

Patriotic War

For almost 30 years, Azerbaijan tried to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict through negotiations with Armenia, which had occupied 20 percent of its territory. The talks yielded no results. On the contrary, it was clear that the Armenian side was simply trying to gain time, to consolidate the status quo, to perpetuate it. Azerbaijan could not and did not come to terms with the occupation.

Over the said period, due to his foresight and wisdom, national leader Heydar Aliyev did tremendous work for the comprehensive development of Azerbaijan and for the solidifying its political and economic independence.



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, who successfully continues this path, stated the importance of economic strength, first of all, for the restoration of the country's territorial integrity. As a result of the accurate and thought-out policies, Azerbaijan began to gain strength, secured its economic independence and became a modern state economically independent of anyone, any country or international financial institution. He created a unique model of development in the world. The country's economic growth led to a turnaround in army building. The Azerbaijani Army's arsenal was replenished with advanced weapons and military equipment. The knowledge and skills of Azerbaijani servicemen were enhanced and significant steps were taken to improve their social protection and professional environment. Azerbaijan's defense industry was developed and most of the army's domestic needs were met through domestic production. Azerbaijan began to produce more than 1,000 types of military products and became an exporter of the most modern weapons. The high combat capability of the Azerbaijani Army was demonstrated to the world in numerous military parades in Azadlig Square.

Most importantly, over the past 30 years the people of Azerbaijan never put up with the occupation and showed unwavering determination in the restoration of their territorial integrity. The patriotic youth that has matured under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly proved that they were ready to make any sacrifice in the interests of the Motherland.

Over the said period, Azerbaijan has significantly strengthened its standing as a reliable partner, enhanced the country's reputation and turned its determination into the crucial factor in the region through the implementation of multifaceted, principled and authentic foreign policy, active engagement with international organizations and foreign countries and forging close relations, as well as implementation of regional energy and communication projects.

All these factors fully conditioned the absolute victory of Azerbaijan and made it only a matter of time.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly called on Armenia to return the occupied territories, but Armenia not only ignored those calls, but also felt encouraged to occupy more of Azerbaijan's lands and opted, instead, for a series of military provocations.



By torpedoing the format and subject matter of the negotiations, by creating a semblance of negotiations, by not implementing the UN Security Council resolutions and decisions, Armenia explicitly showed that it was not in favor of peace.

The statement of the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in Khankendi on 5 August 2019 that “Karabakh is a part of Armenia and full stop” became one of the most obvious admissions of Armenia’s policy of aggression. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev reacted harshly to Pashinyan’s statement during his speech at the 16th annual meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club on 3 October 2019, saying that “Karabakh is Azerbaijan and an exclamation mark.”

President Ilham Aliyev clearly describes this period: “Indeed, they refer to Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. They then published new maps and began to attribute all the adjacent districts to Nagorno-Karabakh. Our towns and villages were renamed, and finally we were threatened with a new war for new territories. This was stated by their defense minister named Tonoyan. He announced that Armenia was preparing for a new war for new territories.”

In July 2020, Armenia committed another military provocation in the direction of Tovuz on the state border with Azerbaijan. The purpose of the provocation was to create a new source of tension in the region, to put the issue of occupation of Azerbaijani territories on the backburner, to involve third countries in the conflict and to cause damage to Azerbaijan’s strategic infrastructure. The Azerbaijani Army responded with a crushing blow to the enemy.

In August 2020, Armenia resorted to yet another military provocation by sending a sabotage group to Azerbaijan to commit acts of terror. However, the Azerbaijani Army foiled this subversive plan too.

Speaking at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly on 24 September 2020, President Ilham Aliyev warned the international community that Armenia was preparing for a new war against Azerbaijan: “Armenia has recently adopted an aggressive and belligerent military doctrine and national security strategy... We call on the United Nations and the international community to deter Armenia from another military aggression. Responsibility for the provocations and the escalation of tensions lies squarely with the military-political leadership of Armenia.”

Thus, the military-political leadership of Armenia did not learn the lesson from the battles of April 2016 and the battles of July 2020, and continued to aggravate the situation.

On 27 September 2020, a counter-offensive was launched in response to Armenia’s yet another large-scale military attack on Azerbaijani Army positions and civilian settlements. The counter-offensive later became known as Operation Iron Fist that led to the Patriotic War.



During the 44-day Patriotic War, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev regularly addressed the people. Those addresses brought the people of Azerbaijan even closer together, united them like a fist and had a tremendous impact on the course and outcomes of the war. Every appeal was a harbinger of further victories.

In his first address to the people during the Patriotic War on 27 September 2020, the President of Azerbaijan called on the nation to achieve the resolute victory. "We are on the right path. Ours is the cause of justice. We will win! Karabakh is ours! Karabakh is Azerbaijan!"

