



# GLOSSARY

## OF HATE SPEECH IN THE MEDIA OF ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

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## GLOSSARY OF HATE SPEECH

The present analytical list of the most common clichés, stereotypes and examples of inaccurate (or reasonably questioned) information in the media of Armenia and Azerbaijan is based on the findings of a number of joint studies, administered by Yerevan Press Club and “Yeni Nesil” Journalists’ Union of Azerbaijan. It also reflects the observations made of Azerbaijani and Armenian media in 2001-2010 by the two organizations. The development and publication of the glossary were made possible through the longstanding partnership between YPC and “Yeni Nesil” within the framework of projects supported by the British Embassies in Yerevan and Baku, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Open Society Institute and Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The authors of this research believe that it should be viewed not only as an evidence of the hostility that has seized the media space of the conflicting parties, but also as a tool useful for those journalists in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Mountainous Karabagh and third countries who seek to produce quality and unbiased coverage of the developments and issues of the region.

## USE OF CLICHÉS IN MEDIA OF ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

In this section of the glossary the notion of “cliché” comes to denote ***the words and phrases invariably used by Armenian and Azerbaijani media that are negatively perceived by the audience of the other party.***

Generally speaking, the media dissemination of clichés based on inaccurate information can be avoided in all cases, once they are verified through several sources. However, it is quite unrealistic to require complete refusal from using negative clichés in media: they often have no direct relation to the facts whatsoever; hence, it is hardly possible to verify them. The clichés are formed also as a result of fact interpretation, are a reflection of mutually exclusive stances that parties may have on important aspects of the problem in question.

Thus, taking into account the today’s nature of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, the inevitability of certain negative clichés must, conventionally speaking, be accepted. They are a consequence of preconceived ideas, fixed in public mind, therefore to give them up one needs a substantial experience of positive coexistence. At the same time, the majority of clichés can be excluded from the active vocabulary of media or at least, their use can be significantly restricted. The analysis of the findings of the many-year studies of leading newspapers, TV channels as well as the online resources of Armenia and Azerbaijan show that the main part of the clichés is produced by reasons, which are surmountable in principle. Yet surmounting those means to have journalistic responsibility and strictly follow the norms of professional ethics. For example, in a number of cases negative clichés are formed as a result of multiple uses in an inappropriate context of notions and terms, initially neutral in their meaning.

Of the numerous clichés, actively used in Armenian and Azerbaijani press, the glossary below lists those of relatively frequent use.

All articles of this section of the glossary follow the outline, common for all sections: the frequency of use of the given cliché is mentioned, as well as the existence of the “mirroring” version in the media of the other party. Further a note is made as to who - journalists, experts, politicians, officials - use the cliché the most; examples from media publications are quoted. The titles of the media cited are not specified, as the same clichés can be encountered in other media outlets with almost identical frequency. Yet, specific links and references are present in the primary research data.

Each of the articles is completed by the analysis of reasons for negative perception of the clichés by the other party. This is followed by recommendations as to how their use can be avoided, alternative options are proposed that can evoke more neutral reactions in the audience of the other country and ultimately help to calm the climate of hate and hostility.

The articles in the section are placed alphabetically.

## CLICHÉS IN THE MEDIA OF ARMENIA

### **AGGRESSION (other versions: Azerbaijani aggression / aggression of Azerbaijan / Azerbaijan the aggressor)**

The cliché is frequently used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan (“Armenian aggression”, etc.).

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Example:**

“Azerbaijan was the first to use force, (...) unleashing a large-scale military aggression against the Mountainous Karabagh Republic that had self-determined.”

**Comment:** This cliché is extremely negatively viewed by the population of the country, whose internationally recognized borders have been violated and whose territory had been an arena for military actions. The Azerbaijani audience is convinced that when calling the country an “aggressor” the Armenian media seek to accuse Azerbaijan of the actions that Armenia itself has committed.

**Recommendation:** As a notion of international law, the term “aggression” stands for an illegal use of armed force by one state (a group of states) against the other one. As per beginning of the military conflict Mountainous Karabagh was an autonomous region within Azerbaijan, its state status was not recognized by the international community. So in the view of correct application of the term, irrespective of who was the first to apply force and what the attitude towards that is, it is preferable to refuse from using this term in Armenian media with regard to Azerbaijan.

### **ARMENIANHOOD (other versions: Artsakh Armenianhood / Armenianhood of MK / Armenianhood of Diaspora / the triple alliance of Armenianhood: Armenia-Artsakh-Diaspora / the Armenianhood of the world)**

The cliché is often used in Armenian media.

The same cliché (“Armenianhood”, “Armenianhood of the world”), but with a negative connotation, is used by the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Turkey and Azerbaijan act as a single body and do their best to damage the common interests of the whole Armenianhood.”

“Bako Sahakyan commended on the efforts of Hay Dat, directed at the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, protection of the rights of Armenian nations and preservation of the Armenianhood of Diaspora.”

“The international community - the UN, the OSCE and other European structures - that repeatedly and brutally violated the rights of Artsakh Armenianhood has no right to demand or to expect MKR to make unjustified compromise both in terms of territory and in terms of the status of independent state.”

**Comment:** The negative perception of this cliché in Azerbaijan is largely related to the context of its use. The “Armenianhood” in the vast majority of cases considered is used in political context, the goal of the Armenianhood is proclaimed to be the struggle against Turkey and Azerbaijan, achievement or protection of the state sovereignty of the unrecognized Mountainous Karabagh Republic, maintenance of Armenian control over the regions around MK. For this reason the notion of “Armenianhood” is seen by Azerbaijanis as a collective force, hostile to everything Turkish, bearing a threat also for the Azerbaijani nation, territorial integrity of the state.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to change the negative perception of this cliché by Azerbaijani audience or the context of its use in Armenian media under the circumstances. One can only propose to Armenian journalists to restrict the use of such versions of it as “the Armenianhood of Artsakh”, “the triple alliance of Armenianhood Armenia-Artsakh-Diaspora”, as well as try to avoid this cliché, having a collective meaning, in the cases when it is irrelevant - e.g., to use the phrase “Armenians of MK” instead of “Armenianhood of MK”.

### **ARTSAKH (other versions: Artsakh Republic / Artsakh problem / Artsakh war / Artsakh conflict / Artsakh resolution / people of Artsakh, etc.)**

This cliché is one of the most frequently used ones in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“If he is really frank in his stance, let him leave the resolution of the issue of the people of Mountainous Karabagh Republic to the people of Artsakh themselves.”

“The head of the Foreign Office Nalbandyan spoke about different aspects of cooperation between Armenia and NATO, priorities of foreign policy of Armenia, the process of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement, the possibilities for resolving the Artsakh problem.”

**Comment:** Before the beginning of the conflict the region was officially called Mountainous Karabagh, and it continues to be called so in all official documents and sources, including Armenian ones. As to the historical aspect of the issue, the Azerbaijani historians mention ancient Artsakh that used to exist on this land as an Albanian principality, while the Armenian historians state it was Armenian. The Azerbaijani party sees in the common use of “Artsakh” name alongside with “Mountainous Karabagh” an aspiration to stress the historical ownership of this territory by Armenians and its today’s status of independence from Azerbaijan. Both these issues are the subject of the principal disagreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia, for this reason the word “Artsakh” and its derivatives are seen as a negative cliché by the Azerbaijani audience.

**Recommendation:** It is unrealistic to expect the Armenian media to completely refuse from using this cliché, as it is directly related to the essence of Azerbaijani-Armenian controversy. Yet the area of its use can be restricted. For example, such versions of the cliché specified as “Artsakh problem”, “Artsakh war”, “Artsakh conflict”, “Artsakh resolution” can be replaced by the commonly accepted “Mountainous Karabagh” or “Karabagh”. The proposed phrases are often used by the media of Armenia and do not impede the perceptions of any party. (For example, the official negotiations between the representatives of the two countries with the involvement of mediators are called negotiations “on the resolution of Mountainous Karabagh problem” by all parties). The domains of use of the term “Artsakh” could be restricted to history and culture.

### **AZERBAIJAN-KARABAGH CONFLICT (other version: Azerbaijan-Artsakh conflict)**

This cliché is frequently used in Armenian media, particularly actively in new media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Example:**

“In the meeting, in which writer Zoriy Balayan had taken part, a broad range of issues was discussed with regard to bilateral links, Azerbaijan-Karabagh conflict.”

**Comment:** The negative perception of this cliché by the Azerbaijani audience is due to the following reasons. Azerbaijan is a sovereign state, and Azerbaijanis are a nation. Karabagh, in the perception of Azerbaijanis as well as by the norms of international law is not a recognized state and Karabaghis are not a nation. Mountainous Karabagh is a geographical denotation of a territory, populated predominantly by Armenians, but also by Azerbaijanis. The Armenians of Karabagh announced their independence and, with the support of Armenia, they seek the recognition of their state sovereignty. Thus, people in Azerbaijan believe the conflict is not between Azerbaijan and Karabagh, but between Azerbaijan and Armenia, over Mountainous Karabagh. In the same manner it is reflected also in international documents. As a geographic notion, Karabagh is much broader than Mountainous Karabagh. Hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis are either of Karabagh

origin or live there. For them the phrase “Azerbaijan-Karabagh conflict” is particularly sensitive, they see it as a distortion of the conflict essence.

**Recommendation:** The conflict has established names - Karabagh conflict, Azerbaijani-Armenian/Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict - that have been used in international documents, in Azerbaijani media and in most cases also in Armenian media for many years. The journalists can further adhere to commonly accepted terms and to avoid other versions that cause additional irritation of the audience of the other country.

**AZERI PROPAGANDA MACHINE (other versions: AzerProp / insinuations of Azerbaijani propaganda machine / propaganda march of Azerbaijan / Goebbels propaganda / propagandist lies and fraud of Azerbaijan / Azerbaijani propagandist hysteria / impudent (insolent) Azerbaijani propaganda)**

This cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan (“Armenian propaganda”, “Armenian lie”, etc.).

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

### Example:

**“The screams of indignation by Azeri propaganda machine to the address of Euronews turned against Azerbaijan itself.”**

**Comment:** In all the clichés of the group there is a component of diminishing or obviously insulting attitude. Associations with the totalitarian Soviet propaganda are thus formed, the deceitfulness as a national feature or an attribute of state policy is stressed, which, naturally causes negative response in Azerbaijan. Besides, such phrases are applied not only to the actions, related to the problem of Mountainous Karabagh, but also any report about Azerbaijan’s achievements, say, in energy or sports.

**Recommendation:** Excluding the use of such clichés in Armenian media while the confrontation remains on today’s level is impossible. Azerbaijani-Armenian confrontation on the information field, the propaganda war are realities of today, are among the main components of the conflict. Yet both media and politicians, as well as experts, officials can be more reticent in their wording, refrain from using insulting statements when reporting a propagandist step of the other party. Thus, for example, instead of such clichés as “AzerProp” one can use the phrase “Azerbaijani propaganda” without coloring it with such epithets as “impudent”, “insolent”, etc. Besides, not every report of an accomplishment of the other party should be interpreted as “propaganda” or “hysteria”, as in the case of, say, the delight of Azerbaijani football fans when the game between Azerbaijan and Russia ended in a draw.



### **AZERIS (other versions: Azeri refugees / Azeri nation / the cave-residing Azeris)**

The cliché is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts and politicians, less frequently - by officials.

#### **Example:**

“(…) They used to be called the Tatars of the Caucasus, further they were renamed into Azerbaijanis, and now - into Azeris. These are the same Turks that helped to commit Armenian genocide in 1918 in the Eastern Transcaucasia.”

**Comment:** The cliché “Azeris” is an intentional distortion of the name “Azerbaijanis” and causes strongly negative feelings among the people of Azerbaijan. They see in it a humiliating, insulting context, and judging from the connotation of this cliché in Armenian media there are serious grounds for that.

**Recommendation:** It is appropriate to refuse from using this cliché in media and to always use the official name of the people of the neighbor country - Azerbaijanis.

### **GENOCIDE OF ARMENIANS IN AZERBAIJAN (other versions: genocide of Armenians in Baku / genocide of Armenians in Gyanja / genocide of Armenians in Sumgait / genocide of Armenians in Maraga / genocide of Armenians in Mountainous Karabagh)**

The cliché is often used in Armenian media.

In the media of Azerbaijan it has “mirror” manifestations regarding the violence against Azerbaijanis in Armenia, Mountainous Karabagh, on the territories around MK, controlled by Armenians.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“The new Azerbaijani state is based on Armenian genocide.”

“The Armenian former residents of Baku, Sumgait and other cities and villages of Azerbaijan were subjected to Genocide twice: once in their places of permanent residence, and then in MKR.”

**Comment:** The accusation of having committed genocide is viewed very negatively by the population of Azerbaijan, which has never and in no way declared and executed extermination or deportation of Armenians on an official level. As a result of bloodshed of late 1980s, followed by the tragic events that became a large-scale war, the Azerbaijani party had as many casualties as the Armenian. At the same time, the frequent repetition of this cliché in Armenian media on every tragic occasion causes the indignation of the Azerbaijani society. An opinion is being formed that Armenians wish to introduce themselves to the world as a nation of many sufferings, constantly repressed and exterminated by the cruel Azerbaijanis, from whom only state borders can protect, including Mountainous Karabagh.

**Recommendation:** “Genocide” term calls for serious consequences in the context of international law and requires appropriate legal recognition, hence it should be applied with extreme caution and responsibility, without arbitrary interpretations. With regard to certain events in Azerbaijan it is more appropriate to use words “tragedy”, in certain cases - “pogrom”. The fact that these events were tragic, the crimes, the human deaths, sufferings, unlike their legal evaluation through the term “genocide”, are undisputed by sensible people, irrespective from which party of the conflict they belong to and how they explain the reasons for these events.

### **KARABAGH TIGRANAKERT (other versions: Artsakh Tigranakert / Tigranakert in MKR)**

The cliché is frequently used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Karabagh Tigranakert and Egypt pyramids.”

“The discovery of Tigranakert is a response to the statement of Aliyev that Armenians are guests in Karabagh, that they appeared in Karabagh in 19th century. (...) The discovery of Armenian monuments must become a counterstrike on Baku and a proof that this territory was historically owned by ethnic Armenians.”

“The results of excavations in Tigranakert are very important in terms of presenting to the world how broad our territories were.”

**Comment:** There are ancient controversies between Azerbaijani and Armenian historians about the origins of historical monuments on the territory of Mountainous Karabagh. In this case, in the opinion of Azerbaijani audience, the cliché “Karabagh Tigranakert” was created and is used to prove the historical Armenian ownership of not only Mountainous Karabagh, but also the whole Karabagh region - for the monument discovered is out of the Soviet administrative borders of Mountainous Karabagh. It is the materials of Armenian

media that contain this cliché are to account for this perception. Thus, everything that is related to excavations and appropriate historical references is directly associated with the conflict and causes negative response in Azerbaijan.

**Recommendation:** Journalists, similarly to politicians, cannot resolve the dispute about the ownership of historical monuments. At the same time it is obvious that it is impossible to avoid the coverage of archeological excavations implemented. Under the circumstances the media can reduce the negative impact of reports about historical discoveries, by modifying their context, refraining from using these facts as an argument, capable of resolving the political and territorial disputes of today.

### **LIBERATED DISTRICTS (other versions: liberated territories / seven liberated districts / allegedly occupied districts / the so-called “occupied territories”)**

The cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan (“occupied areas”), denoting the same territories.

The cliché is equally used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“As a compromise option of resolution it is “proposed” “to return” to Azerbaijan the liberated territories, a surrender of territories in exchange for the recognition of the status or unification with Armenia.”

“They demand that the so-called “occupied territories” be returned to Azerbaijan.”

**Comment:** The name “liberated territories” in media of Armenia is given to the districts of Azerbaijan, adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh and taken into Armenian control as a result of military actions in 1992-1993. During the first years after the ceasefire these areas in Armenian media were more often denoted as “buffer zone” or “security belt” that were to be returned to Azerbaijan as the conflict is resolved. The further transformation of these denotations into cliché “liberated territories” is seen in Azerbaijan to be a change in the approach Armenia has towards the future of these districts. Today they, similarly to Mountainous Karabagh, are often presented by media to be originally Armenian, invaded by Azerbaijan or transferred to it by a third party. Hence, these districts are liberated and cannot be returned to Azerbaijan. This cliché not only causes extremely negative response in Azerbaijani society, but also becomes a sign of the unwillingness of the Armenian party to compromise, serves as an argument for those who call for interruption of negotiations and resumption of war.

