



Since then, official Baku has falsified the events and used the human tragedy to persistently fan anti-Armenian hysteria to demonize the Armenian people in the eyes of the Azeris and the international community. It used the images to incite anti-Armenian sentiment and intolerance, which resulted in murders and calls from Azeris to wipe out Armenians as an ethnic group.

## Conclusion

Responsibility for the tragic loss of civilian life on February 26-27, 1992 on the outskirts of Agdam, territory fully controlled by Azeri forces, lies with the political and military leadership of Azerbaijan.

**First**, the Azeri leadership used the territory of Khojaly for indiscriminate artillery attacks on civilian targets, thus turning the town into a legitimate military target for NKR Self-Defense Forces.

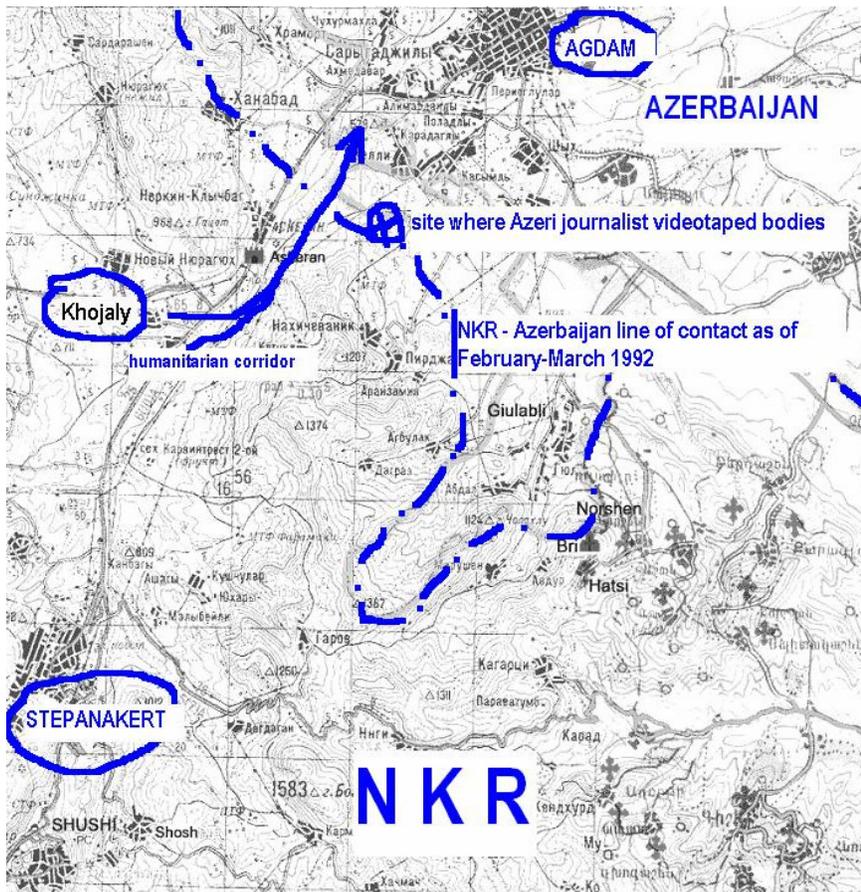
**Second**, the Azeri leadership intentionally prevented the civilian population from leaving the militarized village.

**Third**, the Azeri leadership failed to safely relocate civilians from Khojaly after public warnings of upcoming military operation, although it had many opportunities to do so.

**Fourth**, retreating Azeri forces provoked an exchange of fire with NKR Self-Defense Forces some five miles from Khojaly, which resulted in losses on both sides.

**Fifth**, those who had continued, full access to the site of reported close-range, mass killing are responsible for it. The reported killing of hundreds of civilians with incidences of barbaric mutilation of bodies took place near Agdam (some seven miles from Khojaly), on the territory controlled by Azeri forces. Free access to the site by Azeri and Turkish journalists is clear evidence to that end.

**In addition**, Azerbaijan continues to create ground for a prolonged human tragedy by inciting anti-Armenian sentiments and intolerance in Azeri society. Such a policy stalls efforts to build bridges between Armenian and Azeri people and achieve eventual, long-lasting peace between Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh.



*Background data, journalistic investigation and academic research materials to support the above information are available at the NKR Office and can be provided on-demand*

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NKR Office  
1140 19<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20036

Tel: (202) 223-4330  
Fax: (202) 315-3339  
Email: [info@nkrusa.org](mailto:info@nkrusa.org)  
Web: [www.nkrusa.org](http://www.nkrusa.org)