



Açiq Hökumətin Təşviqinə dair Hökumət-Vətəndaş Cəmiyyəti Dialoq Platforması

AZ, 1001, Bakı ş. M.Əfəndiyev 7/24
www.ogp.org.az

Tel: (+994 12) 492 57 26
E-mail office@ogp.org.az

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STATEMENT

of the Azerbaijan Open Government Platform on the death of civilians as a result of a mine explosion in Kalbajar region of Azerbaijan

On June 4, 2021, a vehicle carrying members of the film crew hit an anti-tank mine on the road in Susuzlug village of the liberated Kalbajar region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result of the blast two members of the film crew, Azerbaijani TV operator Siraj Abishov and correspondent of the Azerbaijan State News Agency Maharram Ibrahimov, as well as a representative of the region executive power Arif Aliyev were killed, four others were injured.

Death of civilian Azerbaijani citizens, especially journalists performing their professional duties is reminiscent of the large-scale mine threat in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Despite the strong insistence of the Azerbaijani side, the Republic of Armenia violating the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and international humanitarian law does not submit a map of mined areas. This position of Armenia overshadows the efforts made between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the post-conflict period to achieve lasting peace in the region. All this makes obstacles for the return of civilians to their homes and restoration of destroyed settlements and infrastructure. Since the agreement signed by the parties on November 10, 2020, which resulted in the cessation of hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia, 139 Azerbaijani citizens were hit by mines so far. Among them are those who died and those who were seriously injured.

This approach of Armenia and its refusal to take peaceful steps aggravates the situation in the region even after the end of hostilities, poses risks for the entire South Caucasus region.

We call on the international community to take effective measures to change this approach and position of Armenia. We call on international organizations to demand that Armenia fulfill its obligations under international law.

The Azerbaijan Open Government Platform believes that the failure of the Republic of Armenia to submit a map of mined areas in violation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions is a challenge to all peace initiatives, humanitarian missions and international human rights organizations. In line with this challenge, the international community remaining true to its principles should make tough decisions towards Armenia in order to prevent further civilian deaths.