**Recommendation:** The replacement of this cliché in media of Armenia by a phrase “districts around Mountainous Karabagh, controlled by Armenian forces”, can significantly reduce the negativism of perception in Azerbaijan. This change of wording would leave much more space for compromise between the conflicting parties.

### **MILITANT POLICY OF AZERBAIJAN (other versions: militarist/adventurist/aggressive/expansive policy of Azerbaijan, etc.)**

The cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Armenian media.

It has corresponding “mirror” versions in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Example:**

“The militant and aggressive policy of Azerbaijan is one of the most important reasons impeding the resolution.”

**Comment:** The authorities of Azerbaijan have repeatedly announced they advocate the peaceful resolution of the conflict. At the same time measures are being taken to strengthen the army and the option of military resolution of the conflict is considered - in the case if the parties fail to find a mutually acceptable solution in the negotiations. This stance is viewed in Azerbaijan as a natural right of any sovereign state. According to the information, received by the Azerbaijani audience, Armenia, too, enhances the military expenditures, holds military drills in the borderline areas, comes up with threats to the address of Azerbaijan. For this reason the Azerbaijani society responds very negatively to the broad use of such clichés as “militant” or “militarist policy of Azerbaijan” in Armenian media, seeing in them a wish to discredit the country.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to fully exclude the use of such clichés in Armenian media: they are contained in speeches of politicians, statements by high-ranked officials, including the leaders of the country, and are a reflection of the common Armenian opinion about the AR policy. Yet the journalists themselves could resort to these clichés, so sensitive for the other party, less frequently.

### **MODIFIED GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES-CLICHÉS (“Kashatagh” for “Lachin”, “Karvachar” for “Kelbajar”, etc.)**

These clichés are often used in Armenian media, are modified versions of the names of Azerbaijani districts and cities, controlled by Armenian armed forces.

In the media of Azerbaijan a “mirror” treatment of Armenian names is manifest.

The clichés are used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Kashatagh has ceased being a liberated territory, this notion has passed into the history, currently this district is recorded in the Constitution of Mountainous Karabagh.”

“(…) No official viewpoint was expressed about the future legal status of historically Armenian Karvachar, bordering with MKR, even though after the war Karvachar was fully cleared of Azerbaijanis.”

**Comment:** It is thus maintained that the districts of Azerbaijan, gained during the military actions, are historical Armenian lands, they cannot be returned to the neighbor country, and, as a proof, the Azerbaijani names are renamed. Azerbaijanis view this as a process of territory annexation. This strengthens their perception of impossibility of compromise for Armenians and is considered as an argument in favor of military solution of the problem by Azerbaijan. This also causes the confusion of foreign readers, who normally do not have sufficient information to compare differing versions of names.

**Recommendation:** An acceptable solution of this problem for Azerbaijani party is the use of those names in Armenian media that were in use at the time the conflict broke out, are considered commonly acceptable and are to this day included in international documents, official texts. It should be noted that in many cases Armenian journalists do just that. At the same time, there may appear situations when the use of other titles for Azerbaijani areas, controlled by Armenian forces, becomes inevitable - such as in quoting from political statements, documents of factual local authorities. In these cases one can note in the text the Azerbaijani name, too - in parentheses and a reservation that an editorial intervention was made. This would render the information more comprehensible also for those people in the audience who are not fully aware of the existing alternative names and are unable to compare differing names.

### **MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH REPUBLIC (other versions: MKR / President of MKR / MKR authorities / MKR parliament, etc.)**

This cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Armenian media.

As a “mirror” version of this cliché in the media of Azerbaijan one can regard the use of “MKR” abbreviation and other attributes that stress the state independence of Mountainous Karabagh in quotation marks.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

### **Examples:**

“Article 142 of the Constitution of Mountainous Karabagh Republic specifies that until the integrity of the state territory of Mountainous Karabagh Republic is restored and the borders are finalized, the public authority is administered on the territory factually governed by the Mountainous Karabagh Republic.”

“The Presidents of Armenia and MKR congratulated Zoriy Balayan on the occasion of his 75th anniversary.”

**Comment:** Azerbaijan does not recognize the independence of Mountainous Karabagh. The future of status of MK is the key point of controversy between the parties at the negotiations on resolving Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict. Azerbaijan considers Mountainous Karabagh to be its integral part, hence any report that defines it as an independent state is viewed very negatively by the population of the country.

**Recommendation:** The cliché is one of the most rooted ones in Armenian media and it reflects the stance of Armenia at the negotiations on MK issue resolution. Hence it is impossible to exclude it from using in Armenian media at the current stage of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. It is also hardly possible to attain a unified denomination for certain concepts in Azerbaijani and Armenian media. At the same time, in many cases, when stressing the official attributes is not inevitable, more general phrases can be used, such as “Mountainous Karabagh” instead of “MKR”, “head of MK” instead of “MKR President”, etc. This could allow avoiding negative response from Azerbaijani audience to a certain extent.

### **OCCUPATION (other versions: territories occupied by Azerbaijan / occupied areas of Mountainous Karabagh / MK territories invaded by Azerbaijan)**

The cliché is often used in Armenian media.

In the media of Azerbaijan it has a “mirror” manifestation: “Armenian occupation” - with regard to Mountainous Karabagh and Azerbaijani regions around it, controlled by Armenians.

The cliché is used by experts, politicians and officials, less frequently - by journalists.

#### **Examples:**

“Azerbaijan (...) occupied territories of Artsakh from Getashen to Martakert.”

“The issue lies in international legal recognition of the Mountainous Karabagh Republic, established de facto, and the problem is in returning the territories, invaded by Azerbaijan and owned by Artsakh by Constitution and international law.”

**Comment:** As of the moment of the conflict beginning the territory of Mountainous Karabagh was legally a part of Azerbaijan. It is within this borders that in March 1992 Azerbaijan was recognized a member state of the UN. The country cannot occupy the lands within its jurisdiction. The Azerbaijani audience is particularly negative when this cliché is attempted to be justified by the MK Constitution, adopted after the armed stage of the conflict, in 2006, “historical ownership of the land” or questionable references to norms of international law.

**Recommendation:** Expecting a change in the attitude of the Armenian party in this issue and hence expect the refusal from this cliché at this stage of the conflict is unrealistic. Yet, through adopting the practice of denoting these territories by neutral phrasings that reflect the pure facts the negativism of Azerbaijani audience can be reduced. Thus, for example

the media can use the notion of “the part of territory of Mountainous Karabagh, controlled by Azerbaijan”, which is clear and more or less acceptable for both parties.

### **OCCUPATION OF NAKHCHIVAN (other version: annexing of Nakhchivan)**

The cliché is seldom used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is mostly used by experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Armenian territories - Artsakh and Nakhchivan - by the very norms of international law have been (...) occupied territories since 1991.”

“There came many warnings from Americans themselves as well as from Armenian experts that all this is directed at the legitimization of the extremely illegal and criminal Kars treaty of 1921 between the Bolsheviks and Kemalists, that is, at the confirmation, by hands of Armenian themselves, of a refusal from Nakhchivan and Kars region - territories, defined as occupied by all international laws and norms.”

**Comment:** In international law the word “occupation” means a temporary invasion by the armed forces of one state of a territory the state does not own, without gaining sovereignty of it. Therefore, the use of notion “occupation of Nakhchivan” in Armenian media is seen in Azerbaijan as non-recognition of Azerbaijan’s sovereignty over Nakhchivan (Azerbaijani transcription) and an allegation that this territory is also owned by Armenia. Azerbaijanis see in this approach a verification of the opinion, commonly held in the country that under certain circumstances Armenia will try to claim this part of internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan, too.

**Recommendation:** It is appropriate to refrain from using this cliché, the very essence of which is absolutely unacceptable for Azerbaijanis, enhances their distrust to Armenia, and hence, affects adversely the negotiations on Karabagh conflict resolution.

### **THE SO-CALLED “GENOCIDE IN KHOJALI” (other versions: “genocide” of Khojali residents / the fictitious genocide in Khojali / the alleged killings in Khojali / questionable Khojali / the legend of Khojali genocide)**

The cliché is frequently used in Armenian media.

In the media of Azerbaijan it has a “mirror” manifestation (“genocide in Khojali” without quotation marks), reflected a reverse attitude towards the issue.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“This conclusion of the journalist contradicts the version of Azerbaijani propaganda that always accuses the Armenian party of “genocide” of Khojali residents.”

“Today the Azerbaijani propaganda machine does not like to recall all (...) cases of brutalities, known to the world, yet it does not cease shouting (...) about the questionable ‘khojali’.”

**Comment:** The people of Azerbaijan treat the tragedy in Khojali as one of the saddest pages in their history. To this day there are eye-witnesses of these events, families and friends of people who were killed in Khojali. Attempts to deny the tragedy of events in Khojali and even their very fact, diminishing statements about them cause strongly negative feelings in Azerbaijan.

**Recommendation:** When speaking of the events that are a source of pain for people journalists must always be tactful. Certain doubts may be voices, versions as to the reasons and consequences of these events can be discussed, but the diminishing expressions in their regard are unacceptable. Proceeding from this undoubted professional norm, it is proposed to refuse from using this group of clichés in Armenian media, at least in those cases, when the legitimacy of the word “genocide” is discussed. When referring to this episode of Karabagh war, the Armenian media could use the notions of “tragedy in Khojali”, “Khojali tragedy” (an occurrence that resulted in hundreds of deaths of innocent people, a deportation of a whole city’s population, is a true tragedy, irrespective of who is responsible for it). The more neutral phrase - “events in Khojali” - would also be acceptable.

## **TWO ARMENIAN STATES (other versions: Armenian and Artsakh states / one nation, two states)**

The cliché is often used in Armenian media, particularly in online resources.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“At the meetings issues were discussed related to the development of military construction and the cooperation of the two Armenian states in this domain.”

“At first two Armenian states held negotiations with Azerbaijan.”



**Comment:** Referring to Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh as to two states, created by one nation, causes negative sentiment in Azerbaijan, as it interprets the existence of Mountainous Karabagh as a sovereign state, independent from Azerbaijan, as a fact of reality, thus ignoring the negotiations under way.

**Recommendation:** No country of the world, including Armenia, has recognized the independent state status of Mountainous Karabagh. Taking into account this fact, from a purely legal viewpoint, it would have been more appropriate to refrain from using this cliché in Armenian media.

### **VANDALISM OF AZERBAIJANIS (other versions: Azerbaijani brutalities / Azerbaijani vandals, etc.)**

The cliché is frequently used in Armenian media.

It has corresponding “mirror” versions in the media of Azerbaijan.

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Armenian representative who spoke afterwards presented the state terror and vandalism against the Armenian population committed by Azerbaijan.”

“Brutalities with regard to Armenians who are regularly organized by Azerbaijani authorities throughout the 20th century once again come to prove how right the Artsakh people were.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijani society qualifies the frequent use of such clichés in Armenian media not only as a sign of extreme hostility but also as an attempt to present Azerbaijani people in front of the international community as an uncivilized brutal nation that is impossible for Armenians to coexist with within one state.

**Recommendation:** One can quote numerous facts in the relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis that can be described as “brutality”, “cruelty”, “an act of vandalism” etc. Yet it must not be a ground for accusing the whole nation of vandalism, or the country and its authorities - of brutality. It should be noted that Armenian media occasionally use such clichés with regard to Azerbaijanis even in the reports of simple criminal chronicle, unrelated to the Mountainous Karabagh conflict, such as in an article telling about a woman killing her husband and titled “Azerbaijani Women Kill Their Husbands By Cutting Off Their ”Manliness”. Taking into account these circumstances as well as following the principles of professional ethics, journalist must restrict the use of such wording with regard to specific actions of specific people, avoiding generalizations, insulting descriptions of the whole nation, as this can only contribute to the hatred and hostility.

## CLICHÉS IN THE MEDIA OF AZERBAIJAN

**AGGRESSION (other versions: aggression of Armenia / Armenian aggression / Armenian aggressors / Armenia is the aggressor / the aggressive/aggressor policy of Armenia / Azerbaijan is the victim of aggression)**

This cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia (“Azerbaijani aggression”, etc.).

The cliché is used by journalists, experts, politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“A historian from Austria, professor Eric Feigl made an appeal to the parliament of its country, titled “The Back Flow” on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of the Khojali genocide. The appeal contained information about Azerbaijan, the Armenian aggression against our country and the brutalities, committed by Armenians.”

“Azerbaijan cannot cooperate with the Collective Security Treaty Organization that includes as a member an aggressor country that damaged the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and secondly, this organization has not condemned its actions, directed at invading others’ territories”, said the Deputy Chairman of the Parliament Standing Committee on Defense and Security Aydin Mirzazadeh.”

“Armenia is presently an aggressor not only towards Azerbaijan, but also towards Turkey.”

**Comment:** Reflecting the interpretation that Azerbaijan gives to the military conflict of early 1990s, this cliché is refused bluntly by the Armenian society. The undesirability of this cliché is due to the fact that the Armenian audience does not accept the use of the notion “aggressor”, common for international law, as applied to Armenia, as it qualifies the use of military force as a response measure to protect the population of Mountainous Karabagh.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to completely exclude the use of the cliché since it reflects the notions, common for the Azerbaijani society. At the same time the cliché is not always necessary to describe certain events or realities. It makes sense not to use them in pieces where such phrasings do not add anything substantial to the content. For example, when the author seeks to simply notify a certain period of time, he can easily use the phrase “after the Karabagh war” instead of “after Armenian aggression”, or use another expression that would not cause negative sentiments in the audience of the neighbor country. The reduction in the use of this cliché would allow mitigating the hostility, without affecting the adequacy of reporting on relevant issues in Azerbaijani media.

### **ARMENIAN PROPAGANDA (other versions: Armenian lie / Armenian provocation / fabrications of Armenians / Armenian fabrications)**

The cliché is frequently used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia (“AzerProp”, “propagandist lies and fraud of Azerbaijan”, etc.).

The cliché is mostly used by journalists and experts, less frequently - by politicians and officials.

#### **Examples:**

“As long as the Armenian occupation of 20% of Azerbaijani territories, the ousting of over one million of refugees and internally displaced persons from the land of their fathers and grandfathers is a fact, all fabrications by Armenian would not be very convincing. On the other hand, I believe that when discussing the report the members of the parliamentary delegation of Azerbaijan will be able to make an adequate response to the Armenian propaganda, based on lies”, M. Gurbanli said (*Ed. Note: Mubariz Gurbanli, deputy of Milli Meclis of Azerbaijan*).”

“The action participants made statements, condemning the demonstration of the film, promoting the Armenian lies.”

“The World Youth Congress did not go without Armenian provocations.”

**Comment:** “Lies”, “fabrications” are notions that have no national identity. Imparting them an ethnic specification “Armenian” not only insults a whole nation, but in fact conveys racist idea. The use of such clichés causes reciprocal hostility from the Armenian party fosters the intensification of mutual hate.

**Recommendation:** It is advisable to refrain from using this cliché as much as possible. If the journalist quotes a specific fact of misinforming, it is recommended to make a reference to the primary source and to explain where the mistake is. If this is a matter of a contrary viewpoint that causes disagreement, it is advisable to quote opinions of both parties with relevant argumentation or to report on the differences and divergences of approach. In all cases it is not recommended to impart ethnical characteristics to controversies. Following these recommendations could help to reduce the tension and hostility.

### **ARMENIANHOOD (other version: Armenianhood of the world)**

The cliché is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

The same cliché, with a different connotation, is used in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is mostly used by journalists and experts, less frequently - by politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“In the conflicts between Armenians and Turks, Armenians and Azerbaijanis that last for dozens of years already we are accustomed to see as a rival the “Armenianhood” as such. And it is true. Yet, with the undisputed predominance of common goals, there are certainly differences and divergences in the interests of separatists of Mountainous Karabagh, the Republic of Armenia and foreign Armenian Diaspora. This may seem surprising, however, it also remains a fact that Armenia suffers the most from the conflicts with Azerbaijan and Turkey; it is Armenia’s population that shoulders the hardships of this historical hostility. Yet the interests of Armenia itself are every second sacrificed to the exaggerated, unrealistic demands of Karabagh separatists and Diaspora.”

