

Güney Kafkasya’da Ayrılcılık ve Mülteciler Sorunu*

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Öz

Modern dünyada Uluslararası Soykırım ve İnsanlığa Karşı Suçlar sorununun çözümü insanlığın karşı karşıya olduğu çok önemli bir konudur. İstanbul Üniversitesi Uluslararası Soykırım ve İnsanlığa Karşı Suçlar Enstitüsü İnsanlık, Barış ve Adalet Dergisi’nin faaliyeti bu açıdan takdire şayandır.

Dünyanın birçok yerinde meydana gelen suçlar ve bunların çözümüne yönelik adaletsiz yaklaşımlar, söz konusu sorunların çözümüne yönelik olsa da çoğu durumda adil bir çözüm bulunamamıştır. Pek çok ülke ve devlet bundan büyük zarar gördü. Bu çatışmalardan biri de Ermenistan’ın uzun yıllardır Azerbaycan’a yönelik asılsız toprak iddialarıyla yürüttüğü etnik temizlik, tehcir ve soykırım politikasının başlattığı uzun süreli çatışmalar ve savaşlardır.

Bu, Ermenistan’ın uzun süredir Güney Kafkasya halklarına yönelik devlet ayrılcılığıdır. Bu bölücülük ve tehcirler, kısıktılan savaşlar sırasında binlerce insan mülteci haline geldi ve ülke içinde yerinden edildi. Mülteci sorununun çözümü, kural olarak, devletler ve halklar açısından büyük gerilimler yaratmıştır. Rus hükümeti, Azerbaycan Türklerinin tarihi topraklarında, Bakü, Erivan, Zengezur, Karabağ gibi ayrı yerleşim birimlerinde Ermenilerin sayısını artırmaya ve hâkim konumlarını sağlamaya çalışıyordu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Güney Kafkasya, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan, ayrılcılık, mülteci sorunu.

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The Problem Of Separatism And Refugees In The South

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Abstract

In the modern world, solving the problem of International Genocide and Crimes against Humanity is a very important issue facing humanity. The activity of Humanity, Peace and Justice Journal (HUPEJ) of International Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity Institute of Istanbul University is commendable in this regard.

Crimes occurring in many parts of the world and unjust approaches aimed at solving them are aimed at solving the mentioned problems, but in many cases they have not found a fair solution. A number of nations and states have suffered great damage from this. One of such conflicts is the long-lasting conflicts and wars started by the policy of ethnic cleansing, deportation and genocide carried out by Armenia for many years with groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan.

This is the state separatism of Armenia directed against the peoples of the South Caucasus for a long time. Thousands of people have become refugees and internally displaced persons during these separatism and deportations, instigated wars. As a rule, solving the refugee problem has created great tensions for states and peoples. The Russian government was trying to increase the number of Armenians in the historical lands of the Azerbaijani Turks, in separate settlements, including Baku, Yerevan, Zangezur, Karabakh, and ensure their dominant position.

Keywords: South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, separatism, refugee problem.

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Introduction

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the groundless territorial claims put forward by the Armenians after they were settled in the lands of Iravan and Nakhchivan of Azerbaijan began. The “Armenian issue”, which is the “political card” of some European countries and Russia, was brought up. This is the main reason why the people of Azerbaijan faced the territorial claims, genocide and ethnic cleansing policy of the Armenian chauvinist-nationalist elements from time to time for more than two hundred years.

The people of Azerbaijan have been subjected to the occupation policy of Armenian nationalists and their patrons. The people of Azerbaijan were expelled from their historical lands many times, turned into refugees and internally displaced persons, and all this led to the creation of a mass of refugees and displaced persons due to the massacres committed by Armenians. This has left a mark in history, like the time when the fate of those who were forced to live as refugees during the First World War, which took place at the beginning of the 20th century, was decided, and we think that it is necessary to study this history.

