



## Açık Hökumətin Təşviqinə dair Hökumət-Vətəndaş Cəmiyyəti Dialoq Platforması

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### STATEMENT

#### **of the Government-Civil Society Dialogue Platform on the Promotion of Open Government on the European Parliament Resolution dated March 10, 2022**

The European Parliament adopted a biased and defamatory resolution on March 10, 2022 on the "destruction of historical and cultural monuments belonging to Armenians" in the territories liberated by Azerbaijan.

First of all, the European Parliament should have taken into account that these territories historically belong to Azerbaijan. There is indisputable evidence that Azerbaijanis are permanent residents of these lands, and it is an undeniable fact that has been confirmed by various historical sources. Armenians have been occupying these territories temporarily for about only 30 years, starting since 1993, and in very small numbers. As a result of the anti-terrorist operation conducted from September 27 to November 10, 2020, these lands were liberated from occupation and returned to the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan. It is no coincidence that the UN Security Council adopted 4 resolutions (Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884) that provided the withdrawal of the occupying forces from all occupied Azerbaijani territories.

The post-occupation situation has shown that for almost 30 years Armenia has completely destroyed the historical monuments, material and cultural heritage, civil and social buildings of Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur. Numerous historical, cultural and religious monuments, places of archeological excavations, libraries and museums, museum exhibits, rare manuscripts, cemeteries have been systematically destroyed and looted. Mosques have been demolished and turned into places where they kept cows and pigs.

There were 13 world-famous (6 architectural and 7 archeological), 292 national (119 architectural and 173 archeological) and 330 local (270 architectural, 22 archeological, 23 gardens, parks, memorial monuments, 15 examples of decorative art) historical and cultural monuments in the territories of Azerbaijan during their occupation by Armenia. The mentioned material and spiritual treasures were completely destroyed, while of 67 Muslim mosques (13 in Shusha, 5 in Aghdam, 16 in Fizuli, 12 in Zangilan, 5 in Jabrayil, 5 in Gubadli, 8 in Lachin) 63 were completely and 4 were partially destroyed.

Evidence such as numerous photos and videos, witness statements, etc. confirming the facts of the destruction have been submitted to relevant international bodies and posted on online resources. It is enough to have a look at these facts to get a correct idea of the scale of vandalism against the historical and cultural heritage of Azerbaijanis. It is worth mentioning that during the occupation, Azerbaijan repeatedly sent requests to UNESCO and other specialized international organizations to organize visits to these territories to assess the state of cultural heritage, but such visits were prevented by Armenia.

It is not clear why the European Parliament, instead of giving an objective assessment of the vandalism of the Armenians, which has been confirmed by the destruction of the historical and cultural heritage of the Azerbaijanis, unfoundedly accuses the Azerbaijani side. It is unfortunate that the wrong and unfair position of such respected body, whose main mission is to ensure peace and safety, including the supremacy of law. Such an unhealthy and biased attitude of the European Parliament threatens the fragile stability in the region and paves the way for conflict to grow.

**Being the Government-Civil Society Dialogue Platform on the Promotion of Open Government, we censure this resolution of the European Parliament and urge it to be objective and fair in dealing with such sensitive issues.**