

**Press Release by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

02 March 2016

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan released today a report entitled "Illegal economic and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan". The information contained in the report, gathered mostly from the Armenian open sources, provides sufficient and convincing evidence testifying to the continued activities in the occupied territories, in total disregard of international law, including the implantation of settlers, depredatory exploitation and pillage of and illicit trade in assets, natural resources and other forms of wealth across the occupied territories. The evidence shows that there is an illegal traffic in natural resources across the occupied section of the international border between Azerbaijan and Armenia and that Armenia is a transport base for movement of products unlawfully produced in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as well as minerals and other wealth from those territories to international markets.

Against the background of the ongoing efforts towards the earliest political settlement of the conflict, the policy and practice of Armenia clearly testify to its intention to consolidate the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and to secure the annexation of these territories that it has captured by military force and carried out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale. The lack of adequate international reaction to these actions of the Armenian side only contributes to its growing sense of impunity and permissiveness.

In that regard, the Republic of Azerbaijan calls upon the international community to oblige Armenia to comply scrupulously with its international obligations, cease and reverse immediately the transfer of settlers of both Armenian and foreign nationality into the occupied territories, cease immediately and refrain in the future from any economic and commercial activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, stop the destruction and looting of the cultural heritage and sacred sites in those territories, including the archeological, cultural and religious monuments.

The Republic of Azerbaijan also calls upon all members of the international community to take effective measures, including through their national legislation, that would prevent any activities on their respective territories by any natural and legal persons against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, including the participation in or facilitation any unlawful activity in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Armenia's policy of attempted annexation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan has no chance of succeeding. The only way to achieve a durable and lasting conflict settlement is to ensure the unconditional and complete withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, as the United Nations Security Council demands in its resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993).

The Republic of Azerbaijan will not tolerate the violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, including in particular through engaging in and/or facilitating by whatever ways and means illegal activities in the occupied territories. The responsibility for the consequences of any action, including pursuit of individuals and corporations through the national legal system of Azerbaijan and domestic courts of involved or third party States, which the Republic of Azerbaijan may be obliged to undertake in connection with the unlawful activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in order to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, as well as the rights and legitimate interests of its citizens, will lie entirely with the Republic of Armenia and the engaged natural and legal persons, entities and bodies.