1. The Problem of Separatism and Refugees in the South Caucasus

The hostile attitude of the “Ararat” state created by the Armenians who were moved to the Caucasus in the 19th century and settled at the beginning of the 20th century towards the Azerbaijan People’s Republic did not allow this state to strengthen. Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, the national liberation movements that expanded in the South Caucasus and other areas became a real opportunity for ideologically and militarily organized Armenians. They came up with the fictitious “Great Armenia” ideology. In this regard, they started ethnic cleansing operations in the territory of Azerbaijan. Armenia’s policy of state separatism in the South Caucasus led to the re-occupation of the weak South Caucasus states, including the APC, by Bolshevik Russia, which had just survived the occupation of Tsarist Russia. During the 70 years they were part of the USSR, Armenia did not give up its groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan. The propaganda machine of Armenian historians and ideologists made many attempts to prove that Armenians are an “aboriginal people” in the South Caucasus and to convince the world community of this. However, even if they could not achieve this, they were able to attract Armenian

nationalists to wars of occupation, following a false ideology. With this ideology, they dealt a heavy blow to the peoples of the Caucasus region, especially the Azerbaijanis.

The Russian government was trying to increase the number of Armenians in the historical lands of the Azerbaijani Turks, in separate settlements, including Baku, Yerevan, Zangezur, Karabakh, and ensure their dominant position. Also, this policy was aimed at preventing independence tendencies of Azerbaijanis who were in colonial slavery and creating an Armenian-Christian barrier in their place by pushing out the local population. Therefore, the military and political activities of Armenians were helped, and their aggressive actions against Azerbaijani Turks were supported. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Armenians began to expel the local population from the historical lands of Azerbaijan for the first time. For this purpose, Armenian terrorist organizations operating in Azerbaijan committed mass massacres in Baku, Yerevan, Zangezur, Karabakh and other places in 1905.¹ The massacres that began in Baku in February 1905 continued until 1906. As a result of these massacres, more than 50 thousand Azerbaijanis were killed and hundreds of settlements were destroyed. More than 200 villages were burned and destroyed in only Karabakh and Zangezur. More than half of these villages were later destroyed, Azerbaijanis were able to return to a small part, and Armenians settled in the rest.²

In 1905-1906, Armenians looted and burned 200 Azerbaijani villages of Iravan and Ganja governorates, and 75 villages of Shusha, Jabrayil, and Zangezur.³

In May 1918, three independent states - Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia - were established in the South Caucasus. However, it was not possible to define the boundaries between these states. In the past, it was difficult to restore the broken borders due to the occupation of Tsarist Russia. At that time, the mixed settlement of Azerbaijanis, Georgians and Armenians in the governorates under the Caucasian viceroyalty made it difficult to define these borders. At that time, the issue of solving the problem of disputed territories

¹ Mir Mohsun Nevvap, *Armenian-Muslim conflict in 1905-1906*. Elm, Baku 1993, p. 45.

² Karim Shukurov, *Population of Azerbaijan: history and sources of study*, Baku Elm 2004, p. 974; "Rovshan Mustafayev, *Crimes against humanity of Armenian terrorist and bandit groups (XIX-XXI centuries)*, Concise chronological encyclopedia, 2003, No. 60, pp. 80-86.

³ Muhammad Said Ordubadi, *Bloody years*, Elm, Baku, 1991, p. 82.

existing in 11 regions between the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia and Azerbaijan and Georgia became urgent. During the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, the issue of some of those territories was resolved peacefully, that is, on the basis of the principle of self-determination of the population. At that time, there was no need for weapons because disputes were settled through negotiations. However, the governments of Armenia and Georgia preferred to resolve the issue by force of arms. That's why the disputes sometimes took a sharp turn. The undisputed territory of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic is 97297.67 sq.km (39075.15 sq.km in Baku governorate, 44371.29 sq.km in Ganja governorate, 3992.54 sq.km in Zagatala governorate, 9858.69 sq.km in Iravan governorate). The disputed territory between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia was 16598.30 sq.km (7913.17 sq.km in Iravan governorate, 8685.30 sq.km in Tbilisi governorate). During the APC period, the territory of the country, including disputed territories, was 113,895.97 sq.km.⁴ However, after the establishment of Soviet power in the South Caucasus, under the pressure of Moscow, approximately 10,000 square kilometers of the territory of the Azerbaijan SSR was given to Armenia and Georgia.

