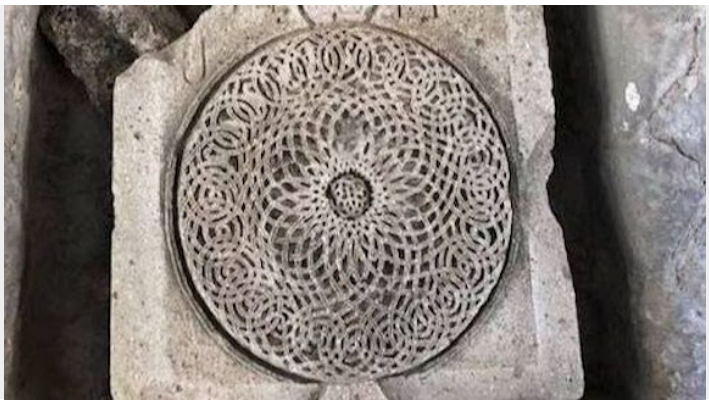
ARTSAKH CULTURAL HERITAGE IN DANGER

Posted on March 1, 2021 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

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"During the Soviet period and ensuing Azerbaijani military aggression against the Republic of Artsakh from 1991 to 1994, no fewer than 167 Armenian churches, 8 Armenian monastic complexes and 123 historical Armenian cemeteries were ruined, obliterated and completely destroyed by Azerbaijani authorities. Appallingly, Azerbaijan also destroyed, in this same time period, some 2,500 Armenian khachkars and more than 10,000 Armenian tombstones, and it turned these ornate Armenian cultural monuments and memorials into building material." David Babayan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Artsakh

On Feb. 9, 2021, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations, Mher Margaryan, presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations a letter and an ad hoc report by David Babayan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Artsakh.

Minister Babayan raised deep concerns over indications about the destruction and elimination faced by the artifacts of the Armenian cultural heritage left in the hands of Azerbaijan following the September 2020 Artsakh War.

Minister Babayan reminded the UN Secretary General of the complete erasure of the "Armenian cemetery of Old Jugha (Julfa) in Nakhichevan with almost 6,000 medieval khachkars." He further points out Azerbaijan's refusal to allow United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to visit the newly occupied territories of Artsakh to gather information and take inventory of affected properties.

He details that the Holy Saviour Ghazanchetsots Cathedral was struck twice with an aerial vehicle on Oct. 8, 2020, which was assessed to be a war crime by Human Rights Watch (HRW).

The ad hoc report submitted to the UN consists of over 200 pages. It includes information on targeted physical attacks on and the appropriation of Armenian cultural heritage, the rules of international law in respect to the protection of cultural property, lists of movable and unmovable cultural artifacts along with images. The contents of the report also include historic information and details of targeted attacks on The Holy Saviour Ghazanchetsots Cathedral (built in 1888), Saint John the Baptist Church of Shushi (1818), Tigranakert fortress of Artsakh (1st c. BC – 13th c. AD), and other cultural monuments.

For details and components of the letter and documents please visit:

https://www.undocs.org/en/A/75/739.

There are no comments yet.