“During the period when the Armenianhood of the world was getting ready to occupy the territories of Azerbaijan, when appeals were made all over Armenia to engage in “liberation” war in Mountainous Karabagh, none of the Armenian politicians, currently pleading peace, spoke about how unreasonable the military actions were.”

“In essence, it is the issue of global confrontation of the West with the Nuclear East that is on agenda now. As the risk of such developments becomes greater, all the remaining issues, including the mythical “Armenian genocide”, in which the Armenianhood of the world currently hopes to gain the support of the Jewish lobby, will become negligible and unimportant.”

**Comment:** The notion of “Armenianhood” was introduced into circulation in Armenia and is to unify around national interests people, dispersed all over the world due to history. At the same time, this notion in Armenia itself, in Armenian media is used differently under different circumstances by different people. The unacceptability of using this cliché in Azerbaijani media is conditioned by the fact that they represent Armenianhood as a unified collective national force, hostile to Azerbaijanis (and Turkey - in the context of 1915 genocide recognition), and this, in essence, is a racist approach.

**Recommendation:** The use of this cliché only contributes to the escalation of tension between the two countries, involved in a conflict. It would be appropriate to restrict the use of thick cliché, taking into account the fact that there are often divergences in the views held by Armenia and Diaspora, and even within Diaspora itself. And in the case when the piece deals with actions of specific Armenian organizations, it is recommended that these organizations be specified, without generalizations.

## BLOCKADE OF NAKHCHIVAN

This is a relatively new cliché. It is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is mostly used by officials and politicians, less frequently - by journalists and experts.

### Example:

“The leader of Armenia did not forget to warn that the territorial claims of his country to Azerbaijan are not limited to Mountainous Karabagh only, the issue of “Armenian autonomy of Nakhchivan” is yet to be solved. We have heard that “Great Armenia” is to expand to include three sea shores, but apparently, there is also the issue of Nakhchivan that has been living in the blockade for the past twenty years owing to Armenia.”

**Comment:** This cliché is only used in the context that the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic has found itself in economic and information blockade through the fault of Armenia. The undesirability of using this cliché is explained by overlooking the fact that Armenia has found itself in a transportation blockade through the initiative of Azerbaijan and the issue of border opening is linked by Azerbaijan itself and Turkey with the regulation of Karabagh conflict. Under the circumstances the partial blockade of Nakhchivan autonomous exclave is inevitable. Besides, the blocked Nakhchivan border paralyzed the communications of Armenia itself. In particular, the railway that unites the South of the country with the capital is idle, as part of it passes through Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. The exclave borders with Iran and the closest ally of Azerbaijan, Turkey, hence its partial economic or, moreover, information blockade is relative. For this reason, the interpretation of the issue in the way it is done in the example quoted raises extremely negative response in Armenia.

**Recommendation:** The use of this cliché not only adds nothing to the content of pieces on Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, but also prevents from understanding the situation and real problems by the reader. From the viewpoint of the correct use of the term, the journalists are recommended to refrain from unilateral accusations of Armenia and to use other wording. In particular, it is appropriate to simply note that Nakhchivan is in partial blockade due to conflict in Mountainous Karabagh.

## FAIR RESOLUTION (other version: fair stance of Azerbaijan)

The cliché is frequently used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

### Examples:

“Other speakers noted that Turkey had always supported the fair stance of Azerbaijan and would be actively supporting it in future, too.”

“What exactly should Azerbaijan do for fair resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in Mountainous Karabagh?”

**Comment:** This cliché is used in the context that the resolution of MK conflict can only be fair from the standpoint of Azerbaijan, i.e., the territorial integrity of the country must be restored. The position of the other party to the conflict is thus unfair. This categorical certainty that only one viewpoint is fair causes strongly negative feelings in Armenian society, strengthens the disbelief in the possibility of attaining compromise and conflict resolution.

**Recommendation:** Under the present circumstances of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations it is unrealistic to expect complete exclusion of this cliché. If the journalists wish to assist the peace building measures, it would be preferable to refrain from using this cliché, resorting to different wording.

### GENOCIDE IN KHOJALI (other version: Khojali genocide)

The cliché is often used in Azerbaijani media.

In the media of Armenia it has a “mirror” manifestation (the so-called “genocide in Khojali”), reflected a reverse attitude towards the issue.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

#### Examples:

“It should be noted that Lidice in 1942 was destroyed by German Nazis, the local population was terrorized. As the tragedies of Khojali and Lidice are very similar, on February 27, 2007, an exhibition was organized in Lidice that was on for three months and presented Khojali genocide.”

“In Washington, owing to the policy of Erdogan, they have understood the essence of Armenia’s aggression that committed a real genocide in Khojali and occupied 20% of Azerbaijan’s territory - under the disguise of the ‘alleged genocide of 1915’.”

**Comment:** During the military actions tragic incidents occurred between the parties to the conflict in Khojali and in, say, Maraga, and other settlements. These tragedies are not questioned by any party to the conflict. Yet the arbitrary application of the international legal term “genocide” to developments in Khojali cause in Armenia tough and emotional response and contributes to the intensification of hostility.

**Recommendation:** Taking into account the present state of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, the refusal to use this cliché looks unrealistic. Yet, it would have been appropriate to restrict its use by journalists. Such phrases as “tragedy in Khojali”, “tragic events in Khojali”, “Khojali tragedy”, acceptable for both parties of the conflict can be encountered in Azerbaijani media and are recommended for use.

**“GENOCIDE OF ARMENIANS” (in quotation marks and referring to the events in Turkey in early 20th century. Other versions: “Armenian genocide” / fictitious (alleged) Armenian genocide / the so-called “Armenian genocide”)**

The cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

### Examples:

“Resolution on recognizing “the Armenian genocide” will soon be entered into the agenda of the Swedish parliament, “Capital” newspaper writes.”

“In the same cradle of “European democracy”, France, the journalists are prosecuted for the negation of the so-called “Armenian genocide” of 1915. This is a complete negligence of principles of free expression and plurality of opinion.”

**Comment:** The undesirability of using this cliché is not only in ignoring the fact that dozens of states, as well as the European Parliament, basing on historical documents, have recognized the fact of Armenian genocide committed in Ottoman Empire, but also in the fact that this cliché imparts an insulting connotation for Armenian audience. No matter what one’s ideas are regarding certain events, one must take into account the feelings of people for whom these developments are a reason of grief and sorrow.

**Recommendation:** If the Azerbaijani party official refuses to recognize the fact of genocide, this by no means signifies that this subject, painful for the Armenian audience, must be covered in insulting tonality. And while this is a subject primarily of Armenian-Turkish and not Armenian-Azerbaijani debate, the treatment of the issue in Turkish press is much more delicate. While avoiding the use of the term “genocide”, the Turkish media seek to replace it by a mutually acceptable term - tragedy or tragic events, used without quotation marks. Moreover, certain liberal Turkish media and public figures use the phrase Armenian genocide without quotation marks, whereas the Azerbaijani media completely deny the tragedy of what happened. It is proposed, depending on the context, to use either the phrase “the events of 1915 in Turkey”, or other phrases used by the leading media in Turkey itself, a country that does not recognize the genocide, either. It is absolutely unacceptable, from the standpoint of professional journalistic norms, when the quotation marks are added into texts, reprinted or quoted by Azerbaijani media from other sources without appropriate notes. The reprinted pieces and quotations cannot be modified in an arbitrary manner. In case of a reprint the editor may express his opinion in a note (e.g., *Ed. Note: the fact of genocide does not find sufficient confirmation*). The author who makes the quotation can always disagree with it out of the quoted fragment.

### **KHANKENDI (also used as an adjective)**

The cliché is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

#### **Examples:**

“As the observers note, in mid-1990s the “Minister of Defense” Samvel Babayan and his brother Karen who held the position of “Mayor of Stepanakert”, that is, Khankendi, owned nearly half of whatever was of value here, and, most importantly, were directly involved in distribution of humanitarian aid.”

“A modern concert and sports complex will be built in the capital of “MKR”, in Khankendi, newsarmenia.ru reports.”

**Comment:** The undesirability of using this cliché is conditioned by the fact that, according to commonly accepted norms, the name of a city, village or a region can only be chosen or changed by its residents. The title of MK capital, used in modern Azerbaijani media - Khankendi - differs from the one commonly used during the pre-conflict Soviet era, Stepanakert, when the Mountainous Karabagh autonomous regions was a part of Azerbaijani SSR. The city is thus renamed by Baku authorities without the knowledge and contrary to the wishes of its population and legislation. Hence, the use of this cliché is negatively viewed by the Armenian audience. Besides, in the case of Stepanakert there is an additional factor, absent in the cases of other names. Besides the media of Armenia and Azerbaijan the MK capital is mentioned in numerous official documents of RA, AR, international organizations, foreign countries. The differences in these references introduce particular confusion in the perceptions of primarily the foreign audience, unaware of the details of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations.

**Recommendation:** Excluding the use of this cliché is hardly possible due to its broad use not only in media but also other Azerbaijani sources - research and other publications, documents, on geographic maps. Yet not to intensify the climate of mutual distrust, to demonstrate readiness to take into account the stance of the other party as well as to avoid confusion, it would be appropriate to use both versions of the name of Mountainous Karabagh capital: “Khankendi (Stepanakert)” or “Stepanakert (Khankendi). It is absolutely unacceptable in terms of professional journalistic norms when one version of the name is replaced by the other in the texts reprinted or quoted by Azerbaijani media from other sources without corresponding notes. Quotes cannot be modified in an arbitrary manner, and whoever makes the quote - the author, the editor, etc. - is entitled to expressing his disagreement with the name used solely in remarks or footnotes, e.g., Stepanakert (*Ed. Note: Khankendi*).



**“MKR” (the abbreviation of the title of unrecognized Mountainous Karabagh Republic. Other versions of using the names of state symbols, power bodies and ranks of officials of the Mountainous Karabagh and others in quotation marks: “MKR president” / “government of MKR” / “ombudsman of MKR” / the so-called president/minister / “MKR parliament” / “parliamentary elections”, etc.)**

This group of clichés is commonly used in Azerbaijani media.

As a “mirror” version of this cliché in the media of Armenia one can regard the use of MKR abbreviation and other symbols, stressing the independence of Mountainous Karabagh as a state, without quotation marks.

The clichés are mostly used by journalists and experts, less frequently - by politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“The General Secretary of the Federation of Table Tennis of Azerbaijan Ibrahim Efendiyev said that the letter addressed to the European Federation of Table Tennis remained without a result: “The response noted that the tournament in Khankendi was not held under the auspices of the European Federation. Rather, the Table Tennis Federation of “the so-called MKR” does not member in any organization.”

“According to the publication, in self-declared “Mountainous Karabagh” there is a suspicion being formed that Serzh Sargsyan is getting ready to surrender the so-called “liberated” territories. (...) According to the newspapers sources, the disappointed residents started to leave Karabagh, and the extremists started to talk that one should speak the language of force with ‘the authorities of RA and MKR’.”

**Comment:** The use of inverted comas reflects the dismissive attitude of the Azerbaijani society to the population, administration of the Mountainous Karabagh. Such an insulting approach caused strong feelings on Armenian part, intensifies hostility and disbelief in the possibility of peaceful resolution of the conflict.

**Recommendation:** This cliché is almost invariably used in pieces on events/situation in Mountainous Karabagh. It is unrealistic to expect a complete refusal from using this cliché at the current stage of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. However, it would be appropriate to limit its use at least to journalists. In order to avoid the intensification of hatred one can find various alternatives that are fully compliant with the official stance of Baku: “unrecognized Mountainous Karabagh Republic”, “the self-declared Mountainous Karabagh Republic” or simply “Mountainous Karabagh”, and when mentioning the administrative bodies - “the parliament of unrecognized MKR”, “the government of unrecognized MKR”, the leader of “Karabagh Armenians”, “the administration of self-proclaimed republic”, etc., without the inverted comas, do appear in Azerbaijani press, albeit very seldom. It is recommended that journalists should adopt this approach in other cases, too. It is absolutely unacceptable from the standpoint of professional journalistic norms to have the quotation marks added in the reprints or quoted texts from other sources without making a relevant notice. The quotes are not to be modified in an arbitrary manner, and whoever makes the

quote (the author, the editor, etc.) has a right to express disagreement with the titles used solely in his own comments, footnotes or an editorial note about intervention into the original text (e.g., *Author's Note: quotations are mine*).

### **MODIFIED GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES-CLICHÉS (“Irevan”, “Iravan” for “Yerevan”, “Goycha” for “Sevan”, “Gerus” for “Goris”, etc.)**

These clichés are frequently used in Azerbaijani media.

In the media of Armenia a “mirror” treatment of Azerbaijani names is manifest.

The clichés are equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

#### **Examples:**

“Mamedyarov announced that Armenia always raises the issue of MK security. To this effect Azerbaijan suggests that a car route Agdam-Khankendi-Shusha-Lachin-Gerus-Sisian-Shakhbuz-Sadarak be opened.”

“There was another, absolutely reverse process, organized when the residents of Azerbaijani settlements in the territory of today’s Armenia, that is, in Zangezur, Vedi, Goycha and other lands of the former Irevan and Karabagh khanates had to move deeper into other former Azerbaijani states - Shamakhi shakhdom, Baku khanate, etc.”

**Comment:** The modified Armenian geographical names are used in Azerbaijani media to impart greater validity to the propaganda theory that the state of Armenia was created on traditional Azerbaijani land. Their use not only confuses the audience that is not sufficiently knowledgeable about the history of the region, but also causes negativism in response.

**Recommendation:** An acceptable solution to the issue for the Armenian party is the use of those names in Azerbaijani media that existed as per the movement of the conflict start, are considered common and to this day appear in international documents, official texts. In many cases this is the way Azerbaijani journalists act. In quoting of political statements and historical documents it is recommended to give also the Armenian official name for the certain geographic area or settlement - for example, in parentheses, with an appropriate reference to editorial intervention.

### **OCCUPATION (other versions: occupied/invaded territories/lands / occupation of Mountainous Karabagh / Armenian occupation / Armenian occupants (invaders) / Armenia that occupied (invaded) Azerbaijani lands / occupation policy of Armenia / Armenia is an occupant country)**

This cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Azerbaijani media.

In the media of Armenia it has a “mirror” manifestation: “territories occupied by Azerbaijan” - with regard to other territories of the region.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

### Examples:

“As “Echo” already reported, quite soon the Azerbaijani journalist Eynullah Fatullayev will visit the occupied territories of our country. In the course of his trip the journalist intends to inquire about the situation on occupied lands and to speak to several representatives of Karabagh regime.”

“As it has been reported, some Armo Tsaturian from occupied Mountainous Karabagh, while in Iran, signed with the Iranian party an agreement about supplying 20 agricultural machines.”

**Comment:** The use of this cliché is undesirable as the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict started and moved into a military stage during the Soviet time, when the parties were not international law subjects and did not have internationally recognized borders. During that period both parties thought of the problem solution as being only military. Everything that happened after the international recognition of the independent statehood of Armenia and Azerbaijan was a continuation of the Soviet conflict, and in this regard must be very cautious when using the term “occupation” (unless, of course, these are journalists who intentionally seek to promote the negative feelings in their country against the neighbor or the indignation and protest from the other party). The term “occupation” causes a particular negative reaction, when it is applied equally to the Azerbaijani districts that surround Mountainous Karabagh and to MK itself - which is happens in most of the cases. It thus appears that the Armenian community that constituted the majority of the population of the former autonomy, seeking to become independent of Azerbaijan (irrespective of how legitimate this wish was) and viewing the Armenian troops as their own, as a guarantee of their security, occupied itself.

**Recommendation:** The “occupation” term corresponds to the assessment of the realities in place by official Baku and the Azerbaijani society. Moreover, this term in the context of Karabagh conflict is encountered in the documents of several international organizations, and naturally, Azerbaijani media, journalists use it every time they address the conflict. Thus, it does not seem possible to exclude or even significantly restrict the frequency of use of this cliché under the circumstances. At the same time, the Azerbaijani journalists must take into account that the frequent repetition of such words as “occupation”, “occupant”, contributed to the formation of the image of Armenians as enemies in Azerbaijan. At the same time, when encountering them in Azerbaijani press, the Armenian reader views these clichés as a sign of hostility. In this regard it is recommended to avoid these clichés at least in the cases when they are not contained in the quoted statements or documents and when they are not mandatory for adequate coverage of the subject. This refers primarily to such versions as “Armenian occupants” (when it is not the military that is being referred to) and particularly, “the occupation of Karabagh”. Any realistic method of resolving the conflict calls for differentiation of MK status within the borders of Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region of the Soviet time and the adjacent regions. Hence it recommended to refuse from using the term “occupation” with regard to

Mountainous Karabagh (unless it is contained in quotations, necessary to be reproduced in media literally).

