OPERATION “RING” (KOL’TSO)

AZERBAIJAN’S ETHNIC CLEANSING CAMPAIGN
April-June 1991

As the Soviet Union was collapsing, Azerbaijan planned and implemented a brutal genocidal act, ethnically cleansing border areas of Nagorno Karabakh of its indigenous Armenian population. Approved by Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov, Operation Ring, the code name of this criminal action, was carried out by paramilitary units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan, aided by the Soviet Army and the Soviet Internal Troops. Methods used in the operation included raids, roundups, military strikes and forced deportation.

As a result of this brutal act:
- 100 Armenians were killed
- 700 Armenians were taken hostage
- 5,000 Armenian villagers were forcefully deported

Azerbaijan should be held accountable for the organization and implementation of this gross violation of human rights on a mass scale.

Operation Ring, the ensuing all-out war against Nagorno Karabakh and the continued absence of any reassessment and condemnation of its past and ongoing criminal actions on the part of Azerbaijan, reinforces the belief that Azerbaijan cannot be trusted with ensuring the security of the Nagorno Karabakh people. Today, the continuation of Azerbaijan’s genocidal intent is clearly reflected in official Baku’s economic blockade of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh and its intensifying calls to launch a new military attack on Nagorno Karabakh.

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