HAJIYEVA, Gultakin, Azerbaijan, EPP/CD
HERKEL, Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD
HUSEYNOV, Rafael, Azerbaijan, ALDE
JURGENS, Erik, Netherlands, SOC
MIRZAZADA, Aydin, Azerbaijan, EDG
PASHAYEVA, Ganira, Azerbaijan, EDG

[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