The research shows that the territorial disputes between the South Caucasus republics in 1918-1920 became more and more acute. In these disputes, the most damage was done to the Azerbaijani population. Even the territories of Azerbaijan have been attacked by the armed forces of Armenia. In 1918, Armenian armed forces destroyed 229 settlements in Baku province (including 58 in Shamakhi district, 112 in Guba district), 272 settlements in Ganja province (115 in Zangezür, 157 in Karabakh), 211 in Iravan province (32 in Iravan district, 7 in Yeni-Bayazid), 75 in Sürmeli, 84 in Echmiadzin), 82 settlements were destroyed in Kars province, hundreds of thousands of people were expelled from their ethnic territories and turned into refugees.⁵ In order to deal with the refugee problem, the Refugee Department of the Muslim Faction was established under the South Caucasus Sejm in March 1918. The Muslim faction raised the issue before the Sejm government in order to end the massacres against Muslims. Also, by sending a delegation, the Faction managed to discuss the results of investigations in the Iravan governorate at the session of the Sejm. Although this led to the relief of the

⁴ *Address-calendar of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 1920*, Part 1, Baku 1920, p. 50.

⁵ SARA, f.894, pol.10, w. 80, p. 49-56; SARA, f.970, pol.10, w. 16, p. 1-9; SARA, f.1061, pol.1, w. 95, p.5-8; SARA, f.970, pol.1, w.1, p. 28-29; SARA, f.970, pol.1, w.66, p.7.

situation of the refugees to a certain extent, it was not possible to stop the massacres.⁶

When the Armenian state was established (in May 1918) in the territory of Iravan governorate, which is the historical land of Azerbaijan, its capital was not yet known.

In order to put an end to the conflicts, the government of Azerbaijan announced on May 29 that it made a compromise to make the city of Yerevan the capital of the newly established state of Armenia. Although the Iravan Muslim National Council expressed its opposition to the concession, a decision was made.⁷ Finally, with the help of the patrons of the Armenians, in 1918, the Armenian state was established in the territory of Western Azerbaijan, with the city of Iravan being temporarily given as the capital.

According to the Batum Treaty (signed on June 4, 1918), the territory of the Republic of Armenia was 9.8 thousand square kilometers. In return, the Armenian government announced that it would give up its territorial claim against Azerbaijan. Despite this, new attacks by Armenians began. After the massacres in Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian armed groups, who fled to the Caucasus under the pressure of the Turkish troops, under the command of Andranik attacked the towns and villages inhabited by the Azerbaijani-Turkish population (from Gumru to Karakilsa, from there to Dilijan valley and Goyce, then to Nakhchivan, and from there to Zangezur) and devastated them. By strengthening the Armenian armed forces in Zangezur and threatening Karabakh, the Azerbaijani government was in serious danger. They armed the Armenians living in Upper Karabakh, the ancient lands of Azerbaijan, and encouraged them to help Andranik's bandits. At that time, they wanted to unite Upper Karabakh to Armenia by expelling the population of the Muslim villages and the Azerbaijani-Turkish population of the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Andranik's bandits destroyed many villages inhabited by the Azerbaijani-Turkish population (Chamirli, Shorca, Gayabashi, Sariyagub, Tashkent, Tazagoshabulag, Kyzylbulag, Yukhari Alchali and Kerkibash of Goyce district of Yeni-Bayazid district) and looted the people's property. The surviving population was forced to retreat to the mountains and wait for help. After the representatives of these villages came

⁶ *Address-calendar of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 1920*, Part 2, Baku 1920, p. 10-11.

⁷ SARA, f.970, pol.1, w.5, p. 14.

to Ganja and appealed to the head of the government, Fatali Khan Khoyski, the Azerbaijani government expressed its protest to the Armenian government, demanded help in ending the massacres against Muslims in Yeni-Bayazid district, and asked him for an answer about the measures taken by the population to return to their places without hindrance.

Andranik Ozanya's gang entered Nakhchivan and Zangezur district after the massacres he committed in Goyche, and seized the road to Gorus and Shusha. The government of Azerbaijan sent a note of protest to the government of Armenia on August 15 regarding this and assessed this action of the Armenian armed forces as aggression. At the same time, it was sharply stated that if measures are not taken against the withdrawal of Armenian military forces from the territory of Azerbaijan, the responsibility for the further development of events will fall on the Armenian government.⁸

The Armenian government stated that Andranik's armed forces were removed from the Armenian army on August 1 and gave the excuse that they were not subservient to the Armenian government. Andranik and his group are not subordinate to the government of Armenia and declared that they do not recognize it, and stated that the government is not responsible for the actions of Andranik and his group.⁹

