

## **NKR MFA: International recognition of the NKR will put an end to the ongoing attempts of Azerbaijan to destroy Artsakh**



STEPANAKERT, APRIL 30, ARMENPRESS. Azerbaijan's criminal behavior only strengthens the determination of the people of Artsakh to build and develop their independent and free state as the guarantor of its security and peaceful existence. Acknowledgment by the international community of this fact, and, as a result of it, the international recognition of the NKR will put an end to the ongoing attempts of Azerbaijan to destroy Artsakh and eliminate its people, and ensure peace and security in the region. "Armenpress" reports the statement issued by the Foreign Ministry of NKR:

"On April 30, 1991, 25 years ago, the operation "Ring" began with a massive shelling of Getashen and Martunashen, which became a prelude to the subsequent full-scale military aggression of Azerbaijan against the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. During the operation, the Armenian villages were at first surrounded by the interior forces of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Soviet Army. And afterwards, the Azerbaijani OMON and militia entered those villages under the pretext of "passport checks", but in fact for murder, robbery, terror against the Armenian population, followed by deportation.

The operation "Ring" became the continuation of a series of Armenian pogroms and ethnic cleansing in Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad and other settlements of Azerbaijan, as well as in the villages of Northern Artsakh in 1988-1991, which were intended to strangle at its birth the national liberation struggle of the Armenians of Artsakh and deprive them of their homeland. The

Azerbaijani authorities did not conceal that they considered the operation "Ring" as the beginning of a large-scale deportation of all Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh.

As a result of the operation, during which tanks, combat helicopters and artillery were used, more than two dozen villages of Northern Artsakh and Shahumyan, Hadrut and Shushi regions were completely devastated and destroyed. Almost 10 thousand people were deported, more than 100 killed and several hundred taken hostage. The fate of many of them still remains unknown.

25 years later, on the night of April 2, 2016, the Azerbaijani authorities unleashed yet another aggression against the NKR, which as in 1991, was accompanied by numerous violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes committed against the civilians and soldiers of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, including targeted shelling of peaceful settlements, killings of civilians, as well as the mutilation and ill-treatment of the dead bodies.

However, both in 1991, and now all the attempts of the Azerbaijani authorities to intimidate and break the people of Artsakh, to suppress their strive for freedom and, eventually, to deprive them of their homeland, resulted in a complete failure.

Azerbaijan's criminal behavior only strengthens the determination of the people of Artsakh to build and develop their independent and free state as the guarantor of its security and peaceful existence. Acknowledgment by the international community of this fact, and, as a result of it, the international recognition of the NKR will put an end to the ongoing attempts of Azerbaijan to destroy Artsakh and eliminate its people, and ensure peace and security in the region.”