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No:595/22, Press Release on inter-state application against Armenia in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

The Government of Azerbaijan has filed an application against Armenia in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to seek redress for gross violations of Azerbaijanis' human rights in the liberated territories.

Azerbaijan has submitted evidence of numerous acts of deliberate and willful destruction of property, including hundreds of civilian homes and other residential properties, during Armenia's withdrawal from the town of Lachin and two neighboring villages between May and August 2022.

Despite having effective control of these areas, the Government of Armenia did nothing to prevent this widespread destruction. The Government of Azerbaijan has also seen evidence that Armenian officials actively participated in what has been described as a "scorched earth" policy.

The Government of Armenia has committed systematic human rights violations in the Lachin road. Recently discovered evidence shows that Armenia's military is continuing to plant landmines and booby-trap civilian homes in the areas from which Armenia was required to withdraw under the November 2020 Trilateral Statement. This includes landmines manufactured by Armenia in 2021 that were transported into Azerbaijan through the Lachin road, in direct violation of the Trilateral Statement.

Armenia's "scorched earth" destruction of houses, combined with its deliberate and specific targeting of civilian properties with explosive devices, continues to prevent displaced families and communities from returning to their former homes and land over thirty years since they were forced to flee as a result of Armenia's illegal occupation.

The Government of Armenia's actions amount violations of Azerbaijanis' right to private and family life, freedom of movement, and the peaceful enjoyment of possessions and property. Its reckless policy of inaction and facilitation also violates the prohibition of discrimination, and represents a breach of the ECHR's interim measures issued in 2020 preventing Armenia from targeting civilian areas following Azerbaijan's application for interim measures after the start of the conflict.

Azerbaijan is seeking compensation, reparation, restitutio in integrum, costs, expenses and further or other relief for the damage suffered following its gross human rights violations.

Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to hold the Government of Armenia to account for its ongoing and deliberate breaches of international human rights law.

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