In October 1918, the appointment of a representative of the Armenian government to the KarvanSARA (State Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan) area of the Gazakh district (now Ijevan) and the beginning of the administration of that area by force of arms caused the opposition of the Azerbaijani government. Expressing its objection to this, the Azerbaijani government appointed Mammad Khan Tekinski as a permanent representative to Armenia in early November 1918 in order to regulate relations with Armenia in a civil manner, to end national conflicts and armed clashes, to solve territorial conflicts with justice, and to alleviate the situation of refugees.¹⁰ Although the Azerbaijani side repeatedly appealed to the Armenian government in the fall of 1918 to hold a peace conference, this proposal was not given a positive response. According to the Mudros Agreement signed on October 30 of that year, the withdrawal of Turkish and German troops from the South Caucasus opened Armenia's hands. Taking

⁸ SARA, f.970, pol. 1, w. 11, p. 180.

⁹ SARA, f.970, pol. 1, w. 11, p. 193.

¹⁰ SARA, f. 887, pol. 1, w. 6, p. 370.

advantage of the opportunity that arose after the British troops received a mandate for the South Caucasus on behalf of the Entente countries, Armenia wanted to expand its territory by force of arms. He tried to do this at the expense of the lands of Azerbaijan and Georgia. However, as a result of the attacks by the local Muslim and Georgian self-defense units on the Armenian armed forces in the Vedibasara and Zangibasara districts of the Yerevan governorate, in the Sharur-Daralayaz district, as well as in Borchali and Lorud, Armenia went to peace talks. The High Commission of the United States wanted to resolve the territorial disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia in favor of Armenia. Therefore, they tried to separate those areas from Azerbaijan by creating a neutral zone in Nakhchivan and Sharur-Darelayaz districts. The government of Azerbaijan agreed to the creation of a neutral zone on the condition that the sovereign rights of Azerbaijan remain intact in that area. The Prime Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia met in Tiflis on November 23, 1919 to resolve territorial disputes. In those negotiations, the Armenian government undertook to withdraw its troops from Zangezur, which it occupied, in order not to violate the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.¹¹ However, the Armenian government not only did not fulfill its promise to withdraw the Armenian armed forces from the occupied settlements in Zangezur, on the contrary, 48 villages in the 3rd area of Zangezur district and 3 villages in the 4th area were destroyed and destroyed (January 19-25, 1920).¹²

During the years 1893-1919, Armenian terrorists representing the “Gnchak” and “Dashnaktsutyun” parties were killed in the borders of the Ottoman state and the South Caucasus, including Baku, Kurdemir, Jabrayil, Ganja, Sheki, Shamakhi, Gazakh, Guba, Tbilisi, Akhalkalak, Akhalsikh, They carried out 129 terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Trabzon and Urmia.¹³

Karabakh Governor-General Khosrov Bey Sultanov informed the head of the British mission that came to Shusha (on February 17, 1919) that it was not the local Armenians who caused the conflict in Upper Karabakh, but the Republic of Armenia and Dashnaktsutyun's party, and demanded the disarmament and removal of Andranik's group from Karabakh, and the

¹¹ SARA, f. 897, pol. 1, w. 31, p. 44

¹² SARA, f. 2898, pol. 1, w. 6, p. 34

¹³ Feliks Tsertsvadze, *Hypocrisy and lies of Armenian propaganda*, Chashyoglu, Baku, 2007, p. 47-56.

return of the refugees to their former places, took the initiative to discuss the issues of opening the Aghdam-Shusha road for traffic. However, the National Council of Armenia strongly objected to this proposal. After that, Khosrov Bey Sultanov told the British representative that Armenians wanted to separate Karabakh from Azerbaijan, not peace, and wanted to conquer Zangezur, and despite all this, he wanted to resolve the Armenian-Muslim conflict peacefully.

In the information dated February 28, 1919 sent by the head of Zangezur district to the governor of Ganja, it was mentioned that the brutality of bandits of the bloodthirsty Andronik covered the area from Hekari to Araza, from Minkend to Bazar-cha and the border of Nakhchivan district.