In his second address to the nation on 4 October 2020, President Ilham Aliyev showed the enemy its place: "Now we have shown who is who... We are carrying out our salvation mission and we will do it!"

In his third address to the nation on 9 October 2020, the President of Azerbaijan declared that the status quo no longer existed and the line of contact had been smashed. "I have changed the status quo. I have changed it! Right there, on the battlefield. There is no status quo any more. There is no line of contact, it doesn't exist. We have broken through it. They had been building this line of contact for 30 years. No-one can withstand the Azerbaijani soldiers."

In his next address to the nation on 17 October 2020, President Ilham Aliyev conveyed the message that Azerbaijani cities subjected to missile attacks had become a symbol of resistance to Armenia's state terrorism and vandalism against civilians. "No threat, no intimidation, no pressure can affect my resolve. Ours is the cause of justice. We are fighting on our own land; we are restoring our territorial integrity."

In his fifth address to the nation on 20 October 2020, the President of Azerbaijan noted that the results achieved were the fruition of deliberate and timely steps, adding that haste was unacceptable: "Every time I address my people, I share good news. At the same time, I mention the names of new villages and cities liberated from occupation through my Twitter account almost every day. I know that the people of Azerbaijan are looking forward to this news every day, every single day! They await every day and every hour for this news to come out. But I want my dear people to know that the liberation of every village and every height requires great courage. There are not only fortifications there, but also the natural terrain of the liberated lands is more advantageous for the Armenians. We have to fight not only against their fortifications, their cannons and their missiles, but also against the natural terrain as we liberate our lands from the invaders inch by inch."

In his sixth address to the nation on 26 October 2020, the head of state shared the good news that the Azerbaijani people were close to the decisive victory. "We are liberating these lands at the cost of lives of our soldiers and officers. We have asserted ourselves in the world both on the battlefield and in the political arena. We have proved that the people of Azerbaijan are proud, brave people and invincible people."

8 November 2020 is inscribed in the history of Azerbaijan as Victory Day in golden letters. President Ilham Aliyev made his seventh address to the nation from the Alley of Martyrs and announced the liberation of Shusha to the people of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis all over the world. "I have also visited the grave of Great Leader Heydar Aliyev today and paid a tribute of respect to him. I said in my heart that I was a fortunate person to have fulfilled a father's will. We have liberated Shusha! This is a great victory! The souls of our martyrs and the Great Leader are rejoicing today! May you rejoice Azerbaijan! May you rejoice Azerbaijanis of the world! ... The people of Azerbaijan are united like this fist today! This will always be the case! This unity will last forever! This unity will help us to accomplish all our goals in the future... Dear Shusha, you are free! Dear Shusha, we have returned! Dear Shusha, we will revive you!"



One day after the liberation of Shusha, more than 70 other settlements were liberated. The enemy was brought to its knees and had no choice but to sign an act of capitulation.

On 10 November 2020, **the act of Armenia's capitulation**, the "Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and President of the Russian Federation", was signed. On the same day, in his eighth address to the nation, Ilham Aliyev announced that his phrase "Karabakh is Azerbaijan and an exclamation mark", which had become a national slogan, already covered the whole of Karabakh and put an end to the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. "What happened to the status quo? ... There is no status and never will be. As long as I am President, this will not happen. Therefore, that document has a tremendous significance. I am sure that all Azerbaijani citizens believe that these days and minutes are the happiest in their lives. I am also fortunate to convey good news and these messages to the Azerbaijani people. I am delighted to have signed this historic document. I am happy that we are returning to our homeland, to our native Karabakh, Shusha - Karabakh's crown jewel, and we will always live in these lands! From now on, no-one can force us from these lands!"



The President of Azerbaijan said that the outcome of the war was the best example to understand the difference between Azerbaijan and Armenia: "Did we have a single deserter? We didn't! Not a single person! That is the people of Azerbaijan! Civilians lost their homes, their property, their loved ones, but were still saying "Long live the Motherland." Charge, only charge! The letters to me say, "Supreme Commander-in-Chief, charge! We support you, charge, don't stop, so I charged, I didn't stop."

President Ilham Aliyev also obliterated Armenian propaganda with his interviews with the world's leading media outlets. "I gave about 30 interviews during this war. I have probably never given so many interviews in my life... I stated in those interviews that we respected international law, we defended international law and we defended justice. We were implementing UN Security Council resolutions. I said that all our steps were taken on based on norms and principles of international law, and in line with moral code. All our steps have been taken in that very direction. We took our revenge on the enemy. We took it on the occupiers. We have never confronted civilians, and we never will. There is no major destruction in the cities where the enemy settled and sheltered because we did not fire at civilian sites. That is the difference between us."