### **SEPARATISTS (other versions: Armenian separatists / Karabagh separatists / separatist regime / the hotspot of separatism)**

This cliché is among the most frequently used ones in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is equally used by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

#### **Examples:**

“The OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmen, engaged in the conflict resolution, continue their visits to the region. The international mediators will visit Khankendi today, whether they will meet the leaders of the separatist regime.”

“It should be noted that this not the first case, when international exhibitions in Russia present pavilions of the separatist regime from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.”

“The French MPs who visited the occupied territories upon the invitation of the separatists of Mountainous Karabagh can be included in the list of personae non grata in Azerbaijan.”

**Comment:** This cliché is undesirable due to the extremely negative content traditionally vested into the word “separatists” on the post-Soviet space. In terms of its connotation it is almost equivalent to the notions of “extremist”, “terrorist” and causes a relevant response from both those who consider themselves the victims and those who are labeled with this word. Besides this, the word “separatist” and its derivatives are often quoted with violations of journalistic norms, the context of the communication is distorted. In particular, none of the official documents about the visit of international mediators to MK define the hosting party as the leaders of separatist regime. Yet the media material, approximated in its form to the official communication, actually consciously replaces the definitions used in the document.

**Recommendation:** Generally speaking, using such clichés in media cannot be excluded as the term to a certain extent does reflect the existing realities. Besides, it is continuously used by officials of Azerbaijan, experts and other public figures. At the same time to reduce the frequency of responses, strengthening the mutual hostility, it is important to limit the use of the term/cliché in the cases when it is inappropriate or comes to replace official definitions. In particular, when the story refers to the daily life of the Karabagh Armenians out of direct relation to the conflict, it is recommended to exclude the word “separatist”. In the purely news pieces that do not call for opinions (particularly when they reflect official developments) it is appropriate to use the maximally neutral definitions: for example, “the leaders of the unrecognized/self-proclaimed republic”, “de facto leaders of MK”, etc. In order to avoid the unnecessary emotionality of publications, the words derived from “separatism” can in certain cases be replaced with “secession” and its derivatives.

The meaning will be preserved, but the term, loaded with the many years of negative use that has become a negative cliché will be avoided. As the term is “rehabilitated” - that is, used in direct sense - in Azerbaijani press, one can expect a calmer attitude towards it from the Armenian party.

### **THE TRUTH ABOUT KARABAGH CONFLICT (other version: the just cause of Azerbaijan)**

The cliché is frequently used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is used by officials and politicians, less frequently - by journalists and experts.

#### **Examples:**

“In the address (*Ed. Note:* of Azerbaijani community of Karabagh to the Head of the OSCE Office in Baku) it is stressed that despite the futility of negotiations under the OSCE Minsk Group with regard to the conflict resolution, the just cause of Azerbaijan is supported by the UN, the Council of Europe, the Organization of Islamic Conference, as well as the leading states of the world that recognize its territorial integrity.”

“Azerbaijan is successful in conveying the whole truth about the Karabagh conflict to the world community, as a consequence of which the policy of double standards is now less frequently applied to Azerbaijan.”

**Comment:** This cliché is undesirable as it contributed to one-sided perception of the problem of Mountainous Karabagh in Azerbaijan as well as disbelief in the possibility of a consensus and an ultimate conflict resolution in Armenia.

**Recommendation:** In such complicated conflicts each party has its own notion of truth, based on emotions, often subjective and one-sided interpretations of international law and historical realities. Meanwhile, the dialogue between the conflicting parties is only possible on the basis of negotiations, mutual compromise, consideration of the whole spectrum of legal norms and historical certainty. For this reason (if the journalists want to assist the building of confidence and mutual understanding) it is recommended to refrain from using this cliché.

### **VANDALISM (BRUTALITIES, TERRORISM, FASCISM) OF ARMENIANS (other versions: Armenian brutalities/cruelty/ vandals/fascists/bands/bandit troops / Armenian terrorism)**

The cliché is frequently used in Azerbaijani media.

It has respective “mirror” versions in the media of Armenia.

The cliché is in equally frequent use by officials, politicians, journalists and experts.

### Examples:

“Today either in Armenia, or in occupied territories of Azerbaijan, even on the historically Azerbaijani territories of Mountainous Karabagh there are no Azerbaijanis. But there are Armenians residing in Baku, and the state ensures their safety. The international community must be decisive in condemning the Armenian vandalism. The time has come to stand for justice both verbally and by action”, Kh.Orujev said (*Ed. Note: Khidayat Orujev, Chairman of the State Committee on Working with Religious Structures of Azerbaijan*).”

“The presentation of “Genocide” documentary in English language was held. This film tells about the brutalities of Armenian Dashnaks, committed on March 31, 1918, against the people of Guba.”

**Comment:** The use of such clichés in Azerbaijani media causes extremely hostile response in Armenian society. The historically complicated relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, Armenia and Azerbaijan were shadowed by tragic developments, war and destruction. Many events and incidents can be called “brutality”, “cruelty”, “vandalism” “terrorist attack” and such. However, the racist approach, that is a generalization of criminal actions to include the whole nation in Azerbaijani media is unacceptable for Armenian society and causes very tough response.

**Recommendation:** Journalists are recommended to give up the use of the term “fascism”. When reporting on events and developments that fit the descriptions of “vandalism”, “brutality”, “cruelty”, it is advisable to refrain from applying ethnic generalizations, as well as to stick to correct use of terms. Limiting the use of this cliché group to refer to only the direct perpetrators and in accordance with the specific meanings of the terms would enable to gradually break the climate of hostility and hatred.

### **VILE POLICY OF ARMENIA (other versions: uncivil policy of Armenia / criminal actions of Armenia / criminal regime of Armenia)**

The cliché is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia (“militant policy of Azerbaijan” and its variants).

The cliché is mostly used by officials and politicians, less frequently - by journalists and experts.

### Examples:

“While closing their eyes at the criminal regime in Armenia that has occupied the territories of Azerbaijan that is a puppet, the USA intentionally spoil relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan.”

“We have already come to a stage when Armenia will no longer be able to continue its vile, hypocrite and fraudulent policy.”

**Comment:** Insulting accusations of criminal actions, villainy, fraud, uncivilized policy, assessing the Karabagh war as a crime on behalf of Armenia cause very strong negative response in Armenian society. The categorical form of such statements, particularly, in combination with allegations of support shown to a conflict party by the mediating countries, announced, inter alia, by high-ranked officials, intensifies the disbelief in the possible resolution, enhances the reciprocal hostility of Armenian society towards the policy of the neighbor state.

**Recommendation:** In fact, excluding the use of such clichés in media completely is unrealistic, as they are voiced by Azerbaijani officials. However, it is possible to avoid using them in the cases when they are unnecessary for the adequate reporting on the subject. It is appropriate for journalists to use other, more delicate phrasings that do not cause irritation in the other party of the conflict.

## USE OF STEREOTYPES IN MEDIA OF ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

The term “stereotype” in this section of the glossary is used to denote ***thoughts, ideas, repeated at a certain frequency, yet expressed in various forms and wording, that refer to the relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis and have a negative connotation or are overtly negative towards the other party.***

Usually the stereotypes do not contain new facts that can be of interest for the audience, but rather serve to form an enemy image, to create a climate that obstructs the dialogue and mutual understanding. They are also seen by the other party as insulting and cause strong reactions in response.

What was mentioned in the preceding section as a reason for the appearance and longevity of clichés can be fully applied also to stereotypes. The only difference here is that the “virus” in this case is carried not by the repeating words and phrases but rather by the same ideas and thoughts that can easily change their verbal envelopes, take different lexical forms. The stereotypes often go beyond the ethical norms, they draw on inaccurate information, distorted facts that would service to substantiate a preconceived notion; they are also notable for being extremely emotionally-loaded.

The media of Armenia and Azerbaijan contain numerous stereotypes that are both directly related to the problem of Mountainous Karabagh and refer to the other aspects of life in the neighboring country/nation. The majority of these are “mirroring” each other, that is, they are virtual copies of each other, with only their subject being changed. The present section lists the most prominent stereotypes that are viewed extremely negatively by the other party and yet are used by media with a certain frequency.

All articles of this section follow the outline, common for all sections: the frequency of use of a specific stereotype is mentioned, as well as the existence of “mirror” version in the media of the other party; the most frequent source of the stereotype is noted (journalists, experts, politicians, officials); examples from media publications are quoted. The media cited are not specified, as the very same stereotypes can be encountered in other media outlets with almost identical frequency.

Besides, each article discloses the reasons behind the negative response that the other party has towards every stereotype, and recommendations are made as to how the use of stereotype in media can be avoided or restricted with no damage made to the news value of the publication. In the cases when this is impossible journalists are suggested to consider the options that are more acceptable for both parties.

The stereotypes are subdivided into three thematic subsections: *Karabagh Conflict Resolution, Reporting on Tragic Events, Presentation of Armenia/Azerbaijan (as a Country, as a State, Its Institutions) and Armenians/Azerbaijanis (as Individual Representatives of the Nation, State)*. In each subsection the articles are placed alphabetically by a key word, defined by the researchers.



## STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA OF ARMENIA



### KARABAGH CONFLICT RESOLUTION

#### ARMENIA advocates a peaceful solution, while Azerbaijan calls to war

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. However, the latter ones publish similar statement (“Armenia pushes Azerbaijan to war, and it’s the patrons of Armenia that make it choose this way”).

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### Examples:

“The aggressive policy of Azerbaijan (...) implies the danger of military action being resumed.”

“Azerbaijan wishes to demonstrate it is serious about the war, and this is proved by the regular violations of ceasefire on the frontline.”

**Comment:** Appeals are often made in the Azerbaijani society to liberate the territories, taken by Armenian troops. But the dominant opinion is the continuation of effort directed at peaceful resolution of the Mountainous Karabagh issue. The military option is seen as an extreme measure, should the peace talks bear no result. This is also the official stance of the country, repeatedly voiced by its leaders. Hence the unequivocal accusation of Azerbaijan of its preference of a military resolution, while the Armenian party is busy searching peaceful ways, is seen negatively by Azerbaijanis. Such allegations are seen as propaganda aiming to distort the international image of Azerbaijan. The stereotype also enhances the “enemy” image of Azerbaijan due to the use of such epithets as “militant”, “aggressive”, “war-monger”, etc.

**Recommendation:** It is advisable to try and refrain from statement that enforce this stereotype. If journalists want to stress the existence of supporters of military solution in Azerbaijan, it is preferable to specify them, avoiding generalizations. It can also be mentioned that with time the appeals to war have become more frequent, but they should not be set equal to the stance of the whole nation or state.

**ARMENIA is not a side of the conflict, but a mediator, true parties/participants of the conflict are Azerbaijan and Mountainous Karabagh**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media. It has recently been transformed: within this stereotype the media make fewer references to the mediating role of Armenia.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“Armenia must be simply a mediator in this matter and not be called an aggressor state. MK is a sovereign state.”

“Serzh Sargsyan reminded the international community that the war was waged not between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as Baku seeks to present it, but rather between Karabagh and Azerbaijan. According to the RPA Secretary (*Ed. Note: Republican Party of Armenia*), the solution of Karabagh conflict is not in the capitals of superpowers but in hands of the people of an established state, the Republic of Artsakh.”

**Comment:** The negative perception of this stereotype is linked to the fact that, presenting numerous facts and evidence, the Azerbaijani party states that Armenia did have direct involvement in the Karabagh war, considers the conflict to be not interethnic but interstate. The Azerbaijani society is convinced that the state whose troops have taken and retain a part of Azerbaijan’s territory cannot act as a mediator. Moreover, the Azerbaijani audience is convinced that by refusing to be called a “party to the conflict” after many years of bilateral talks, Armenia is trying to escape the responsibility for the consequences of a potential war in Mountainous Karabagh.

**Recommendation:** The elimination of these stereotypes from media use in Armenia given the present state of relations between the two countries can hardly be expected. However, journalists must not overlook the fact that the negotiations under the OSCE Minsk Group are held between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and thus, Armenia is internationally recognized as a party to the conflict, and it does appear in this quality. At the same time, in the cases when Armenian media, quoting official sources, announce that Armenia does not consider itself a party to the conflict, it is appropriate to mention also the position of Azerbaijan on the matter. This can contribute to greater tolerance of Azerbaijani audience towards this stereotype.

**ARMENIA is not to return to Azerbaijan any land, including the regions adjacent to the administrative borders of the former MKAR**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan; however, it is countered by the frequent appeals not to cede any land to Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“No one has returned a single centimeter of land, and no one will, we shall never allow this to happen.”

“It is a simple thing: they want Karabagh, and I am not giving it, you see, they want the liberated territories, I am not giving them. (...) Eventually, we are the party who won the war.”

**Comment:** The public opinion of Azerbaijan sees the most important task of Karabagh resolution to be the restoration of the territorial integrity of the country. Hence any statements on the refusal of the Armenian party to return the territories taken as a result of military action, particularly the regions that are out of administrative borders of the former MKAR (Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region) are perceived very negatively by the Azerbaijani audience, imply that the war is inevitable.

**Recommendation:** The elimination of these stereotype from media use in Armenia given the present state of relations between the two countries cannot be expected. Yet the tonality of such statements can be changed, bringing the emotion down so that to have milder response, too. The journalists can also try and avoid mentioning the regions of Azerbaijan that are outside the former MKAR in this context.

## The ARMENIAN PARTY is not to make concessions to Azerbaijan

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Azerbaijan must not consent to compromise.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Our stance is invariable: the establishment of relations and the removal of the blockade is necessary for both parties, and to proceed in this direction, Armenia must make no concessions.”

**Comment:** This stereotype convinces the Azerbaijani society that Armenia on its behalf does not consider the possibility of compromise in conflict resolution, including creating of conditions for refugees to return to their homeland. It gives ground to those who believe

that the continuation of peace talks is pointless and the military resolution of the existing problem is the only possible way.

**Recommendation:** It is advisable to give up this stereotype, at least in purely journalistic stories. The media can contribute to the peaceful resolution of the conflict if they give more explanation as to the essence of the possible compromise, initiate public debate to define the possible limits of concessions.

### **ARMENIANS AND AZERBAIJANIS cannot coexist together**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“The fact that Azerbaijan has allowed the ethnical cleansings of Armenians in its capital, subjecting the Armenian population genocide, demonstrates the impossibility of the coexistence of Armenians and Azerbaijanis.”

**Comment:** The vast majority of Azerbaijani population is convinced that Azerbaijanis and Armenians must resolve the conflict as soon as possible and start a peaceful life together. Despite the numerous tragic pages of the common history of these two nations and the current problems that they are facing, the society does realize there can be no other way. Therefore this stereotype that also contains an accusation of Azerbaijanis is seen very negatively by the audience of the country. It is seen to be directly linked to stereotype “If MK remains a part of Azerbaijan, the Armenians that live there will either be ousted or exterminated.”

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to expect the elimination of this stereotype given the present state of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, the journalists are recommended to refrain from it in statements of their own, list examples of prosperous coexistence of Azerbaijanis and Armenians in other countries and in the past. By this the media audience would have been more focused on the search of compromise to resolve the current issues between the nations.

### **AZERBAIJAN commits gross violations of international norms/requirements of international organizations**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenia unilaterally violates the international norms/requirements of international organizations.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Azerbaijan to this day fails to implement the four resolutions of the UN Security Council adopted in 1993 and continues to provoke a race of armament in region, grossly violating the fundamental principle of international law on non-commitment of violence or threat of force.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is used in Armenian media not only with regard to the actions of Azerbaijan on Karabagh conflict resolution, but also with regard to international crime, etc. This serves to create an image of a perpetrating country that is a source of permanent international tension, which is viewed negatively by the society of Azerbaijan. The latter is convinced that the stereotype is propagated by the Armenian party to create a basis for accusing Azerbaijan of violating agreements, aggression and foul play. It sees the stereotype as propaganda directed to remove any responsibility from the Armenian party for frequent fire on the frontline, for the casualties, human losses - both among the military and civilians.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to expect the complete elimination of the stereotype in the media of Armenia, since it is contained in many official communications, statements by the leaders of the country. However, the media can try and verify this information from other sources whenever possible, have investigations of their own to determine the truth or, at least, to refrain from the continuous accentuation of the unilateral violation of ceasefire in their stories. Such allegations can be grounded if they are based on established facts, assessments of international institutes, appropriate norms and requirements. When no reference to such sources is made, the media are recommended to refrain from statements that contribute to the stereotype.

