ENSURING THIS IS THE LAST AZERI ATTACK

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Category: Opinions

Harut Sassounian, Publisher, The California Courier, 5 April 2015

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Even a casual observer of this long-running conflict could have guessed that Azerbaijan would launch yet another attack during last weekend's Nuclear Security Summit hosted by Pres. Obama and attended by 50 heads of state, including Presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey. Some observers were surprised by the large scale of the Azeri attack which involved tanks, helicopters, missiles, and drones. In fact, the scope of the assault should not have come as a surprise, given Azerbaijan's technological escalation of aggression in recent years. Aliyev's sinister practice of timing military attacks with peace talks or international conferences reflects his intensive efforts to keep the Artsakh conflict as a burning issue at all cost.

Certainly, Pres. Aliyev is increasingly frustrated by his inability to intimidate Armenians into giving up the territory of Artsakh despite Azerbaijan's purchase of multi-billion dollars of modern weaponry. Aliyev is also distressed by his failure to use his country's vast oil and gas resources as an inducement to pressure world leaders into supporting Azerbaijan in the Artsakh conflict. As a result, the Baku dictator has wasted huge amounts of his country's wealth to bribe foreign officials and purchase expensive but ineffective weapons.

Furthermore, as Azerbaijan's father and son Presidential Dynasty, the Aliyevs have persistently threatened to attack and "liberate the occupied territories of Karabagh" for over 20 years. Since they have cried wolf for far too long, very few Azeris take their president's bravado talk too seriously.

Consequently, Aliyev has been desperate to take any and all measures, no matter how reckless, to save face at home and abroad!

It is important to understand the timing and motive of Aliyev's aggressive behavior so that other countries are not blamed for instigating these attacks which would only serve to shift attention from the only guilty party -- Azerbaijan! However, there are other countries that have a share of the blame: First among these is Erdogan's Turkey for its direct participation and support of Azerbaijan's military misadventures. The Minsk Group of mediators (France, Russia, and United States) are also guilty for remaining silent during previous Azeri aggressions and blaming both sides each time Azerbaijan attacked Armenia or Artsakh. The international community's shameful silence and doubletalk routinely equated the victimizer with the victim, thereby emboldening the warmongering Aliyev!

One particularly horrifying episode during this latest attack validated the concern of all those who have been warning for years about the risk of genocide threatening Artsakh's Armenians. Over the weekend, when Azeri soldiers temporarily took over the Talish village, just inside Artsakh's border, they not only executed an elderly Armenian couple, but barbarically cut off their ears as souvenirs! Such savagery, at a minimum, is a war crime under international law! Just imagine what these brutal Azeri soldiers would have done if they had overrun the entire population of Artsakh. It would have been a bloodbath of immense proportion -- a second Armenian Genocide!

Three firm conclusions should be drawn from the latest massive Azeri aggression:

1) Artsakh Armenians can never go back to live under the despotic rule of Azerbaijan, no matter how many times Aliyev threatens or attacks.

2) Armenians should not just repel the Azeri forces, but inflict such massive destruction that Aliyev would never again think of another attack. Already, thousands of volunteers from all over Armenia have rushed to Artsakh's defense. Azerbaijan is aware that its multi-billion dollar oil fields and pipelines are in easy reach of Armenia's long-range missiles!

3) It is time to declare Artsakh an inseparable part of the Republic of Armenia. On April 4, Pres. Sargsyan told foreign ambassadors in Yerevan that if the hostilities continued and escalated, Armenia would "recognize Karabagh's independence."

The brave people of Artsakh desperately need everyone's moral, political and material support! The Armenia Artsakh Fund of Glendale, California, gratefully welcomes your contributions to be able to ship urgently-needed millions of dollars of medicines and medical supplies the Fund has already collected. Please send your tax-deductible donations to: Armenia Artsakh Fund, 1101 N. Pacific Ave.,

#204, Glendale, CA 91202. Email: sassoun@pacbell.net; phone: 818-241-8900.