2. The Problem of Refugees and the Question of Its Solution

When the Russian Bolshevik army approached the border of Azerbaijan (in March 1920), the members of the Armenian National Council secretly entered the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan from Armenia and committed provocations and national massacres there. The AKP government has taken serious measures to establish law and order in the Karabakh region and ensured the protection of its sovereign rights here. Despite the official recognition of the independence of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic at the Paris Peace Conference in January 1920, territorial disputes with Armenia continued. At that time, the problem of refugees remained one of the most important issues for the Azerbaijani government to solve. This was the second big blow after the deportation and genocide that took place in Iravan governorate and different regions of Azerbaijan in March-April 1918. During the First World War, from a number of conflict centers - Eastern Anatolia, the Balkans, etc. Thousands of refugees gathered in Baku governorate. Most of the refugees who came to Baku were non-Muslims. At that time, the Muslim Charitable Society, the Committee for Aid to Armenian Refugees, the Committee for Aid to Latvian Refugees, the Committee for Aid to the Stoned Polish Population, the Baku Committee for the Registration of Refugees of the committee founded by Tatyana Nikolayeva, the Baku branch of the General Commission for the Placement of Refugees on the Caucasus Front, etc., were in Baku. such societies and committees were established.

In the information sent by the mayor of Baku to Petrograd on December

31, 1917, it was stated that “there are 2,568 refugees in Baku - including 1,763 Armenians, 276 Latvians, 169 Russians, 157 Jews, 95 Greeks, 84 Poles, 13 Aisorians, 7 Hungarians, 3 Czechs, 1 Bulgarian was registered”. It is interesting that, at that time, Baku gradonachalniki did not register Muslim refugees in order to deprive them of aid. At that time, thousands of Turkish refugees from Eastern Anatolia took refuge in Azerbaijan. They were under the patronage of the Baku Muslim Charitable Society. The Ministry of Health and Welfare was created while the APC government was still in Ganja.¹⁴

It is known from official documents that as a result of the massacres that continued since February 1918, 0.5 million people became beggars (except for Nakhchivan district, Sharur precinct, the 2nd-3rd police areas of Sürmeli precinct and Zangibasars district), in these areas that were destroyed More than 200 thousand Muslim population lost everything. Muslims of Goykumbat, Arbat, Aghcagishlaq and Charbakh villages of Yerevan city, Zangibasars belong to this category. According to official information, the number of dead was 100-120 thousand people, 50 thousand refugees came to North Azerbaijan, and then many of them moved to South Azerbaijan and the territory of Turkey. Hundreds of people were brutally killed by Armenian gangs in Zangezur district, villages belonging to Azerbaijanis were destroyed. 211 villages in Iravan province and 92 villages in Kars province were burned and looted. In 1918, 1,349 villages belonging to Azerbaijanis were registered in the territory of present-day Armenia. The villages inhabited by Azerbaijanis made up 50-55% of the current territory of Armenia, and the villages inhabited by Armenians made up 30-35%. During two years, as a result of the aggressive policy of Armenians against the territories inhabited by Azerbaijanis, 157 villages were fully owned and 67 villages were partially owned. In general, at that time Dashnaksutyun's party played a key role in the expansion of the feeling of hatred against Azerbaijanis, and they always and by all means acted with anti-Turkish policy. Together with Dashnaksutyun's party, Andranik Ozanyan and Hayk Bzhshkyan (Gay) were more active in the implementation of the genocide policy of Tsarist Russia against Azerbaijanis. The events that went down in history like the Zangezur massacre, which led to the settlement of about 30 thousand Armenians in these areas, were the result of Andranik's inhuman actions. This intention of Andranik, who wished to turn the entire South

¹⁴ *Address-calendar* - Nagyl evi, Baku 2011, p. 115.

Caucasus into a “Great Armenia” state, was not realized. While leaving Zangezur, he destroyed the population that survived the first massacre in Zangezur, Bazarchay, Vedi and Etchmiazin villages along the way. This ethnic cleansing policy of the Armenians led to the death of more than 260,000 Azerbaijanis at that time. The Armenian press is currently trying to hide this information.¹⁵

The policy of the Armenian government caused the Azerbaijanis living there to be displaced from their ancestral land, Western Azerbaijan, and became refugees. Thousands of refugees were also settled in Shusha, Javanshir, Jabrayil, and Zangezur districts. This made the work of the governor-general even more complicated.

This activity of Armenian-Dashnak gangs against Azerbaijanis was carried out with deportation and genocide. At that time, Azerbaijanis who had become refugees from the accidents of Iravan governorate were mostly settled in Ganja and its surroundings. Measures were taken to provide them with food and protect their health. However, the enemy forces tried to disrupt political stability in the governorate using all means. The Bolsheviks, who were especially distinguished in this field, tried to expand the peasant movement here, taking into account the characteristics of the province. These violations continued during the republic.