### **AZERBAIJAN occupied a part of Mountainous Karabagh territory**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian online resources, less so - in traditional media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. However this stereotype is to a certain extent countered by the frequent statements that Armenia has occupied lands of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Heritage” (*Ed. Note*: political party) reinstates that the essence of Karabagh conflict resolution is the legal recognition of the de facto established MKR, and its objective is to return the territories occupied by Azerbaijan.”

**Comment:** Such statements are seen by Azerbaijanis as additional territorial claims of Armenia to Azerbaijan. The negative response to this stereotype is also related to the fact that the use of the term “occupation” in this context is inappropriate: Azerbaijan cannot occupy the territories that are officially part of its territory and are recognized internationally as belonging to this state.

**Recommendation:** Journalists are advised to refrain from the use of this stereotype and the word “occupation” in this context at least in their own statements. The idea of Armenians who inhabited certain areas, were ousted or had to leave their homes because of the war, military action of Azerbaijani army, can be conveyed in a different form.

### The CONTINUED CONFRONTATION is to the damage of Azerbaijan: Armenia will win another war

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. At the same time, the latter ones often repeat the idea that the time is on the side of Azerbaijan as the country will grow strong enough to win the new war.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Should Karabagh be in danger, the military action will not only move to the territory of the enemy, but will also continue deep into Azerbaijan and this is certainly possible after the capacities of the Armenian army were demonstrated during the exercise.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijani audience sees this stereotype as military blackmail by Armenia as well as an appeal to refuse any concession to Azerbaijan in negotiations, as the latter is not only unable to return the lost territories by force, but may also find itself in a worse situation.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate the use of this stereotype in media given the continuing danger of war resumption and the related exchange of threats, coming mostly from the political and military leadership of conflicting parties. The journalists are recommended not to accentuate the militant statements artificially.

### **KARABAGH is a historically Armenian land, where Azerbaijanis are newcomers**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: “Armenians are ecdemic in Karabagh/the Caucasus. The state of Armenia is created on Turkic territories.”

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Examples:**

“The research on territory of MKR provides indisputable proofs that this is historical Armenian land.”

“Kosovo has been recognized by all of Europe, even though it is not populated by autochthonous population, and for some reason there is an issue with Karabagh were autochthonous ethnicity resides? Why should newcoming Azerbaijanis own this land?”

**Comment:** The stereotype is negatively viewed by the Azerbaijani audience as a distortion of history. Azerbaijani historiographers present different facts and conclusions to the society. This becomes a basis for constant mutual accusations between Azerbaijan and Armenia of falsifying history. Besides, such statements in Armenian media often have a degrading context.

**Recommendation:** What causes debate even among historians should not be used as an argument by journalists, politicians or state officials in resolving territorial disputes. The international community is convinced that defining borders in the modern world according to the principle of “who was the first to set foot on this land” means pushing the world into endless conflict and chaos. It is hence advisable to refrain from using this stereotype that intensifies the hostility between the two nations, impedes the constructive search for problem resolution.

### **The MILITARY AGGRESSION was started by Azerbaijan, while Armenians of Karabagh were only protecting their independence**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has no pronounced “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. At the same time, in certain contexts one can see the message that “the aggression was started by Armenia, while Azerbaijan had to protect its territorial integrity”.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“The conflict between Karabagh and Azerbaijan started in 1988. As a response to the peaceful demands of the Armenians of Karabagh, who constituted 80% of the population of Mountainous Karabagh autonomous region (MKAR), Azerbaijan unleashed aggression against the peaceful population.”

“The military phase of the Mountainous Karabagh conflict started in 1991, when in response to the demands of MK population to realize the right to self determination, the Azerbaijani authorities (...) tried to resolve the question through ethnical cleansings (...) and initiated large-scale military actions.”

**Comment:** This stereotype, while extremely simplifying the essence of the conflict, presents Armenians as peaceful victims of aggressive Azerbaijanis. It implies an attempt to place all responsibility for initiating the war and for its consequences on Azerbaijan, which is seen negatively by the society of this country.

**Recommendation:** This stereotype is linked to such questions as “who fired the first shot?”, “where did the first refugees come from?”, “who was the first to start a massacre or a military action?”, etc. Each of the parties has its own set of responses to every question of this sort. It would have been more productive if journalists did not sustain in their professional toolboxes the old stereotypes dating from the initial stage of the conflict but rather focused on the search for conflict resolution, the compromise that would allow attaining steady peace in the region.

### **MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH is an established state, and the existence of two Armenian states is a fact**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. At the same time, the denial of the possibility of existence of two Armenian states is pretty frequent here, thus contributing to a corresponding stereotype.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“Mountainous Karabagh is an established state, in accordance with international law.”



“According to the deputy head of the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Azerbaijan not only implements a blockade of two Armenian states, the MKR and Armenia, but also demands that Turkey continue this policy.”

**Comment:** The most disputed subject of the longtime negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia is the very status of Mountainous Karabagh. Its statehood is not recognized by any international organization or country of the world. Hence, from the purely legal standpoint it is inappropriate to speak about the established independence MK or the fact of existence of two Armenian states. The unilateral statements of Armenian media that Mountainous Karabagh is an established independent entity and the two Armenian states do factually exist cause negative response from the Azerbaijani society, give rise to doubts as to the meaningfulness of further negotiations.

**Recommendation:** This stereotype that reflects the perception of the reality by one of the parties and is totally unacceptable for the other creates additional emotional tension around the talks. Refusing from propagating this stereotype and the use a notion of “unrecognized MK/unrecognized state” instead of phrases like “established independent state”, “second Armenian state” can contribute to alleviating this tension to a certain extent.

### **The conflict cannot be resolved without a full-fledged involvement of MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH as a rightful party to negotiations**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has no pronounced “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. At the same time, this stereotype is countered by statements that exclude the involvement of Mountainous Karabagh in the negotiations process as a full-fledged party.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“Firstly, the independence of Karabagh must be recognized. Secondly, we should leave the negotiations process. As a result, Azerbaijan will have no other choice but start the talks with Karabagh, that is, in fact recognize Karabagh as an established state.”

**Comment:** In Azerbaijan MK is not seen as a state, but as a part of the country invaded by troops of another state and a subject of dispute. There is a predominant opinion that the administrative structures of Mountainous Karabagh only exist owing to the support of Armenia. Thus, it is considered that by pushing for Mountainous Karabagh to be involved in negotiations as a part, Armenia is trying to induce Azerbaijan to indirectly recognize the statehood of MK. On the other hand, as Azerbaijani audience believes, when putting forth this idea, Armenia seeks to expand its maneuvering ground in negotiations, shifting the burden of non-consent with certain proposals from mediators to MK representatives.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to eliminate this stereotype from media use in Armenia. Under the circumstances we can only recommend the journalists to occasionally offer the experts from Azerbaijan an opportunity to state and motivate the stance of their country on the issue. This will not reduce the sensitivity of the problem, but would allow looking at it from different perspectives.

### **MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH has nothing to do with the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan: MK has never been a part of independent Azerbaijan**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no pronounced “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. At the same time, this stereotype is countered by frequent statements that Karabagh was and remains part of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“Armenia (...) does not object to territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, but it is unrelated to Mountainous Karabagh, as it has exercised its right to self-determination and is a separate entity.”

**Comment:** This stereotype distorts the essence of conflict and the subject of negotiations. If Mountainous Karabagh has never been part of Azerbaijan, who does it claim independence from? And if Mountainous Karabagh is unrelated to the issue of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, what is then the reason of the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding the prevalence of principles of territorial integrity or self-determination? The negative attitude of Azerbaijani audience to this stereotype is also due to the denial of a fact confirmed by numerous international documents.

**Recommendation:** It is advisable to refrain from propagating this stereotype that has no sufficient factual base and is to a certain extent contrary to logic.

### **If MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH remains part of Azerbaijan, all Armenians residing there will either be ousted or exterminated**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Baku does not conceal its hatred to Armenians of Mountainous Karabagh, there are threats to settle accounts with them after the ‘occupied territories are returned’.”

**Comment:** The official Baku makes no statements that can be qualified as an aspiration to exterminate Armenians of Mountainous Karabagh, on the contrary, it states its readiness to provide the broadest possible autonomy within the state. Hence this stereotype is seen by the Azerbaijani audience as Armenian propaganda, cutting off the reconciliation and seeking to intimidate the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh, reinforce the image of Azerbaijanis as bitter enemies and thus present the independence of MK as the only sensible solution to the problem.

**Recommendation:** It is advisable to maximally restrict the use of this stereotype in media. In the cases when its use is inevitable, i.e., it is contained in a statement by an official, the media can also quote the opinion of Azerbaijani authorities on the matter, thus allowing the audience to compare the information from alternative sources. This approach would help to ease the negativism of the Azerbaijani audience towards this stereotype.

### **The PROCESS OF ARMENIAN-TURKISH RAPPROCHEMENT should not be linked to the resolution of MK problem**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Until the Karabagh conflict remains unresolved/the territories adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh are liberated, the Armenian-Turkish relations are not to normalize.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“Armenia does not consider the issue of territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders mentioned in the Protocols as a reference to Karabagh problem.”

“Any attempt (...) to link the process of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement with the Karabagh conflict resolution are doomed to failure.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijani side believes that the rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey and the resolution of Mountainous Karabagh conflict are interrelated and are to evolve parallels, since it is the MK conflict that was the reason for Turkey's closing the border with Armenia. The Azerbaijani society is particularly negative about the statement that the issue of territorial integrity and respect for firm borders as mentioned in the

Protocols on Diplomatic Relations between Armenia and Turkey does not refer to Azerbaijan or Mountainous Karabagh problem: if this is a principle, then it is universally applicable to all countries, including Azerbaijan.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate this stereotype from the media use in Armenia, as it reflects the official stance and public opinion of this country. However, media could occasionally present alternative opinions, the arguments of the opposing party to contribute to the search of mutually acceptable solutions and would bring down the negative impact of the stereotype on the Azerbaijani audience.

**The RIGHT OF THE NATION TO SELF-DETERMINATION is the main international principle that cannot be subjugated to other principles and is the only basis for conflict resolution**

The stereotype is seldom used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“The resolution of Karabagh conflict is only possible on the basis of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### **Example:**

“Historically and logically the legal right of self-determination is prevalent over the principle of territorial integrity, otherwise it would have been unnecessary.”

**Comment:** Azerbaijan on this issue takes a contrary stance, considering that the Mountainous Karabagh conflict must be resolved on the basis of territorial integrity of the country. This concept, disseminated by Armenian media, is seen by Azerbaijanis to be a threat not only of ultimate loss of Mountainous Karabagh, but also disruption of statehood: this may lead other national minorities in the country, irrespective of their number, hold referenda and declare independence, something that Azerbaijan cannot accept.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate the use of this stereotype in the media of Armenia given the present state of negotiations. Not only Azerbaijan and Armenia, but also a number of other countries, international organizations come up with differing interpretations of these two principles of international law and the controversy that exists between them. At the same time the Armenian journalists can be recommended to note other principles of international law when referring to self-determination right, as well as discuss the controversies that arise between them.

**The STANCE OF AZERBAIJAN on Karabagh conflict resolution is counterproductive, it is not ready for compromise, while Armenia is productive**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenia/Mountainous Karabagh refuse to cooperate, they are unready for compromise, their stance is counterproductive, while Azerbaijan is productive.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, more often in statements and speeches by politicians, officials.

### Example:

“To really attain a breakthrough (*Ed. Note:* in negotiations) the parties must be ready for compromise. Azerbaijan is absolutely unprepared for them.”

**Comment:** This stereotype bears no specific information regarding the position of Azerbaijan in the negotiations process, its arguments. The blame for the ineffective talks is fully placed on Azerbaijan, which is viewed negatively by the audience of this country. The frequent repetition of this stereotype in pieces by Armenia media increases the conviction of Azerbaijanis that the peace initiatives and mediating missions are meaningless.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to eliminate the use of this stereotype in media as it is contained in numerous statements and speeches by the leaders of the country, official structures. However, the journalists themselves can refrain from such statements, quote not only the opinion of the official Yerevan, but also provide the audience with as much information as possible regarding the negotiations, the positions taken by parties on specific issues. Thus the reader will be able to come up with an opinion on how productive each of the parties is, how promising the peace talks are.

**TERRITORIES outside the administrative borders of the former MKAR, controlled by the Armenian party, are part of the historical Armenian homeland**

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan; however, it is countered by frequent statements of Azerbaijanis being the true owners of a large part of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“The question of ‘Aravot’ as to the attitude of ARF ‘Dashnaktsutyun’ to the suggestion of ‘Heritage’ party to resolve the issue of liberated lands following the ‘land for land’ model,

i.e., exchange Agdam for Shahumian was answered by the leader of 'Dashnaktsutyun' parliamentary faction Vahan Hovhannisian: "(...) We do not exchange Armenian land for Armenian land."

**Comment:** The negative perception of this stereotype by Azerbaijanis is due to the fact that the regions of Azerbaijan Republic that are now controlled by Armenian troops and that had Azerbaijanis living there for centuries until they were displaced through military action, are announced to be a part of historical Armenian homeland. This becomes a reason to announce these lands cannot be returned to Azerbaijan under any circumstances. This is viewed by Azerbaijan to be as gross expansion.

**Recommendation:** If the use of this stereotype can be qualified as continuation of a debate on the historical ownership of lands, its use by politicians and state officials as an argument in a territorial dispute has the most undesirable consequences. It takes the conflicting parties away from a pragmatic approach to conflict resolution, pushes them towards emotional decisions, deepens the divide between the nations, increases the wish to resolve the conflict by means of a new war. Armenian journalists are recommended to restrict the use of this stereotype that blocks compromise between the parties to the conflict.

### REPORTING ON TRAGIC EVENTS

**Throughout the 20th century AZERBAIJANIS have repeatedly subjected Armenians to genocide**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a "mirror" version in the media of Azerbaijan: **"Armenians have committed genocide of Azerbaijanis/Turks in Azerbaijan/South Caucasus."**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Examples:**

"In Sumgait, Kirovabad, Baku, Maraga and other places (...) Azerbaijanis have committed acts of Armenian genocide (starting from 1988)."

"The Armenians of Azerbaijan were subjected to genocide for three times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century."

**Comment:** The negative perception of this stereotype by the audience of Azerbaijan is related to several reasons: it gives a one-sided biased interpretation not only to historical events, but also facts of the recent past; it creates the image of Azerbaijanis as a bitter enemy of Armenians, with whom it is impossible to live in the same state; the frequent

repetition of the term “genocide” in different context (such as, “genocide in Baku”, “genocide in Maraga”, genocide in Sumgait”, “genocide in MKR”, “genocide in Nakhchivan”, “genocide in Ganja”, “genocide in other cities and villages of Azerbaijan”, “genocide in the area of permanent residence”, etc.) the tragic sense of the word was diluted, it is seen by people as a propaganda cliché that the party to the conflict is using for any occasion.

**Recommendation:** The stereotype is formed by the biased presentation of historical events and the excessively broad interpretation of the legal term “genocide”. Armenian media can refrain from using this stereotype as it only leads to mutual accusations and greater alienation of the nations. When referring to the clashes in Azerbaijan, the murders or other crimes that were committed against Armenian on the basis of ethnicity, it is preferable to stress the facts, analysis of the phenomena, to refrain from labeling and using the most neutral expressions possible, i.e., “tragically events”. This approach will not cause strongly negative response from any of the conflicting parties.

### The TRAGEDY IN KHOJALI is inspired or invented by Azerbaijanis to libel Armenians

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. Yet the latter ones occasionally publish stories to the effect that the Armenian pogroms in Sumgait in February 1988 were inspired.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### Example:

“These are ethnical cleansings committed by Azerbaijan on the territories adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh and in Mountainous Karabagh itself. The situation deteriorated to the destruction of Azerbaijanis themselves, let us recall the tragedy of Khojali residents.”