Combat losses of Armenian troops

No	Losses	Total
1.	Personnel	10000-ə qədər
2.	Tanks	287
3.	Infantry Fighting Vehicles	66
4.	Infantry Fighting Vehicles-C	3
5.	152 mm self-propelled artillery units (2S3 Acacia)	14
6.	122 mm self-propelled artillery units (2S1 Carnation)	14
7.	Cannons (different caliber)	315
8.	Mortars (different caliber) / anti-tank weapon	63/53
9.	300 mm BM-30 ("Smerch")	4
10.	SU-25 airplanes	5
11.	122 mm BM-21 ("Grad")	97
12.	220 mm "Hurricane"	2
13.	273 mm WM 80	2
14.	220 mm TOS (with ammunition)	2
15.	S-300 air defense system launcher	7
16.	S-300 air defense system lighting and guiding radar	1
17.	S-300 air defense system radar detection station	2
18.	5N84 (defense) radar	1
19.	Air defense systems "Tor"	6
20.	Air defense systems "Osa"	38
21.	Air defense systems "Osa" charger installation	1
22.	Air defense systems KUB launcher	2
23.	Air defense systems KUB ICT station	2
24.	Air defense systems KRUG RTS	1
25.	Air defense system S-125 antenna posts (UNV-2D)	2
26.	Anti-aircraft defense installations M55 Zastava (mounted on multi-purpose transporter)	5
27.	Anti-aircraft defense installations 23-2/4 (mounted on multi-purpose transporter)	9
28.	Unmanned flying vehicles	22
29.	Short-range missiles "ELBRUS" (rocket)	2
30.	Ballistic rockets	2
31.	"TOCHKA-U" rocket systems	1
32.	PMZ (ground vehicle mine dispenser)	1
33.	REM (RTK) installations / Re-transmitter	5/1
34.	R-142 (command post vehicles), diesel engine	2/1
35.	NEBO-M radars	1
36.	P-19 radar station	1
37.	P-18 radar station / antenna post	3/1
38.	19J6 radar stations	3
39.	Repellents (radio-technical disturbance unit)	4
40.	Trucks (22 with ammunition), automobiles	253/46
41.	Pick-up automobiles / special vehicles	5/1
42.	Multi-purpose transporters	3



Spoils of war seized by the Azerbaijani Army from the enemy

No	Spoils of war	Total
1.	Ammunition (different caliber)	2994285
2.	Tanks	101
3.	Infantry fighting vehicles	63
4.	Infantry fighting vehicles-CS	1
5.	BRDM-2 (armored reconnaissance scout vehicle)	8
6.	Cannons and howitzers	169
7.	Mortars	64
8.	Anti-tank guided rocket systems	97
9.	Anti-tank guided rockets	358
10.	Grenade launchers	635
11.	Firearms	3615
12.	Shilka anti-aircraft defense systems 23-4	11
13.	KUB-2K12 (1RL-93 rocket charging station of anti-aircraft defense systems)	1
14.	KUB-2K12 (anti-aircraft defense system launchers)	1
15.	3M9M3 anti-aircraft missile system (rocket)	3
16.	9M331 TOR system (9M334)	6
17.	9M331 TOR anti-aircraft missile system (rocket)	21
18.	9M33M2, 9M33M3 anti-aircraft missile system (rocket)	31
19.	OSA combat vehicle	1
20.	9T217BM3 fuel engine	2
21.	"Igla-S", "Igla", "Igla-1" portable anti-aircraft defense systems	138
22.	"Strela-2" portable anti-aircraft defense systems	6
23.	"Igla-S", "Igla", "Igla-1", "Strela-2" portable anti-aircraft defense system launchers	55
24.	Automobiles	120
25.	Trucks	512
26.	Special vehicles	94
27.	Trailers	47
28.	BTS-4 armored tractor	5
29.	Multi-purpose transporters	48
30.	BRM-1K combat reconnaissance vehicle	6
31.	Self-propelled artillery installations (2S1 Carnation)	12
32.	Tractors	10

In addition, seven enemy command posts and 11 ammunition depots were destroyed.

As a result of a continuation of the military victory in the political arena, within 20 days after the 44-day war, three districts were returned to Azerbaijan – Aghdam on 20 November, Kalbajar on 25 November and Lachin on 1 December of 2020. In this regard, the President of Azerbaijan said in an address to the nation on 1 December: "The brilliant victory on the battlefield led to the wonderful outcome that Azerbaijan's three districts – Aghdam, Kalbadjar and Lachin – have been returned to us. We have regained these districts without firing a single shot or a single person becoming a martyr."

Thus, Azerbaijan's lands that were gradually occupied by Armenian military units over the course of four years and remained under occupation for about 30 years were liberated in a matter of 44 days regardless of strong military fortifications, obstacles and lines of defense. The territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been restored and the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict has been consigned to history.



Azerbaijan won a brilliant victory in the Patriotic War, defeated Armenia and put an end to the occupation. Every single day of these 44 days was a glorious history for Azerbaijan.

