

## Maragha massacre eyewitness



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Maragha massacre eyewitness: Azerbaijanis did so many things to us, and now we have to give them lands? Never!

On April 10, 1992, after a 3-hour artillery preparation, the subunits of the Azerbaijani regular army invaded the peaceful village of Maragha from the Azerbaijani Mir-Bashir (currently Tartar).

The attack was not dictated by military necessity.

Over 100 people became victims of the aggression – mainly women, children, and old people.

Civilians were killed by the most cruel ways: they were partitioned, burnt alive, beheaded, thrown under tanks, or cut with axes.

About 50 people were taken hostages, including 9 children. While in captivity, many Maragha residents were tortured, humiliated, and were a subject to an inhuman treatment. Many of them were later exchanged, but the fate of many is still unknown.

In about two weeks, on April 22-23, Maragha was again attacked, people, who had returned to the site of fire, had to leave the native town forever. Currently, Maragha is under Azerbaijani occupation. Baroness Caroline Cox called Maragha “contemporary Golgotha.”

The details of what happened in the once prosperous village 24 years ago, on 10 April 1992, still chill blood, making one doubt whether the perpetrators can have the right to be called human beings.

The stories of the survivors, who currently live in the village Nor (New) Maragha, leave no doubt that what happened in the Karabakh village on that day completely matches the definition of genocide provided by a respective UN Convention. Back in 1997, the Armenian side submitted documents and facts about the tragedy in Maragha to the UN Human Rights Committee.

The process could not be accomplished then. However, the Armenian side intends to introduce the Maragha dossier to international agencies once again in the frameworks of An Ordinary Genocide project.

On the Maragha Genocide victims commemorative days, Panorama.am presents a series of testimonies of Maragha people. The full materials on the topic can be found on

[karabakhrecords.info](http://karabakhrecords.info) and [maragha.org](http://maragha.org).

Elmira Sahakyan

We were at home on April 10. We filled bags with sand and barricaded the ground floor with them. All the neighbors took refuge in our house.

Maragha bombing started at dawn. My husband and sons were on the front line defending the village. During the battle near the cemetery, my husband received a shot on cheek but he tied up the wound with a scarf and continued fighting. He died there.

Only those, who had been warned, managed to leave the village and be saved, still many did not know about the attack and were not able to escape.

They – children and women – stayed in the refuges and were either killed or taken hostages.

We could leave on time. Coming back to the village, we saw rivers of blood flowing there. There was no Maragha at all... Houses were robbed and burnt, people were slaughtered, nothing remained. Some children were beaten, killed, burned, others were taken hostages. It is impossible to describe what they did with young women and girls, who had been taken hostages. Women, who returned from captivity, had their bodies fully covered with wounds as a result of cigarette burns.

No one in Karabakh suffered so much as the people of Maragha. Women and children were tortured and murdered in Maragha as nowhere else. No one went through so many challenges as the people in Maragha. The houses were burnt, little children were taken hostages, old men were burnt alive and thrown under tanks. They cut one man's head off and hung it in the village square. How can one speak about reconciling with them after all that? They are blood suckers, with whom it is impossible to reconcile after all they did to us. I lost my husband and my son at war, many people in Maragha lost their families during those days: they were killed or missing. None of us will want to reconcile with them. They did so many things to us, and now we have to give them lands? What for? Why do I have to give them anything? We will not give them anything! Let them shoot me here, but we are not going to give them our lands! If they start a war, I will take a rifle myself and go to fight. But we will not give them any piece of land!

The recent events in the village Talysh (NKR) also remind of "Maragha." On April 2, 2016, Azerbaijani divisions, including armed cap-a-pie mercenaries, managed to invade the village. The atrocities committed by them and later photographed by reporters shocked the public. The Azerbaijani saboteurs shot elderly civilians Valera Khalapyan and his wife Razmella, and cut their ears. They also shot the aged and helpless MarusyaKhalapyan (born in 1924).