**Comment:** People in Azerbaijan believe that Khojali was left without due protection because of the lack of care from the authorities, however the mere idea of Azerbaijanis killing hundreds of their compatriots to ascribe the crime to Armenians is seen as a sacrilegious lie. Azerbaijanis are convinced that this stereotype is being coined by the Armenian party to shrug off the responsibility for the mass killing of civilians in Khojali.

**Recommendation:** When referring to events that are seen by nations as a tragedy media should be extremely cautious. Following this principle, they must refuse from propagating the stereotype, unless facts are quoted that can be serious ground for putting forth such versions.



### PRESENTATION OF AZERBAIJAN (AS A COUNTRY, AS A STATE, ITS INSTITUTIONS) AND AZERBAIJANIS (AS INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION, STATE)

#### ARMENOPHOBIA is a state policy in Azerbaijan

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### Examples:

“In the 20th century armenophobia as an ideology becomes a lifestyle in Azerbaijan.”

“Azerbaijan is a country where the anti-Armenian hysteria is brought to the level of state policy.”

**Comment:** The stereotype ascribes features to the Azerbaijani society that are in contradiction with the self-perception of Azerbaijanis, and therefore are seen as unfair discrediting. Azerbaijani audience sees the roots of mutual hostility in the policy of the Armenian state, and not in its particular negative feelings towards Armenians.

**Recommendation:** Journalists are recommended to restrict the use of these stereotypes by the cases when it refers to specific manifestations of anti-Armenian sentiment in Azerbaijan. One should avoid the simplification of the essence of conflict, limiting it to Azerbaijanis being infected with armenophobia and dissemination of anti-Armenian ideology in the country. Enforcement of the image of a bitter enemy represented by Azerbaijanis causes reciprocal feelings towards Armenians and impedes the overcoming of contradictions.

#### AZERBAIJAN has been founded on historical Armenian land

The stereotype is seldom used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenians are endemic to Karabagh/the Caucasus. The state of Armenia is founded on Turkic territories.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.



### Examples:

“In 1918 on the territory of Eastern Armenia and former Persian khanates through the efforts of Turkey and Great Britain the Azerbaijan Republic was established.”

“This (*Ed. Note*: statement by President Ilham Aliyev) is a complete hallucination coming from a man who never understood that he only inherited the presidential office of Azerbaijan, and not the historical Armenian territories that for a number of reasons were temporarily governed by Persians shahs or their appointee khans.”

**Comment:** The stereotype is giving a biased interpretation of Azerbaijani history, presents Azerbaijanis as a hostile nation that gained a part of the historical Armenian land and founded its state on it with the help of foreign patrons. It is seen negatively by the people who see these lands as their historical motherland.

**Recommendation:** The elimination of this stereotype from media discourse in Armenia is impossible due to the extremely controversial interpretation of the history of the Caucasus by the scientists and politicians of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Yet the media of general interest are recommended to try and restrict the transfer of historical debate on their pages and airtime, as their audiences are quite susceptible to the impact of negative stereotypes.

### **AZERBAIJAN is a bitter enemy of Armenia, Azerbaijanis are eternal enemies of Armenians**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenia is a hostile country/an Armenian is an enemy.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Azerbaijan is not a simple opponent of the Armenian party, it’s a bitter enemy that sees its primary goal to be not the search for reconciliation but the destruction of the whole Armenian nation.”

**Comment:** The stereotype promotes hatred towards Azerbaijanis, makes them an embodiment of eternal enemy who seeks to exterminate all Armenians. Present in a number of stories that are often unrelated to the MK problem, the word “enemy” as a synonym to the word “Azerbaijani” is seen extremely negatively by the audience of this country and causes strong emotional response.

**Recommendation:** Given the present nature of relations between the two countries it is impossible to avoid the use of this stereotype in the Armenian media. However, the media can significantly limit its reproduction, in particular, avoiding its use in stories that are not related to specific aspects of the conflict.

### **AZERBAIJAN is a terrorist state, a criminal country that supports the international terrorism**

The stereotype is seldom used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenians have a tradition of political terror.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

#### **Example:**

“This type of terrorism is extraordinary as we are dealing with a terrorist-state that keeps in terror not only the ethnic minorities but its own people, too.”

**Comment:** There are many problems in Azerbaijan related to rule of law and democracy, typical for many countries of the post-Soviet space. Yet people do not see signs of particular criminal situation in the country, manifestations of state terror. Moreover, the greater powers of the world have repeatedly stressed the role of Azerbaijan in the international anti-terrorist actions. Taking into account these circumstances, this stereotype, disseminated by Armenian media is seen by the Azerbaijani media as an attempt to libel the country on international arena.

**Recommendation:** Facts of crimes being committed give no grounds to call a country criminal. The notions of “state terrorism”, “international terrorism” have a specific legal definition and it is preferable for media to follow these definitions, with no radicalism. The confusion of notions deprives them of specific sense in the perceptions of the audience.

### **AZERBAIJAN is a threat to the region and the world**

The stereotype is relatively frequent used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenia is playing a destabilizing role in South Caucasus and is a menace for the region.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Example:

“Azerbaijan today is a country that spreads not security but danger”, S. Safarian defined the opinion of Western experts.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijani society, including the opposition, believes that in its foreign policy Azerbaijan aims at establishing peace and stability in the region, neighborly relations with the bordering states, is involved in the resolution of such global issues as energy security, actions against international terrorism etc. In the opinion of Azerbaijanis, it is the Mountainous Karabagh conflict and the counterproductive approach to its resolution displayed by the Armenian party that pose a menace to the security in the world and in the region. Thus, the stereotype is conflicting with the notions that the Azerbaijani society has about the situation in the region and causes strong negative feelings.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to expect a complete elimination of this stereotype from the media of Armenia given the current nature of the relations between the two countries. At the same time the journalists must avoid unsubstantiated allegations, take care of proper argumentation when voicing accusations to the neighbor country of being a menace to the security and stability and the region.

**AZERBAIJAN/AZERBAIJANIS have no/falsify their history, expropriate the history of others and claim the cultural values of other nations**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“The Armenians falsify history, claim the cultural values of other nations.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

### Examples:

“Historical and cultural falsifications have become part and parcel of the Azerbaijani mentality and ethnical identity. This is how the Azerbaijani society has been living for several decades, a fact that has greatly damaged this ethnicity and has made them a laughingstock on the international stage.”

“Azerbaijan has appropriated almost all the great Iranian poets (except Hafiz and Saadi): Nizami, Hagani, Nasimi, Fizuli, Sabir. The Azerbaijani musician Uzeir Gacibekov actually borrowed Iranian music and announcing it to be Azerbaijani.”

**Comment:** The views on history and cultural heritage of the scientists of the two nations are quite different, often radically contradictory. The Azerbaijani society is of firm opinion that it is the Armenians who falsify history to stress the age of the nation and its exclusivity, the right of ownership of territories, cultural monuments, etc. Thus, this stereotype is seen by the Azerbaijani audience as an attempt of the Armenian party to accuse Azerbaijan of actions that it has been committing itself. The allegations that the values that Azerbaijanis take pride in belong to others, are borrowed from other cultures, are seen extremely negatively by the population of the country.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to eliminate this stereotype from media discourse in Armenia, at least with the current state of relations between the two nations. Moreover since the origin of cultural monuments often have different versions, each of them being quite plausible. However, media must be more responsible with regard to facts, refrain from making insulting and degrading remarks to the address of the other nation, basing on questionable arguments. It is unacceptable to come up with allegations that theft of cultural values is in national character. It is a gross violation of norms of professional ethics.

### **The AZERBAIJANI ARMY is weak and demoralized while Armenian army is strong and well-prepared**

The stereotype is relatively frequent used in Armenian media.

It has no pronounced “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. Yet in Azerbaijan publications about the growing power of Azerbaijani army are quite frequent, twinned with description of problems that Armenian army is facing.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“Along with the catastrophically situation in Azerbaijani army, when privates shoot dead the commandment because of the degrading conditions of military service, this yields a clear picture of the state of affairs in this country.”

**Comment:** In the opinion of Azerbaijanis, this stereotype is formed through a intentional distortion of the real picture to artificially raise the morals of the Armenian army. At the same time, the humiliating characteristics of Azerbaijani soldiers are presented as typical of the whole nation, a fact that naturally causes strong negative sentiment in the country.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to eliminate this stereotype out of media use in Armenia as long as the danger of war resumption is present. The propaganda war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, of which this stereotype is an element, is part and parcel of the relations between the two countries today. However, both media and politicians, experts can be more reticent in their statements when assessing the army of the neighbor country, to refrain from insulting remarks and avoid ungrounded generalizations.

### **AZERBAIJANI PROPAGANDA misleads the global community, and the Azerbaijani media are means of information war against Armenia**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenian media spread misinformation on Karabagh conflict and wage an information war against Azerbaijan.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“Azerbaijani propaganda of Goebbels style does nothing other than mislead.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijani society sees this stereotype very negatively, believing that it is the Armenian media wage the anti-Azerbaijani propaganda all over the world, falsify the history, distort the reality to attain their political objectives. Therefore, in the opinion of the population of the country, the Azerbaijani media try to counter these actions.

**Recommendation:** It is possible to eliminate such stereotypes from media use in Armenia under the existing circumstances of conflict between the two countries. The information offset of Azerbaijan and Armenia in the domain of information, the propaganda war are among the principal components of the conflict. However, the media can be more reticent in wording, to refrain from insults and degrading remarks when reporting the propaganda steps of the other party or when replying to it.

### **AZERBAIJANIS are vandals, barbarians, insolent, aggressive, bloodthirsty and mean people of uncertain ethnical origin**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has no direct “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan. Yet here the publications where Armenians are characterized as mean liars, as cruel, examples are cited when Armenians destroy the Azerbaijani cultural heritage.

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Examples:**

“Aggressiveness of Azerbaijanis in 21st century has reached a climax. They commit cruel crimes with no mercy even for their families.”

“The blood-thirsty face of the Tatars of the Caucasus is still noticeable behind the back of an Azerbaijani.”

**Comment:** This stereotype defines Azerbaijanis as possessing the worst human qualities, the whole nation is addressed insulting and degrading remarks, which enhances the anti-Armenian sentiment in the Azerbaijani society, provokes the media of the country to respond with stories of corresponding content.

**Recommendation:** The media that claim to be quality must be aware that similar characteristics of a nation are a gross violation of basic professional ethics. The climate formed by journalists through this stereotype is a serious impediment for conflict resolution.

### The LEADERSHIP OF AZERBAIJAN are incompetent, indecent and silly people

The stereotype is particularly often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“The Leadership of Armenia is incompetent.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

#### Examples:

“Unlike the President of Azerbaijan, who makes militant statements and loses no chance to speak of increasing military budgets, our President makes no such statements as he is modest and decent.”

“Azerbaijan is governed by silly and sick people, schizophrenics.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is used mostly to explain the reasons of, as Armenian media maintain, the aggressive and counterproductive stance of Azerbaijan in the Karabagh conflict resolution, its violation of commonly accepted international principles, etc. Sometimes this characteristic is given to the leaders of Azerbaijan in the context of internal politics. The negative perception of the stereotype is enhanced by the insulting remarks often made to the address of Azerbaijani officials. Irrespective of the attitude of Azerbaijanis to their government, when such insults are made by the Armenian press, they are seen as insults to the society.

**Recommendation:** The opinion on how competent the leadership of Azerbaijan is in the conflict resolution can be expressed by Armenian media with no insulting and degrading remarks. At the same time it is advisable to refrain from using this stereotype in the stories, dealing with the inner policy of Azerbaijan, to limit the narration to mere facts: the display

of “concern” about the people of Azerbaijan by media of the conflicting country is seen as gloat and nourishes the mutual hostility.

### **MK/ARMENIA is a democratic state, while Azerbaijan is non-democratic**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Armenia is a non-democratic state, while Azerbaijan is democratic.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians, officials.

#### **Example:**

“MKR is a tolerant and democratic country, unlike, say, Azerbaijan, where the parliament has recently passed a constitutional law on lifelong power mandate for Aliyev.”

**Comment:** The stereotype is negatively viewed by Azerbaijani audience for a number of reasons: it stresses the idea of Armenia’s superiority over Azerbaijan, of Armenians over Azerbaijanis; to prove this point often inaccurate information is used. Thus, for example in the quotation above the allegation that the “parliament has passed a constitutional law on lifelong mandate for Aliyev” is inaccurate. At the same time the criticism of inner situation in the country, even if based on accurate information, yet made by a representative of an unfriendly country, is often sensitive, hence the negative reaction to this.

**Recommendation:** In this case it is important to present accurate information about the situation in the other country, avoiding implying the superiority with regards to reforms. The comparisons are seen by the audience of the criticized country less negatively and sound more convincing when coming from unbiased sources. Moreover, since judging by the data of international organizations, all countries of the region face certain difficulties with regard democratic transformations.

### **NATIONAL MINORITIES in Azerbaijan are persecuted and subjected to religious repressions, ethnical cleansings, assimilation**

The stereotype is often used in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“In Armenia (unlike Azerbaijan) national minorities are subjected to discrimination.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

### Examples:

“The problems of Georgians in Azerbaijan are numerous and quite similar to the problems of other ethnic communities of this country. (...) In reality, the policy of Azerbaijan towards Ingiloyans is aimed at either assimilation or their ousting to Georgia.”

“The Sunni Muslims are subject to repressions. These are mostly indigenous nations of the northern Azerbaijan: Avars, Lezgins, Tsakhurs. Here, besides the religious factor, the controversy is of ethnic nature. Repressions against these people have already led to armed clashes and casualties from both sides.”

**Comment:** The Azerbaijanis see this stereotype, often based on inaccurate information or generalization of individual facts, as a product of the aspiration of Armenian politicians and media to convince the Armenian society and the global community of the intolerance of Azerbaijanis, of their incapability for peaceful coexistence with different ethnic and religious minorities.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to fully exclude the use of this stereotype from the media use in Armenia, as it is contained in the speeches and statements of state officials, politicians. However, the journalists themselves can try and refrain from such statements, reporting when necessary the mere facts and avoiding unjustified generalizations, as the professional ethics requires.



## STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA OF AZERBAIJAN



### KARABAGH CONFLICT RESOLUTION

#### **ARMENIA unilaterally violates the international norms/requirements of international organizations**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan commits gross violations of international norms/requirements of international organizations.”**

The stereotype is equally frequently encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Examples:**

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan issued a statement on the signing of the protocols. The statements reads: ‘In 1993 Turkey closed its border with Armenia to protest the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia. As a result of Armenian aggression 20% of Azerbaijani territories have been occupied, around 1 million of Azerbaijani citizens have been ousted from their land, the cultural and historical heritage of Azerbaijan is being destroyed on the occupied territories. Throughout this time a number of international organizations, including the UN SC, UN GA, OSCE, PACE etc., adopted resolutions that confirm and condemn the aggression committed by Armenia. Yet Armenia persists in ignoring the demands on international organizations to withdraw troops from occupied territories.’”

“Our lands have been occupied for 20 years already. Armenia has violated fundamental principles of international law. As you know, the UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions that require immediate withdrawal of Armenian troops from invaded territories without a reservation. Unfortunately, these resolutions remain unimplemented.”

**Comment:** The use of this stereotype is inadvisable as it is misleading to speak of Armenia being the sole violator of international norms. In particular, the Azerbaijani officials, politicians, experts, journalists often use it in the context of four resolutions of the UN Security Council of April 30, July 29, October 14 and November 12, 1993, maintaining that Armenia failed to comply with them. However, these documents made demands to both parties of the conflict: to immediately stop all military actions and hostile acts; to refrain from any action that impedes the peaceful resolution of conflict etc. These demands were never performed by any of the parties. After the Bishkek protocol in May 1994 was signed the aforementioned resolutions to a certain extent lost their validity; yet the media of Azerbaijan to this day continue recalling Armenia’s failure to comply with them. This serves to form a misleading notion of both the essence of the documents and their role. If one speaks of other demands by international organization, one can always recall that it is

due to Azerbaijan's violation of international norms that unilateral sanctions were imposed by the USA on Baku for a number of years. Hence the unilateral accusations of Armenia intensify the mistrust in the capability and willingness of Azerbaijan to treat the conflict resolution objectively and productively in Armenia.