After the APC government moved to Baku in October, the Ministry of Health and Welfare was divided into two parts. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Welfare began to operate separately. The Ministry of Protection faced 2 main tasks - the issue of refugees and the issue of protection. The work to be done on the issue of refugees: accepting refugees from Armenia and Turkey, providing them with basic food and foodstuffs, seeds and working animals for planting, providing interest-free loans to restore individual farms in some rural communities, and providing them with employment. On the issue of guardianship, a number of activities were carried out: organizing orphanages and camps for the maintenance of young orphans, opening cheap canteens and food stations for the poor, monitoring individual and public charity activities, and assisting in its development. In order to perform these tasks, 3 departments were created in the ministry - guardianship, refugees and economic departments. The Ministry organized

¹⁵ Vagif Arzumanli, Nazim Mustafa, *Black pages of history, Deportation, Genocide, Refugee*, Gartal, Baku 1998, p. 88.

6 state patronage circles in order to solve local issues in an orderly manner. These are Baku district (included Baku city, Baku, Guba districts), Ganja district (Ganja city, Ganja and Gazakh districts), Shamakhi district (Shamakhi and Goychay districts), Nukha district (Nukha, Aresh districts, Zagatala governorate), Karabakh district (Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil and Zangezur districts) and Lankaran district (Lankaran and Javad districts).¹⁶ Guardianship inspectors were in charge of cases in the districts. The issue of assistance to refugees was organized in three main directions in the Ministry of Protection: in Baku and its regions; in other parts of the country; in foreign countries. In 1919, for refugees, orphans, old people, in Bayil, in the territory of the present Nasimi region¹⁷, in Surakhani, Romany, Mashtag, Bulbula, etc. canteens were opened in places. In 1919, 17 canteens, 2 food distribution points, and 5 teahouses were operating. The daily bread needs of approximately 700 refugees from Kars province were covered by the Ministry of Protection through the mediation of the Baku Muslim Charitable Society. For this purpose, the ministry paid 526,195 manats from November 1919 to January 1, 1920. In 1919, the refugee districts were as follows: The number of refugees in Ganja District was 21,098 people.¹⁸ 5 food centers, 3 orphanages, and a hospital were opened here. 18,244 pounds of grain products were distributed to the refugees.¹⁹ In Shamakhi district, the number of refugees was 26,877. 13 food stations, 2 orphanages, an Armenian orphanage, and a hospital were opened here.²⁰ 18,244 pounds of grain products were distributed to them. In Nukha district - the number of refugees was 5100 people. A food station, a Muslim and two Armenian orphanages were opened here. 2623 pounds of grain products were distributed to them. In the Karabakh region, more than 20 thousand refugees were helped, Zangezur refugees were given a loan of 187,500 manat within 3 months. Food aid was provided to 3205 people in Lankaran district, a food station, an orphanage was opened, and more than 4 thousand pounds of grain products were distributed. In 1919, according to the information

¹⁶ SARA, f. 46, pol. 2, w. 235, p. 6. 100; Aziz B. *Azerbaijan People's Republic and the problem of refugees* - Baku: actual problems of APC, materials of the international scientific session, - March-May 2003, p. 17-18

¹⁷ Boran Aziz, *Azerbaijan People's Republic and the problem of refugees* - Baku: actual problems of APC, materials of the international scientific session, - March-May 2003, p. 17-18.

¹⁸ SARA, f. 28, pol. 1, w. 13, p. 7.

¹⁹ SARA, f. 970, pol. 1, w. 65, p. 3.

²⁰ SARA, f. 897, pol. 1, w. 40, p. 1-204.

provided by the district inspector of Ganja, along with Muslim refugees, 3928 Armenians (including 1818 Turkish Armenians), 427 Russian refugees from SARA (State Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan) tovka and Novo-Ivanovka villages displaced by the Armenian armed forces found shelter in Ganja. The Ministry of Protection opened a lazaret (military hospital) for Armenian refugees in Ganja. As we mentioned above, the Ministry of Protection also helped Azerbaijani refugees living abroad. On June 4, 1919, the AKP government instructed its diplomatic representative in Yerevan, M. Takinsky, to collect and send statistical figures about the villages of Yerevan province and Kars province destroyed by the Armenian armed forces, about the names of those killed there, about those who were captured, and about stolen herds. The Azerbaijani government would use this factual information at the Paris Peace Conference. These facts were used by the Iravan Muslim National Council during the appeal to the heads of the missions of the great powers in the Caucasus.²¹ From July 8, 1919, lawyer Zulfugar Bey Makinski started working as a representative of the Ministry of Protection in Yerevan to solve the problem of Muslim refugees in Armenia.