The people of Azerbaijan and the state cherish the bright memory of the heroic sons who perished for the Motherland, always remember them with utmost respect, appreciate the hard work of the wounded war veterans and are proud of them.



Some of the equipment seized from the Armenian army was displayed in a military parade in Baku on 10 December 2020, and is also exhibited in the Spoils of War Park, which opened in Baku in April 2021.



The Patriotic War has also earned the title of a “War of the 21st Century” in the world’s military science. In the face of the complex fortifications built by the enemy in difficult terrain for decades, the victorious Azerbaijani Army demonstrated true professionalism, skill, invincibility and, most importantly, proved to the world that it is ready for any sacrifice for the sake of eternal love for the Motherland.



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The Great Return

The Patriotic War put an end to the longing of the Azerbaijani people for Karabakh and paved the way for the restoration and reconstruction work in the liberated territories in accordance with the latest standards. Life has returned to Karabakh. As a result of the Patriotic War, the restoration of Azerbaijan's borderline with Armenia began, and the Zangazur corridor will soon become a historical reality.

The Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey signed in Shusha on 15 June 2021 also states that the opening of the Zangazur corridor will signal the start of a new phase in the life of the region.



President Ilham Aliyev clearly defined the historic significance of the Shusha Declaration: “The Declaration reflects the words of the great leaders of our peoples, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Heydar Aliyev. In the early 20th century, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said, ‘Azerbaijan’s joy is ours, and so is its sorrow.’ In the late 20th century, Heydar Aliyev said, ‘Turkey and Azerbaijan are one nation in two states.’ Those historic words are the primary factor in our endeavors. In the 21st century, we remain true to this testament, demonstrate our loyalty to our ancestors and guide future generations by signing the Declaration on Allied Relations in the liberated Shusha. The Joint Declaration refers to the historic Kars Agreement. The historic Kars Agreement was signed exactly 100 years ago. There is also a great symbolism in that. The Joint Declaration on Allied Relations signed in the liberated city of Shusha after 100 years shows the direction of our future cooperation.”

Another historic document signed on 7 July 2021, the **“Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on a new division of economic regions in the Republic of Azerbaijan”**, became one of the primary outcomes of the Patriotic War. By this Decree, Bu Fərmanla Zəngəzur dağ silsiləsi ilə əhatə olunan, Laçın və Kəlbəcərdən Naxçıvana qədər böyük bir ərazini tutan Zəngəzur yaylasının şərq hissəsində, Ermənistanla sərhəddə yerləşmiş və eyni coğrafi məkanda, tarixən birlikdə, habelə uzun illər 1861-ci ildə yaradılmış Zəngəzur qəzasının tərkibində olmuş və ənənəvi sosial-iqtisadi, tarixi-mədəni bağlılıqlara malik Zəngilan, Qubadlı, Cəbrayıl, Laçın və Kəlbəcər rayonları vahid iqtisadi rayonda – Şərqi Zəngəzur iqtisadi rayonunda birləşdirildi. Ağdam, Şuşa, Füzuli, Tərtər, Xocavənd, Xocalı rayonları və Xankəndi şəhəri, habelə Qarabağ bölgəsinə aid olan Ağcabədi və Bərdə rayonları da daxil olmaqla özünəməxsus zəngin tarixi-mədəni irsə, əsrarəngiz təbiətə malik qədim Qarabağ bölgəsi Qarabağ iqtisadi rayonuna çevrildi

Located in the eastern part of the Zangazur plateau, surrounded by the Zangazur mountain range and covering a vast area from Lachin and Kalbadjar to Nakhchivan, situated on the border with Armenia, a region that was long part of the Zangazur district established in the same geographical area in 1861, has become a part of a single economic zone – the East Zangazur Economic Region, together with Zangilan, Gubadli, Jabrayil, Lachin and Kalbadjar districts, with which it has historically had economic, historical and cultural ties. The ancient Karabakh region with its unique historical and cultural heritage and inimitable nature has become – the Karabakh Economic Region that includes Aghdam, Shusha, Fuzuli, Tartar, Khojavand, Khojaly districts and Khankendi city, as well as Aghjabadi and Barda districts.

Thus, another historical injustice that befell the Azerbaijani people during the USSR had been eliminated by President Ilham Aliyev: “... In 1923, an artificial entity was created in our territory – the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region. There were absolutely no grounds for its establishment. Although the 7 July was a tragic date for our people, in 2021 we have turned this black page. 7 July will go down in history as a remarkable date because on 7 July 2021, I signed a decree on the establishment of the Karabakh and East Zangazur economic zones, and historical justice has been restored.”





Karabakh and East Zangazur will soon become a paradise. At present, all the liberated territories are experiencing a period of great construction and restoration and are preparing for the Great Return.



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