**Recommendation:** It is extremely difficult to get rid of this stereotype completely, because it has already rooted in the official argumentation of the Azerbaijani party and is strong in the notions common for the Azerbaijani society. However, it would have been advisable to restrict its use by journalists in the articles that do not require quoting from official statements, speeches of officials, politicians and experts. The journalists who are courageous enough to express viewpoints that diverge from the official one could present the alternative interpretation of the international documents to their audience, thus contributing to the general awareness level in Azerbaijan.

**ARMENIA/MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH refuse to cooperate, they are unready for compromise, their stance is counterproductive, while Azerbaijan is productive**

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a "mirror" version in the media of Armenia: **"The stance of Azerbaijan on Karabagh conflict resolution is counterproductive, it is not ready for compromise, while Armenia is productive."**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Examples:

"The latest comments in this regard came from "the MKR President" Arkadiy Ghukasian who was interviewed at length by the Public Television of Armenia. (...) In this interview, despite the optimistic tonality of the recent round of talks where mediators were involved, A. Ghukasian made statements that come to prove: the separatist regime is unready for compromise and unwilling to resolve the conflict in the short term."

"Thus, according to the head of Department of Information Policy and Press of the AR Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tair Tagizadeh, 'one has to state that despite the positive development of negotiations between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia to advance the speedy and substantial resolution of Mountainous Karabagh conflict, Armenia and Armenian political and public organizations do not stop their attempts to fake history that only serve to deepen the mutual discontent'. The diplomat believes that 'this is a destructive approach that most certainly does not contribute to the peace process'."

**Comment:** The accusations of one party to the peace resolution process of refusing to cooperate and look for compromise are seen by Armenian society to stem from Azerbaijan's wish to damage the international image of Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh, to show that no agreement can be reached with the neighbor country. Moreover, over the past years Azerbaijani media have been disseminating stereotypes expressing this very idea in a stronger form, i.e., the stereotype that Armenia is ready to

prevent the conflict from being resolved at any price. This approach causes a corresponding response, increases the mistrust of Armenian society towards the capability and willingness of Azerbaijani side to be objective and constructive in conflict resolution.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to exclude the use of the present stereotype, since it does reflect the notions that are rooted in Azerbaijani society. However, it would be more productive to restrict its use by journalists in publications that do not require quotes from official statements, speeches of state officials, politicians and experts. This could reduce the tension between the parties to the conflict.

### ARMENIAN POPULATION of Mountainous Karabagh are citizens of Azerbaijan

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“J. Hasanli (*Ed. Note:* Milli Meclis deputy Jamil Hasanli) noted that in terms of attitude towards the Karabagh problem there is not much diversity in the society of Azerbaijan: ‘The Armenians who reside in Mountainous Karabagh are citizens of Azerbaijan, their rights must be protected and in exchange for that they must respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. This is how we see the resolution of the problem.’”

**Comment:** The inadvisability of using this stereotype lies in the fact that the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh declared its independence and since then has not been recognizing the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan, does not hold and does not recognize Azerbaijani passports and other objects that would confirm their Azerbaijani citizenship. The future status of Mountainous Karabagh remains a subject of negotiations. The Armenians of Karabagh have delegated their power to the representatives of MK authorities. The use of this stereotype is seen as lack of will to take their stance into account and therefore, lack of willingness to seek compromise in negotiations.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to completely exclude the use of this stereotype, particularly since its source is often to be found in official structures. At the same time it would have been reasonable to couple such communications (or at least intermit them) with descriptions of real situation and ideas of compromise forms of relations between the nations.

### ARMENIANS cannot have two states

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Example:

“Armenia maintains that ‘the conflict in Mountainous Karabagh is the result of a nation’s fight for self-determination’. Objectively, the Armenian nation does not need additional ‘self-determination’, as the state of Armenia does exist already, it is a full-fledged member of the global community and the Armenians are the ethnicity which forms the basis of this state. Therefore, the conflict is not that for liberation, but that for conquest of territory. The modern world has over 150 state. The ethnicities are dozen times more numerous. Objectively, not every ethnic group has its state or even autonomy. (...) Yet Armenians are lucky, they do have Armenia. And there can be no second “Armenian state”, that of “Mountainous Karabagh.”

**Comment:** The inadvisability of using this stereotype is conditioned by the fact that it basically ignores the global experience: the national minorities mostly strive for independence in those cases, when the state does not ensure the realization of their legitimate rights. And in a number of cases the interethnic conflicts were resolved not through the principle of territorial integrity, but contrary to it: examples of Bangladesh, Eritrea, East Timor, Kosovo, South Sudan. So the existence of another state on another territory of the same or similar ethnic composition cannot be a decisive factor. The world knows over a dozen Arab, and a number of Turkic states. Azerbaijan itself has a lot of supporters for the slogan of “One Nation, Two States” (and if one takes into account the Northern Cyprus, this would become “One Nation, Three States”). This attitude to the issue provokes disbelief in the possibility of mutual understanding, intensifies the climate of hostility.

**Recommendation:** Excluding the use of such stereotypes in media is only possible if officials refrain from similar statements. However, when the content of the articles does not require citing from official sources, from political statements, journalists could have been more multi-faceted in their coverage of the subject, reflecting the viewpoint of the opponents, too.

### **AZERBAIJAN must not consent to compromise**

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“The Armenian party is not to make concessions to Azerbaijan.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Example:

“Any concessions and compromise lead to nothing other but greater adamancy of Armenia in the negotiations on resolving the Armenian-Azerbaijani and Mountainous Karabagh conflicts.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is normally used in Azerbaijani media with no explanation as to the essence of controversy between the two parties to the conflict, with no specification as to what concessions and compromised is offered by the Azerbaijani party and to what extent they are acceptable for Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh. The bluntness of such statements cause the Armenian society to disbelieve the capability and willingness of Azerbaijani party to approach the conflict resolution in an objective and constructive manner.

**Recommendation:** Given the current state of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations it is hardly realistic to expect that this stereotype could be discarded. However, it is reasonable to restrict its use at least by journalists. In the cases when the possibility or impossibility of compromise is analyzed, we recommend that specific examples of compromise proposals be given along with the reasons why they were rejected. The improved understanding of negotiations process, of the rationale behind the behavior of each party could contribute to lessening the emotional tension and to more realistic expectations for each of the parties with regard to each other.

### **Each AZERBAIJANI must be prepared to resolve the problem of Karabagh with a gun in hand**

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no pronounced “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Example:

“The Chief Editor of the newspaper (**Ed Note:** “Novoye Vremya”) Shaker Gabiloglu stressed how important it is for journalist to keep to their duty in returning the occupied territories. ‘If it is necessary, each journalist must take weapon and do everything in his power to return the occupied territories. Because the resolution of Karabagh conflict is the sacred duty of each Azerbaijani.’”

**Comment:** Such militant statements that are in actual contradiction with the principle of non-violent resolution and the threats of putting force at the service of conflict resolution

cause very strong feelings on the other side, intensify the anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in the Armenian society.

**Recommendation:** Given the present day situation in the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations it is hardly realistic to expect the complete refusal from this stereotype. However, the journalists who are fully conscious of the importance of the peaceful resolution to the conflict and the dangers of militant rhetoric for public feelings must avoid using this stereotype in their own texts. It is advisable to use other methods for sustaining the patriotism of readers that are not implying mutual aggression and that do not become an obstacle in the search for compromise in the course of negotiations.

**The INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY must exert unilateral pressure on Armenia. The resolution of Karabagh conflict can be assisted by sanctions against Armenia**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, more seldom in writings of journalists.

### Example:

“To prevent such threats F.Sadykhov (*Ed. Note:* professor of Western University Fikret Sadykhov) thinks it necessary that Armenia be pressured into accepting the renewed version of Madrid principles, as well as believes it is important that influential powers should not set equal Azerbaijan and Armenia, since it is Azerbaijan that suffers from the threats of separatism.”

**Comment:** The inadvisability of using this stereotype is due to the fact that it promotes in the Azerbaijani society expectations from the international community regarding pressuring Armenia, meanwhile these expectations have little ground. By this the parties to the negotiations are put in unequal conditions, and compromise is expected from only one of them. Not a word is being spoken about the possible compromise from the other side, it is from the very start maintained that the stance of the Azerbaijani party is fair, while the notions of Armenians are unfair, and the situation can be corrected if international sanctions are applied against Armenia. Appeals to mediating countries, the international community in combination with the traditional set of accusations of Armenian occupation, aggression, separatism, etc. demonstrated the unpreparedness of Azerbaijan for compromise and search for mutually acceptable solution. The categorical form of such statements enhances the disbelief of the Armenian party in the capability and willingness of Azerbaijani party to approach the conflict resolution in an objective and productive manner.

**Recommendation:** Given the present state of the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations it is unrealistic to expect the elimination of this stereotype, particularly since the statements of this type are constantly made by Azerbaijani officials, including the immediate participants

of the negotiations. However, when the use of the stereotype is not linked to the quotations from official sources, from political statements, journalists could offer their audiences an alternative approach to the subject. In particular, to present the content of negotiations and the existing controversy at a greater detail, presenting also the standpoint of the opposing party. This would help to restrict the negative impact of the stereotype.

### The INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY supports Armenia

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia. At the same time, the Armenian media discuss the subject of influence that the finance of Azerbaijan may have on the behavior of certain foreign politicians and organizations.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“OLK (*Ed. Note:* Organization for Liberation of Karabagh) is strongly protesting against the statements of D. Rupel and Y. Merzlyakov regarding the involvement in the negotiations of the separatist regime, the so-called “MKR” as a party to the conflict, and that the territory of the Mountainous Karabagh is disputable. This policy has resulted in pressure that Armenians exert on OSCE for quite a long time. The statement concludes with an appeal to representatives of this international structure to refuse the support of the Armenian party in its aggressive and occupations policy.”

**Comment:** The stereotype is used mostly in the context of implied support provided by influential international actors, the mediating countries to Armenia with regard to Karabagh conflict. Had it not been for this patronage, the conflict would have been resolved long ago. This interpretation of the negotiations process intensifies the distrust of the Armenian party on the matter of Azerbaijan’s readiness to effectively cooperate within international mediation efforts, and hence questions the capability of the latter ones to contribute to the peaceful resolution.

**Recommendation:** Given the present condition of the negotiations process within OSCE Minsk Group, one cannot expect this stereotype to be completely removed from the discourse, all the more since similar statements are regularly made by Azerbaijani officials, including the direct participants in the negotiations process. However, when the description of activities of international organizations in the context of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations does not require quoting from Azerbaijani politicians, journalists could present the content of negotiations and existing controversies in a more comprehensive manner, giving floor also to the opposing viewpoint. By this dominating impact of the stereotype on the public opinion could have been overcome to a large extent.

### The KARABAGH CONFLICT can only be resolved through a war

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“In any case, the problem of Karabagh will have to be resolved by a war. Is the society ready for that, in particular, the young people? (...) It follows from the findings of a survey administered by the National Council of Youth Organizations of Azerbaijan, that over 69% of young people believe that the occupied lands can only be returned through a war. And it is not only possible, but also necessary.”

**Comment:** Similar statements that run contrary to the principle of Karabagh conflict peaceful resolution (and frequently containing calls for arms) raise very strong negative feelings in response, intensify the hostility and strengthen the anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in the Armenian society.

**Recommendation:** Taking into account the frequency of public statements in Azerbaijan regarding the preferable military solution to the problem, it is unrealistic to expect that the stereotype to be completely eliminated. Journalists can be recommended not to voice similar appeals in their names and give floor more frequently to those representatives of Azerbaijani society that remain committed to peaceful resolution. The alleviation of hostility between the two parties to the conflict could have been stimulated by greater attention towards the bilateral Armenian-Azerbaijan and initiatives that signal the possible rapprochement of stances.

### The KARABAGH CONFLICT was unleashed by Armenia

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia; however, Armenian media do contain accusations to the address of Azerbaijan for initiating the armed stage of the conflict.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“However, the provocative statements of O. Yesayan and other “hawks” who pride themselves on having participated in massacres of peaceful Azerbaijani population of



Karabagh and the invasion of Azerbaijani land not only cause the indignation and rejection on an international level, from the Council of Europe to the UN, but also undermine all efforts directed at peaceful resolution of the situation. Probably the representatives of forces who started the aggressive war against Azerbaijan hope to rip some profits should the war resume. But these hopes are to remain futile, and on the days of the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of victory over fascisms the warmonger ought to understand: any aggression, even if it is temporarily successful, is doomed to failure.”

**Comment:** While reflecting the interpretation of Karabagh conflict from Azerbaijan’s perspective, this stereotype causes a corresponding response in Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh. The inadvisability of its use is explained by the fact that in Armenia it is believed - and not without grounds - that the Karabagh conflict started off with the protests of Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region in February 1988 and the inadequate response that followed from the political leadership of Azerbaijan SSR and the USSR, resulting to an escalation of tension. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan were Soviet Socialist Republics of the same country, the USSR, and it is misleading to state that the conflict was started by Armenia. If one speaks about the military phase of the conflict, the Armenian society sees the use of military force as a response to protect the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh. The interpretation of events that differs dramatically from the one above is seen by Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh to be an intentional distortion of recent history, increases the mistrust towards Azerbaijan and disbelief in the possibility of productive talks.

**Recommendation:** The use of such stereotypes in media can only be excluded if such statements are given up by officials. However, when the content of the articles does not require quoting official sources or political statements, journalists could have refrained from categorical unilateral accusations in their stories. Greater attention to the ideas the opposing party has would have enhanced the probability of a constructive dialogue.

### **The RESOLUTION of Karabagh conflict is only possible on the basis of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“The right of the nation to self-determination is the main international principle that cannot be subjugated to other principles and is the only basis for conflict resolution.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Examples:**

“Yet we do have our principles: the problem is to be resolved within territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the Armenian troops must leave all occupied territories, and our compatriots are to return to their homes. No other options can be considered.”

“When reporting on the negotiations on the Armenian-Azerbaijani Mountainous Karabagh conflict resolution, E. Mamedyarov stressed the need to resolve the issue within territorial integrity of our country, noting that this will allow to restore peace and security in the region.”

**Comment:** The use of this stereotype is inadvisable also because it in fact dismisses the other basic principle of the resolution, the right of the nation to self-determination. No document has ever defined one of the principles being prevalent over the other, as well as no document specifies which of them should be applied in specific cases.

**Recommendation:** Excluding the use of such stereotypes in media is only possible if officials give up similar statements, including those, directly involved in negotiations. However, when the content of the journalistic stories does not require quoting from official sources, political statements, journalists could be more conscientious in their allusions to international law norms. This would contribute to the public awareness of the resolution process and to bring down the radicalism in both countries.

### The RESOLUTION of Karabagh conflict will be the consequence of the increasing economic/military power of Azerbaijan

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“Unlike a number of political scientists I (*Ed. Note:* the author of the article) will not engage in fortunetelling and giving even approximate dates of when the competent foreign policy and economic achievements of Azerbaijan will start transforming into the process of returning of territories of our country occupied by Armenia. I shall only present my ideas as to how exactly it will be proved that the time has always been to the benefit of Azerbaijan in Mountainous Karabagh resolution. I am convinced that the factor that can, even if not in immediate future, disrupt the wish of Armenians to fight for the secession of Karabagh from Azerbaijan and may incite their own wish to return to Azerbaijan is the continuation of the gap in the living standard between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The gap is already quite huge, and there are grounds to believe that Azerbaijan will go on gaining pace. I do not want to simplify a serious problem of this kind, but human history has seen examples of economic leverage in the resolution of similar ethnic-territorial controversy.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is aimed at fortifying the insufficiently valid ideas in Azerbaijani society as to the situation, the possibility to negotiate with the Armenian party and to achieve the resolution of Karabagh conflict by force. Such expectations have no confirmation in either the historical experience or the situation analysis that international

experts come up with. The statements that the Azerbaijani party is making regarding the decisive significance of economic superiority of Azerbaijan in the conflict resolution fail to make the impact on the Armenian society that Baku seeks to have. They only come to confirm the conviction of Armenians that Azerbaijan is not interested to have the conflict resolved with both parties interests taken into account and in compliance with the principles of international law, thus strengthening their wish to maintain the status quo.

**Recommendation:** To eliminate such stereotypes from the media discourse is hardly possible as the growing revenues from the sale of raw hydrocarbons does instill the belief among numerous Azerbaijanis that these revenues can help to resolve all issues. The impact of this stereotype could be lessened by a balanced presentation of alternative viewpoints on Karabagh conflict resolution.