During the First World War, a branch of the Baku Muslim Charitable Society was opened in Kars. This society saved 40,000 Turks who survived the Armenian genocide from starvation and death. During the APC period, a representative office was opened in Kars on the basis of that department. In January 1919, the government of the South-West Caucasus appealed to the government of Azerbaijan and asked for financial assistance and officials to solve the problems of the refugees.²² The government of Azerbaijan sent a bag of gold coins to help the refugees who escaped from the villages of Iravan province and found shelter in Cildir and Agbaba districts. Azerbaijani Turks from Armenia and Kars province came to the border of Georgia in 1918 via the Iravan-Gumru-Tbilisi, Kars-Gumru-Tbilisi railway, and from there they were transferred to Azerbaijan via the Tbilisi-Ganja-Baku railway. During 1919, the permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Georgia ordered 171 wagons from the Ministry of Roads of Georgia for the refugees gathered in Tiflis from Armenia and Kars province to go to Azerbaijan.²³ According to the information provided by the Permanent Representation of Azerbaijan in Armenia, up to 200 thousand Muslim population was displaced

²¹ SARA, f. 970, pol. 1, w. 65, p. 3.

²² SARA, f. 28, pol. 1, w. 13, p. 27.

²³ SARA, f. 897, pol. 1, w. 40, p. 1-204.

by the Armenian armed forces in Echmiazin and Yeni-Bayazid districts of Yerevan in 1919 alone. On the basis of the information provided by the representative of the Ministry of Protection in Armenia, a draft decision was submitted to the parliament on providing assistance to the population in Armenia. In July 1919, 3 million manats were allocated to provide assistance to the population in Armenia, and 15 wagons of flour, wheat and barley were sent at the expense of these funds. Also, a dispensary for Muslims was opened in Yerevan, and an orphanage for 85 people was organized there (September 1, 1919). Later, this orphanage was placed at the disposal of the American Children's Aid Committee. In order to provide assistance to Muslims fleeing from Armenia and Kars province, mobile food stations (free canteens) were created on the roads they passed. According to the instructions of the Ministry of Defense, such food stations were opened at the Lower SARA (State Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan) 1 station and near Tbilisi.²⁴ Out of the 575,000 Muslim population who lived in the territory of Armenia until 1918, on the eve of the fall of the APC, only a little more than 10,000 Azerbaijani-Turkish people remained.²⁵ Thus, in 1918-1920, most of the population saved from the genocide in Armenia found refuge in Azerbaijan as refugees. The problem of refugees returning to their private lands remained unresolved during the APC government. This problem did not find a fair solution after the establishment of Soviet power in Azerbaijan. Before the establishment of the USSR (1922), less than half of the population who fled to their historical lands - a total of 100,000 Azerbaijani Turks - were able to return to West Azerbaijan (present-day Armenia).

On April 28, 1920, the fall of the government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in Baku and the announcement of the establishment of the Bolshevik government in Azerbaijan had an impact on the situation in Ganja province. On the same day, under the chairmanship of F. Aliyev, the Ganja District Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (Bolsheviks) Party, the Gubernia Revolutionary Committee was established and an ultimatum was sent to the Ganja governor about the transfer of power. The ultimatum was accepted. On April 29, an act was signed on the transfer of

²⁴ *Address-calendar of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 1920*. Part 3, Baku 1920, p. 87.

²⁵ Zaven Korkodyan, *Population of Soviet Armenia, 1831-1931*, (in *Armenian*. Yerevan, 1932), p. 185; See: "Israfil Mammadov, Sabir Asadov, *Azerbaijanis of Armenia and their bitter fate*, Baku 1992, p. 33.

power to the Gubernia Revolutionary Committee. On May 1²⁶, 11th Red Army units entered Ganja. However, the Soviet authorities faced a strong resistance movement in the Ganja governorate. Uprisings against the Soviet Bolshevik occupation took place in Ganja, Karabakh and other regions. Units of the 11th Army brutally suppressed these uprisings, and Soviet power was restored.²⁷ Ganja governorate was abolished.

