



PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA
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Agenda Item 83 “The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels”

**Statement by Mr. Tigran Galstyan,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN**

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Mr. Chair,

The rule of law is instrumental in building just societies at national level and maintaining peace at the international level. Armenia is committed to upholding and promoting justice and the rule of law at the national and international levels. To this end, we have been working to design and implement multiple reform processes that ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law, as exemplified in the latest report of the Secretary-General on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities.

The rule of law is essential in ensuring accountability, fighting impunity and preventing future violations. Armenia recognizes the crucial role of justice and accountability and we remain steadfast in our dedication to their pursuit.

In 2020, amidst an unprecedented healthcare crisis caused by a global pandemic, Azerbaijan unleashed a full-scale war against Nagorno-Karabakh, in an effort to resolve an international dispute by force. Azerbaijan’s systematic attacks have since involved multiple instances of violent and hostile conduct, in violation of the international law and the existing ceasefire arrangements.

Guided by the strong commitment to upholding the fundamental principles of the rule of law, on 16 September 2021, Armenia filed an Application with the International Court of Justice instituting proceedings against Azerbaijan under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which contained also a request for the indication of provisional measures. On 7 December 2021, the Court indicated first provisional measures, according to which Azerbaijan shall, in accordance with its obligations under the CERD, “*Protect from violence and bodily harm all persons captured in relation to the 2020 Conflict who remain in detention, and ensure their security and equality before the law*”; “*Take all necessary measures to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration affecting Armenian cultural heritage, including but not limited to churches and other places of worship, monuments, landmarks,*

cemeteries and artefacts”; and *“Take all necessary measures to prevent the incitement and promotion of racial hatred and discrimination, including by its officials and public institutions, targeted at persons of Armenian national or ethnic origin”*.

On 22 February 2023, the ICJ indicated another provisional measure, ordering Azerbaijan to *“take all measures at its disposal to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions.”* The measure was issued in response to Armenia’s request, following the blockade imposed by Azerbaijan on the Lachin Corridor – the only humanitarian lifeline connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia and the outer world. At the same time, the ICJ rejected Azerbaijan’s counter request for provisional measures involving land-mining allegations against Armenia. The provisional measure requesting to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor was subsequently reaffirmed by the ICJ in another order issued on 6 July 2023, recalling also that its orders on provisional measures have binding effect and thus create international legal obligations for any party to whom they are addressed. The Court also reaffirmed that Parties shall refrain from any action which might aggravate or extend the dispute before the Court or make it more difficult to resolve.

In a manifest violation of its obligations under the orders of the International Court of Justice, including the obligation not to aggravate the dispute, Azerbaijan carried out nothing short of an ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh, which involved a 10-months long blockade imposed on the population of 120,000 people with the subsequent use of large-scale military force that brought about forced displacement of the entire ethnic Armenian population from their ancestral homeland.

Armenia's most recent appeal to the International Court of Justice dated 29 September 2023, requesting the Court to reaffirm Azerbaijan’s obligations under the previously rendered orders, indicating new provisional measures to refrain from taking any measures which might entail breaches of its obligations under the CERD, refrain from placing any impediment on the access of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, as well as the activities of ICRC.

Mr. Chair,

Collective efforts should be made by Member States to enforce full implementation of decisions of international judicial bodies. We firmly believe in the primacy of international law over use of force and are committed to effectively address and combat impunity, including through the mechanisms of the international criminal jurisdiction. To this end, we have recently ratified the Statute of the International Criminal Court - an important step towards promoting justice and accountability and upholding the rule of law at the international level.

We reaffirm Armenia’s commitment to the principles of the rule of law, justice, and accountability as cornerstones for the promotion of peace, development and human rights.

I thank you.