

THE POWER OF WORDS

Posted on May 25, 2021 by Keghart



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By Arus Karapetyan, Toronto 24 May 2021

Armenophobia has been vigorously cultivated in Azerbaijan in the past 30 years. It was not taken seriously, nor was much attention paid to it in Armenia or anywhere else. While its roots go back over a century, it is sufficient to remember its effects in the pogroms of the Armenians in Azerbaijan of the late Eighties and early Nineties. The state-sponsored Armenophobia, following Azerbaijan's loss of the Nagorno-Karabakh War in 1994, became a key instrument to propagate hate within Azerbaijani society. Filling a society with hate provides the perfect milieu to implement war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity that was carried out during the 2020 Azerbaijani invasion of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). In May 2021 the Human Rights Defender of Armenia "completed the analysis of 297 videos and photos of the Azerbaijani atrocities against the Armenian servicemen and civilians" revealing torture, humiliation, beheadings, murder, use of chemical weapons, vandalism of Armenian cultural heritage, the dissemination of hatred on social media and the participation of mercenaries in the war. But it does not end there: an Azerbaijani society afflicted with Armenophobia is cheering the recent incursion of 500 Azerbaijani forces into Armenian territory. This, too, is a testament to the genocidal intentions of Azerbaijan towards Armenians.

Below are examples of Armenophobia from the [Baroness Cox Report – Continuing Impunity](#), (See downloaded text) the report by the office of Ombudsman of the Republic of Artsakh: [Armenophobia in Azerbaijan](#) (which also details the violation of international laws in the scope of racism/xenophobia -see downloaded text), and social media:

1. Speeches by Aliyev using words such as "Dogs... savages... barbarians...vandals."

- "Armenia keeps cows and pigs in our mosques... It is fascists, vandals and savages who have done this."
- "I said that we would chase them, that we would chase them like dogs, and we chased them, we chased them like dogs."
- "The Armenian [barbarians and vandals](#) have razed the city of Agdam to the ground."

<https://twitter.com/NeilPHauer/status/1391736283119165448?s=20>

2. Azerbaijani officials following the lead of their president:

- Member of Parliament Azer Badamov: "We don't need to sit at the negotiating table with terrorists and vandals. We need to continue our operations to annihilate them. They should fall to their knees before our army. We shouldn't let them come to their senses. The more humanity we show them, the more atrocities the opponent will commit. We shouldn't allow them to come to their senses and regain their breath."
- Hafiz Hajiyev, Modern Musavat party leader: "We will assign our sons in Armenia to blow up the nuclear power plant (ANPP) there. There will be no Armenian left there then. Our neighbors can also blame us but we have to annihilate all the Armenians... if the Armenians do not want to live subordinating to the Azerbaijanis, they will be expelled from Karabakh... There should be no

Armenian left in Azerbaijan."

- Mete Turksoy, Azerbaijani political activist: "Not a single civilian should be left alive in Nagorno-Karabakh."

<https://twitter.com/TheArmenite/status/1320793046422679555?s=20>

3. *War Exhibition Trophy Park.* (See downloaded text) Opened in 2021, its exhibits include "grotesque" and "ugly" wax mannequins representing dying/suffering Armenian servicemen. The park exhibits the helmets of thousands of Armenian soldiers who lost their lives as well as war equipment seized from the battle ground.

<https://twitter.com/cavidaga/status/1382393145837637640?s=20>

<https://twitter.com/NeilPHauer/status/1382836913036533761?s=20>

4. Statements by Public Figures:

- Media manager of the Azerbaijani football club Qarabag, Nurlan Ibrahimov: "We must kill Armenians. No matter whether a woman, a child, an old man. We must kill everyone we can and whoever happens. We should not feel sorry; we should not feel pity. If we do not kill (them), our children will be killed."

- Asif Gurbanov, Chairman of World Azerbaijanis Congress: "The computers have virus and antivirus software. The companies creating viruses also create anti-viruses. The creators of the virus called Armenia need to create its antivirus as well. To be able to achieve peace in the whole world, we need to get rid of the virus called Armenia."

- Farid Teymurkhanli, journalist: "The inherent meaning of the word Armenian is clear to everyone but the Armenians of course. It is meanness, it is cowardice, it is treachery. Apparently, God was in a bad mood when creating them, as he has rewarded them with the most abominable qualities."

- Habil Aliyev, founder and editor-in-chief of *Gundelik Baku* newspaper: "I consider the Armenians my eternal enemies. Wherever I see Armenians, I will cut their tongues off and will call them perverts. Even if I am torn into pieces, I will always hate them. If I go to war again, I will not pity even the Armenian children."

5. In the Azeri media. As examined through the Ombudsman of the Republic of Artsakh, the spread of hatred is rampant. The world press index of Azerbaijan ranks at 167 out of 180, revealing the state sponsorship of xenophobia and racism against Armenians.

- ***Call to make abusive speeches on air*** - Tavakkul Dadashev, head of the Department of Expertise, Programming and Analytics of the National Television and Radio Council of Azerbaijan: "I do not deny that offensive language is used in air and in the articles covering Armenia. It is correct and well-deserved. Every TV-channel needs to shed insults addressing Armenia as much as possible. No problem at all."

6. Rewards for violence against Armenians:

- Lieutenant Ramil Safarov who murdered Armenian Lieutenant Gurgun Margaryan, in his sleep,

during a NATO-sponsored training seminar for which he was rewarded with a promotion and the title of national hero.

7. Teaching children to hate: School curriculums are programmed to be anti-Armenian creating hatred and negative emotions early on towards an 'inferior' enemy:

- Leyla Yunus, a renowned Azerbaijani human rights defender, Director of the Institute of Peace and Democracy: "Since they are 10 years old, the children are made to believe that the Azerbaijanis' enemies are the Christians and the Armenians are called "faithless people in black garments." A PhD-holder in History, I could never conceive that the school textbooks of history could hold that those guilty of the division of Azerbaijan's Muslims into Shias and Sunnis were the Christians and of course Armenians..."

<https://twitter.com/wa11110r/status/1359332363637903363?s=20>

8. Propaganda:

- A series of postage stamps with images of workers fumigating Armenians, like a virus, from the map of "Azerbaijan," within the structure of Azerbaijan's Ministry of Transportation.

https://twitter.com/Jake_Hanrahan/status/1348438123399835656?s=20

In Genocide studies emphasis is made on red flags presented before genocide takes place- - it always starts with words. Yet those states and international organizations that have set human rights laws and prevention standards appear to be paralyzed, despite the presence of facts in violation of international laws, while the lives of Armenians are under constant threat.

The warning signs are clear and supported by international human rights activists and bodies. During the 44 day Artsakh invasion Genocide Watch "classified Azerbaijan at Stage 9 (extermination) and Stage 10 (denial) of the ten stages of the genocidal process." In addition, a statement was issued by International Genocide scholars that read "... already a case can be made that there is conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, and attempt to commit genocide, all of which are acts that, according to article 3 of 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, all states of the world are obliged to prevent and punish."

We are familiar with the expression "Never Again" as a lesson from the first genocide of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923. Yet time has proven that such promises carry no weight. Instead, the words used in Armenophobia are on their path to achieving their purpose.

<https://twitter.com/wa11110r/status/1359784655185010690>

<https://twitter.com/517design/status/1317077393836773376>

We thank HAYREN for collecting some of the references included in this article.

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