These atrocities committed by the Armenians were the result of the “Turkless Armenia” policy implemented during the Dashnak rule. In 1916, the number of Azerbaijanis within the current borders of Armenia decreased from 333,000 to 84,500 in 1926. The main reason for this is the acts of deportation and genocide against Azerbaijanis in 1918-1920.

As a result of the Karabakh war started by Armenia at the end of the 20th century, the armed forces of Armenia occupied 20% of the lands of Azerbaijan. The former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province came under the control of the Armenian armed forces. 7 districts of the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province of the Republic of Azerbaijan were also occupied by the armed forces of Armenia. More than 20,000 Azerbaijanis died in the war, about 100,000 people were injured and 6,000 people were captured. More than one million Azerbaijanis - approximately 15% of the country’s population - are refugees and live in tent cities. 700 towns and villages were destroyed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Almost all houses, schools, and hospitals were burned in those cities and villages.

In general, as a result of the military aggression of Armenia, 20% of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan was occupied, and approximately one million residents of those regions of the republic became refugees in their own country, lost their permanent places of residence, and had to leave their homes. He stayed in this place. All these weakened both the economic and social conditions of Azerbaijan, and most importantly, seriously damaged the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the republic. Also, Armenia has refused to fulfill the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council regarding the liberation of the occupied territories.

Although the resolutions of the UN Security Council demanded the

²⁶ Israfil Mammadov, Sabir Asadov, *Azerbaijanis of Armenia and their bitter fate*, Baku 1992, p. 33.

²⁷ Manaf Suleymanov, *The Azerbaijani army (1918-1920)*, Baku 1998, p. 27.

immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the lands of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the return of refugees to their native places, Armenia, ignoring the efforts and calls of the international community in this field, continued to occupy the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Although the UN Security Council called to refrain from any hostile actions that could lead to the expansion of the conflict, any interference or military intervention, this was only remembered as another warning to the aggressor Republic of Armenia.

One of the important issues here is the need to create guaranteed security conditions for refugees and IDPs to return to their permanent places of residence, which Armenia, as a rule, did not follow. Finally, the Republic of Azerbaijan increased its defense power, created a strong, regular army, increased the security of the army, established high diplomatic relations, and won the second Karabakh war, which began with the threats and military attack of Armenia. As a result of the 44-day Patriotic War, Armenia put an end to groundless territorial claims against the Republic of Azerbaijan. The solution to the problem of territorial integrity was realized.

During the 30-year occupation period in the Republic of Azerbaijan, important measures were taken at the state level to solve the social issues of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Conclusion

Armenians committed mass massacres and genocides against Azerbaijanis in 1905-1906, 1918-1920, and deportations of Azerbaijanis in 1948-1953 and 1988. Twice in just one century, Armenians committed genocide against Azerbaijanis - at the beginning and end of the 20th century, on March 31, 1918 and the Khojaly genocide in 1992.

The Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, separatism, deportation, genocide, and the resulting refugee problem, started by Armenian nationalists from the beginning of the 20th century, dealt a heavy blow to the life of the South Caucasus, especially Azerbaijan.

Armenia's policy of state separatism in the South Caucasus brought great troubles to the indigenous peoples of the South Caucasus.

The problem of refugees remained on the agenda for a long time as a

difficult issue in the life of local peoples. Different from the state of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani-Turkish nation and the organizations created by them, a number of states and public organizations approached the solution of the refugee problem and meeting their material and moral needs in a different way.

The problem of separatism, deportation, genocide and refugees caused by Armenia continued until the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. States and peoples have suffered a large amount of material and moral damage. Due to Armenia's non-constructive position, the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has not been resolved, although international organizations have repeatedly held discussions and adopted decisions. The conflict was resolved only as a result of the 44-day Patriotic War, which began in September 2020 with the counter-offensive operation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The moral support of the fraternal Republic of Turkey was a great support for the state and people of Azerbaijan in this struggle.

During the 30-year occupation in the Republic of Azerbaijan, important measures were taken at the state level to solve the social issues of refugees and internally displaced persons. The problem of refugees, which appeared at the end of the 20th century as well as at the beginning, is gradually being solved.

Thus, we believe that the on going processes in the South Caucasus will once and for all put an end to the separatism of Armenia and the refugee problem.

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