

16/19 August 1919
To Mr. Chairman of the Peace Conference

Mr. Chairman!

While the Azerbaijani peace delegation is patiently awaiting in Paris for its turn to speak to the Peace Conference on the recognition of the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, our country is becoming a site of very important events and decisions, which, violating the competence of the Peace Conference, introduce forced and radical changes into the territory and population of the Caucasian Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani peace delegation does not have the opportunities to maintain regular and frequent contacts with the Azerbaijani capital of Azerbaijan. However, we learned from the most recent official reports about the sad fate of the Kars oblast of the Nakhchivan uyezd, Sharur-Daral-Agez, Surmali and a part of Erivan uyezds of the Erivan province, which were, except for the Ardagan okrug in the Kars oblast, forcibly annexed to the Armenian Republic.

Those territories were occupied by the Turkish forces, who stayed there until the armistice. After the Turkish troops withdrew, Kars and Batumi oblasts jointly with the Ahaltsikhi and Ahalkalaki uyezds of the Tiflis province, formed an independent republic of the South-Western Caucasus, headed by the provisional government in Kars. This provisional government consists of the Parliament, which was summoned at the same time.

Despite the explicit willingness of the population in the foregoing oblasts, the neighboring republics made several attempts and a forcible entry into parts of the South-Western Caucasus Republic in violation of the principle of free self-determination of nation. They finally had the Kars Parliament and the Government dissolved by decree of General Thomson. The members of the Government were arrested and sent to Batumi. The dissolution of the Parliament and arrests were motivated by hostile orientation of the Kars Parliament and Government, which the United Commandment had been incorrectly informed by the interested parties in the area.

Under the plea of settlement of refugees, the Kars oblast was occupied by Armenian and Georgian troops. The occupation was accompanied by numerous armed clashes. The occupation of the Kars oblast was timely protested at by the Government of Azerbaijan, which sent the appropriate notes of protest to the Governments of Armenia and Georgia, as well as to the commander of British forces in the Caucasus.

Azeri Foreign Minister in his letter of protest on April 30th expressed his regret concerning the settlement of refugees in the territories, and wrote to Mr. Commander of the United Forces that the settlement should be regulated by British forces, rather than Armenian military troops, who were more interested in forced occupation and consolidation of this area, rather than settlement of the refugees. The Ardagan okrug was occupied by Georgia, whose Government later issued a decree concerning the withdrawal of its forces.

The Republic of Azerbaijan cannot stay indifferent to such developments in the Kars oblast.

...We shall not forget that the attitude of Armenians to Moslems in the Kars oblast, which relatively recently belonged to Turkey (until 1877), always left much to be desired. The relations were strongly aggravated during the last war when Turkish forces temporarily occupied the Ardagan okrug, Ardagan and a part of the Kars okrug in December of 1914; after Turkish forces withdrew, Russian troops began to annihilate the Moslem population, laying waste with fire and sword on everything.

During those murderous events experienced by the innocent Moslem population, local Armenians were expressing their clearly hostile attitude and in some places, particularly Karea and Ardagan, not only set Cossacks against Moslems, but massacred the latter mercilessly themselves.

These circumstances by no means indicate at peace co-existence of Moslems in Kars oblast under the governance of Armenian authorities.

The Moslem population, in realization of this fact, made numerous applications to the Azeri Government through deputations and written requests, concerning its inability and unwillingness to subordinate to the Armenian power. The oblast was requested to be annexed to the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan...

...Henceforward prior to the determination of the future fate of this oblast, it is necessary in the name of justice to introduce in it the power of the United Forces and withdraw all and any non-allied military forces.

To an even less degree can the Republic of Azerbaijan reconcile with the transfer of control over the Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralagez, Surmali uyezds and a part of Erivan uyezd to the Government of Armenia.

Even in the end of April of this year, when this transfer was scheduled to take place, the Azeri Government made a resolute protest on the matter to the commander-in-chief of the allied forces in the Caucasus. However, the transfer of control still did take place and the foregoing districts are currently controlled by the Government of the Armenian Republic.

This factor obliges the Azerbaijani peace delegation to declare at the instruction of its government, that the delegation strongly supports the above-mentioned protest.

We believe that the transfer of control over an integral part of Azerbaijan is an obvious violation of the Azerbaijan Republic's indefeasible right to the Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralagez, Surmali uyezds and a part of Erivan uyezd. This act is the source of constant misunderstandings and even clashes between local Moslem population and the Armenian Republic.

"The above-mentioned districts are populated by Azeri Moslems, who form one nation and one nationality with the indigenous population of Azerbaijan, and both are absolutely similar for their faith, ethnical composition, language, customs and traditions.

	Azeri Moslems	Armenians	Others
Nakhchyvan	62,5	36,7	0,8
Sharur-Daralez	72,3	27,1	0,4
Surmali	68,0	30,4	1,6
Erevan	60,0	37,4	2,4

You can simply compare the correlation between Moslems and Armenians to decide the rights over these lands in favor of Azerbaijan:

Thus, Azeri Moslems not only form over half of the population, but they represent absolute majority in all uyezds, and form up to 72.3% in the Sharur-Daralagez uyezd. The figures apply to the population of the whole uyezd in Erivan. But the part of the uyezd, which was transferred under the Armenian Government's control and consists of the Vedi-Bassar and Millistan districts, is made up by nearly 90% Moslem population.

That very part of the Erivan uyezd suffered the most from Armenian military units known under the names of "Van residents", "Sasun residents", who annihilated the Moslem population as Andranik gangs, without the consideration for elderly persons and children, burned down the villages and fired settlements from cannons and armor train. They dishonored Moslem women, undid abdomens of dead persons, put out the eyes, sometimes burned corpses, robbed the population and accomplished unprecedented barbarities in general.

There was a crying fact in Vedi-Bassari district, when the same Armenian troops slaughtered all men in Karakhach, Kadishu, Karabaglar, Agasibekli and Dachnaz villages and captured several hundreds of beautiful married women and girls, who were placed at the disposal of Armenian "warriors". The latter kept those miserable victims of Armenian barbarities for a long time, even though the Armenian Parliament interfered after receiving a note of protest from the Azeri Government.

You can see from numerous deputations and written applications that the Moslem population of this district, as well as Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralagez and Surmalin uyezds is unable to stand the rule of the Armenian Government. In these documents, the Moslems from these places urge the Government of Azerbaijan to annex their lands to the territory of their native Azerbaijan, stating they would be happier to die than accept the power of Armenians.

To recognize the transfer of control over these districts to the Government of the Armenian Republic would mean to consent with tearing one part of indigenous population from another, with cutting a part from a living organism.

The Government of Azerbaijan cannot consent with this, especially that these foregoing uyezds always formed a constituent part of Azerbaijan and always stayed under the rule of the Azeri Government, which the local Moslem population was always drawn towards. The Government of Armenia never had any relation these regions in terms of power before.

The Government of Azerbaijan hereby submits this note of protest to the Peace Conference and has the honor to kindly request the Conference to give the following instructions to the Allied Commandment representatives in the Caucasus:

1. Withdrawal of all non-allied military forces from the Kars oblast and introduce power which corresponds to the desires of local population, in this oblast until final determination of its future fate.
2. To preserve Nakhchyvan, Surmali, Sharur-Daralagez and a part of Erivan uyezds under the control of the Government of Azerbaijan.

(signed) (STAMP)