### To launch the RESOLUTION PROCESS Armenia must unilaterally implement certain pre-requisite conditions

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less frequently in writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“Thirdly, the USA must understand that Azerbaijan will not go for concessions on the issue of Karabagh, and to prove the effectiveness of negotiations at this stage at least 5 occupied regions surrounding Mountainous Karabagh must be liberated.”

**Comment:** the use of this stereotype is inadvisable as the parties to the negotiations process are thus placed in unequal statuses, with only one of them being demanded to take certain steps. Not a word is spoken about the possible compromise from the other side, the essence of the controversy remains undisclosed. The Armenian party does not come up with prerequisite conditions, and the ultimatum in the negotiations process is unacceptable for the Armenian society. It virtually demolishes the possibility of compromise, enhances the disbelief in the possibility of the peaceful resolution of the conflict, in the effective mediating efforts.

**Recommendation:** One can expect such stereotypes to be completely excluded from media use only in the case when country officials, including the immediate negotiations participants, give up statements of similar content. However, when the content of journalistic stories does not require quoting from official sources or political statements, the journalists could present the whole context of negotiations, reflecting the approaches that the parties have without biased comments. This would have limited the negative impact of the stereotype on the public opinion.

### Until the Karabagh conflict is RESOLVED, no cooperation is possible between Armenians and Azerbaijanis

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Example:

“At the same time I (*Ed. Note:* the Minister of Agriculture of Azerbaijan Ismet Abbasov) said that until the Karabagh conflict is resolved there can be no cooperation with Armenia. This is the where our country stands: after the conflict is resolved the cooperation in all domains will be possible, including the agriculture.”

**Comment:** The use of this stereotype is inadvisable as the false idea is being imparted to the audience that the refusal from cooperation in all domains is a more productive resolution tool than the existence of such cooperation. By this the two societies are refused an important reconciliation resource. As a consequence of the use of this stereotype by Azerbaijani media, in Armenia as well as in Azerbaijan the belief in the possibility of conflict being overcome due to shared interests is largely lost.

**Recommendation:** Eliminating such stereotypes from media is only possible if the leadership of Azerbaijan gives up this policy. On the other hand, the situation becomes a vicious circle, when the radicalism of the authorities and the society is mutually nourishing, impeding the choice of compromise approaches. The situation could have been changed by media and journalists that possess certain independence to present alternative viewpoints and to thus limit the negative impact of the stereotype.

### Until the conflict is RESOLVED, the population of MK must remain in absolute isolation

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Examples:

“It shall also be recalled that a year ago the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan made a fast tough statement to the effect that the recitals of Russian actors in Khankendi in front of the

Karabagh separatists with no consent from official Baku are viewed as a sign of disrespect to the people of Azerbaijan.”

“Echo” has already noted that the financial transactions in Mountainous Karabagh are illegal as none of the banks there is licensed by the National Bank (*Ed. Note: National Bank of Azerbaijan*) that would grant the official permission to engage in such activities on the territory of the country.”

**Comment:** Denying the right of Armenians of Mountainous Karabagh to live a normal life on their land until the status of the region is determined - to engage in financial transactions, hold concerts and recitals, use natural gas etc. - only comes to strengthen the conviction of the Armenian society that the leadership of the neighbor country is inclined to punish the Armenians of MK at all cost for their aspiration for independence. This results in strong reciprocal negativism, increased anti-Azerbaijani sentiment.

**Recommendation:** It seems unrealistic to eliminate this stereotype from media use given the official stance of Azerbaijan regarding the contacts of Mountainous Karabagh with the outside world and under the circumstances of unresolved conflict. The journalists are recommended to refrain from the use of this stereotype in the cases when it is not required by the need to voice the official statements. In this way, the adamancy of the official policy would have had less impact on the interethnic relations in a broader sense.

**Until the Karabagh conflict remains UNRESOLVED/the territories adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh are liberated, the Armenian-Turkish relations are not to normalize**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“The process of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement should not be linked to the resolution of MK problem.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Examples:

“Any agreement signed by Turkey and Armenia that does not take into account the resolution of Karabagh issue, runs contrary to the national interest of Azerbaijan.”

“It is common knowledge that the Karabagh conflict resolution process has gained pace again recently”, MP Zahid Oruc told the 525ci Gazet. “At a first sight, the improvement of process in the region cannot bypass the Karabagh conflict resolution. That is, the Armenian-Turkish relations cannot be resolved without Karabagh. There can be no doubt that the reality and prospect of liberation of occupied territories of Azerbaijan are inevitable.”

**Comment:** This approach is unacceptable for the Armenian audience. Armenians believe that they have more reason to expect reciprocal steps from Turkey than to comply with the requirements put forth. And if Yerevan defines no pre-conditions for the rapprochement, Ankara has even less reasons to do so. The involvement of Azerbaijan in the process makes an extremely negative impact, as most people in Armenia believe Azerbaijan is impossible to reach a compromise with and Azerbaijan has no other feelings but hostility towards Armenia and its people. Armenia is also very sensitive with regard to any pressure of from any third party on Karabagh resolution, believing that mixing together the relations between Armenia and Turkey and the Karabagh conflict is damaging for both processes. And the more prominent Karabagh issue is made in the context of Armenian-Turkish protocols, the more negativist the sentiments of Armenian society become towards the latter process become.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to exclude the use of this stereotype in media given the present situation in the relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Armenia and Turkey. The journalists are recommended to also present the opposing viewpoint that is present in Turkish society, thus allowing the audience to analyze the arguments and come up with an opinion of its own. It is also preferable to refrain from the use of this stereotype when it is not required by citing of someone else's opinion, since the preconditions do impede the dialogue, the commitment of the two parties to overcome the controversy by negotiations.



### REPORTING ON TRAGIC EVENTS

#### **The recognition of ARMENIAN GENOCIDE damages the security of the region/adversely affects the regional processes**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Example:**

“It has been noted that such debates (*Ed. Note:* on the resolution of 1915 Genocide at Swedish Parliament) will negatively affect the image and relations of Sweden with Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as damage the regional security in South Caucasus, as it will be seen as support provided to the aggressor country, Armenia”, said the head of AFS (*Ed. Note:* Azerbaijani Federation of Sweden).

**Comment:** The unacceptability of using this stereotype lies in the fact that the Azerbaijani party keeps attempting to link the recognition of the 1915 Genocide recognition by other countries with the current situation, to exert pressure on them and put forth preconditions. The disrespect towards these decisions pronounced by Azerbaijani media increases the anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in the Armenian society.

**Recommendation:** Given the present state of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, it is impossible to fully eliminate the use of this stereotype in media. However, if the Azerbaijani side has a different stance on the issue of the genocide, this should not mean that this subject, so sensitive for the Armenian society, must be covered with disrespect. The journalists are recommended to try and refrain from the use of this stereotype.

### **ARMENIANS have committed genocide of Azerbaijanis/Turks in Azerbaijan/South Caucasus**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century Azerbaijanis have repeatedly subjected Armenians to genocide.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Example:**

“The chairwoman of the Public Association ‘Eurasian Institute of International Research’ Gunel Pashaeva in her speech at the presentation noted that in 1918-1920s Armenians killed and crippled thousands of civilian Azerbaijanis in different regions of Azerbaijan. She also noted that the mass burial in Guba, discovered in 2007, is an irrevocable proof of Azerbaijani genocide, mass killings and torture that victimized the peaceful population.”

**Comment:** The inadvisability of the use of this stereotype is conditioned by the inappropriate use of the term “genocide”. Genocide is different from a premeditated murder or inflicting a physical damage, a terrorist attack or other crimes on the grounds of religious, racial, national or ethnic hostility in as much as the genocides main purpose is to exterminate or partially destroy a certain group of people, an ethnic group or a nation. And the idea of a small Armenian nation that had no state of its own would aim to exterminate or partially destroy an ethnic group that is several times larger, moreover, on the territory of other countries, is viewed in Armenia with sarcasm. The categorical form in which the accusations are made is strongly protested by Armenian society, increases the anti-Azerbaijani sentiments.

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to fully eliminate the use of this stereotype in media given the current trends of Azerbaijani historiography. Journalists are recommended to try and refrain from the use of these stereotype in the stories of their own. When referring to the issue of interethnic clashes in the past it is advisable to avoid making one-sided accusations of Armenians and to present the whole context of the events, using as neutral wording as possible.

### **ARMENIANS made ethnic cleansings in Karabagh and adjacent territories**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia. They do occasionally speak of ethnic cleansings in Azerbaijan, but the subject does not take the shape of a stereotype.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Examples:

“In this regard the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan states once again that the unrecognized separatist regime on occupied territories is nothing other than an illegitimate body, created by Armenia as a result of ethnic cleansing of local Azerbaijanis.”

“Finally, in 1988-1993, as a result of aggression and the policy of ethnic cleansings against Azerbaijan from Armenia a military intervention was made that resulted in occupation of one fifth of Azerbaijan Republic territory.”

**Comment:** In the course of military conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis the civilian population had to leave the territories, taken by the troops of the opposing party, hence accusing only the Armenian party of ethnic cleansings is incorrect. In particular, the first cases when the residents were ousted by military actions due to their ethnicity took place during the “Ring” operation of 1991, implemented jointly by the Soviet troops and Azerbaijani armed groups against the residents of Armenian villages. The use of this stereotype in Azerbaijani media enforces the conviction of the Armenian society that the other party is biased.

**Recommendation:** Eliminating the use of this stereotype from the media discourse given the present state of relation between Armenian and Azerbaijan, when all events are interpreted in a one-sided manner, is unrealistic. The journalists are recommended to try and refrain from enforcing this stereotype, to avoid generalizations when covering the subjects, presenting only specific and verified information.



### **PRESENTATION OF ARMENIA (AS A COUNTRY, AS A STATE, ITS INSTITUTIONS) AND ARMENIANS (AS INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION, STATE)**

#### **ARMENIA is a dependent state/Armenia conducts the policy of Moscow**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.



### Examples:

“But in this manner they (*Ed. Note: Armenians*) have become a satellite of Russia, having given themselves into complete dependence on the will of the Kremlin.”

“It is no secret that Armenia is a manageable formation rather than an independent political entity. It is managed by outer forces backed by influential circles from Russia, USA.”

**Comment:** The use of this stereotype is inadvisable as Armenia, similarly to other countries, forms its foreign policy in accordance with its own interest. The Armenian society expects that the relations that the country has with Russia and that are not directed against the third countries be described in respectful manner. The evaluations contained in this stereotype are seen as attempts to damage the international image of the country, and hence enforce the intolerance of the Armenian society towards the policy of the neighbor state.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate the use of this stereotype in media given the present situation in relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The journalists are recommended to refrain from using it in their own materials, when it does not require quoting from public statements.

### ARMENIA is a hostile country/an Armenian is an enemy

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan is a bitter enemy of Armenia, Azerbaijanis are eternal enemies of Armenians.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

### Example:

“The chief coach noted that soon the names of the sportsmen who will come out on the ring in weight categories of 54 kg and 60 kg would be pronounced, and stressed that they had nothing to fear from the team of Armenia: “Armenians will be coming to our country with strongest boxers. Thus, for example, Narek Abgarian who appears in category of 51 kg is the champion of Europe. Others have been winning prizes in different competitions, too. But despite all this, we are capable of defeating the sportsmen of the hostile country.”

**Comment:** The use of this stereotype is unacceptable as it is directed to the formation and reinforcement of an enemy image represented by a whole nation, of racist ideas. This stereotype is used in stories that are not directly related to the Karabagh conflict. Thus, a

newspaper piece on the life of Azerbaijani refugees from Mountainous Karabagh who live in a hostel in Baku describes a scene with a little boy pointing his toy gun at the journalist and saying: “I come from Karabagh. I will be killing Armenians with this gun.” The publication was accompanied with the photograph of the child and a caption: “Fuad says he will be killing Armenians.” The story about the theatrical performance at Agdam Drama Theater on the military conflict of early 1990s noted that actor Jafar Bayramov who plays the role of an Armenian, “did manage to show the true face of Armenians at least a bit, however difficult this disclosure is”. This stereotype, contributing to the intensification of armenophobia in Azerbaijan, causes similarly strong reactions in the Armenian society.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to fully exclude the use of this stereotype in media, given the present situation in Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. It is recommended that journalists refrain from its frequent use, avoid its use in expressing opinions of their own, so as to restrict the negative impact of the stereotype on public sentiment.

### **ARMENIA is a non-democratic state, while Azerbaijan is democratic**

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“MK/Armenia is a democratic state, while Azerbaijan is non-democratic.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.

#### **Examples:**

“I (*Ed. Note: the interviewee*) won't go to Armenia. This country has mass violations of human rights and still holds events on human right protection.”

“The permanent pressure of international organizations regarding the horrible state of democracy and human rights in Armenia.”

**Comment:** According to reports of international human rights organizations, Armenia, similarly to Azerbaijan, has problems with democracy. Yet, these reports assess the situation in Armenia as more favorable than in Azerbaijan along almost all criteria. There is no ground to maintain that Azerbaijan is, unlike Armenia, a democratic country. The use of this stereotype makes the Armenian society question the capability of the Azerbaijani party to evaluate the situation objectively.

**Recommendation:** It is unrealistic to expect the complete elimination of this stereotype in media, given the respective statements by Azerbaijani officials. But in the cases when the content of the stories does not call for quoting from official sources, from political statements, the journalists could present the objective picture by referring to the data of international organizations. When describing specific cases of human rights or fundamental freedoms, democracy violations it is recommended that journalists refrain

from generalizations. Thus they would contribute to the democratic reforms in their country and would be appear much more plausible to the audience of neighboring Armenia.

### **ARMENIA is playing a destabilizing role in South Caucasus and is a menace for the region**

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan is a threat to the region and the world.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.

#### **Example:**

“We do know from history that Russia has traditionally nurtured ideas of securing exit to warmer seas. Which is why there have always been wars between Russia and Turkey. However, unlike Armenia, this does not impede Russia and Turkey to overcome the stereotype of “image” and to build new relations and cooperation. Meanwhile, Yerevan while inflicting irreparable damage on his own people, plays an extremely destabilizing role in the region. I (*Ed. Note: Azerbaijan Milli Meclis deputy Zahid Oruc*) do believe that it is Turkey that can truly influence the stance of Russia on Karabagh issue. Moscow must understand that for their foothold in the Caucasus it is not the separatist regime in Karabagh that they need, but rather the developing economic and strategic relations with Baku.”

**Comment:** Armenia, similarly to other countries of the region stands for its interest, and the disagreement one has with the policy of the country is not a basis for categorical dogmatic statements of this kind. The insulting accusations of destabilization in the region cause in the Armenian society very strong response, are seen as an attempt to damage the international image of the country, increase the hostility of the Armenian society towards the politics of the neighbor country.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate the use of this stereotype in media given the present situation in relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, when its use is not related to the quoting from official sources, political statements, the journalists could offer their audiences alternative approaches to the subject. In particular, they should give more coverage to the existing controversies and alternative viewpoints on specific regional problems.

### **ARMENIA makes territorial claims on other countries**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has no “mirror” version in the media of Armenia.

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.

### Example:

“The lack of punishment for Armenia inspires its leaders to come up with new territorial claims. Thus, the leadership of Armenia claims territories that have never been Armenian. They want to seize from Azerbaijan all the territory between the Kura and the Araz, including Nakhchivan, from Turkey - all of its eastern part, from Georgia - its south-western territories (the land of Mesh Turks) and all of the Black sea coastline, from Russia - the southern Black sea coastline up to Armavir. And they are insolent enough to state their rights to this territory by faking historical evidence.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is generally used by Azerbaijani media in the context of Armenia claiming those territories of the neighbors where Armenians are a majority of population or that were owned by Armenia at certain time in history. In its relations with Georgia Armenia has been taking part in a number of joint social, economic, cultural and educational programs aimed at improving the situation in Javakhk (Javakheti) where Armenians constitute a majority. Armenia has repeatedly announced its readiness to normalize the relations with Turkey with no pre-conditions. The categorical point-blank statements of territorial claims by Armenia are based on opinions and statements that do not correspond to the official policy of Armenia. The use of this stereotype is seen by the Armenian society as an attempt to damage the international image of Armenia and causes the increase in anti-Azerbaijani sentiment as a result.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly realistic to expect the elimination of this stereotype from media discourse given the present state of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Journalists are recommended to refrain from mentioning it in their own stories, when the stereotype is not supported by any reliable, meaningful facts.

### In ARMENIA (unlike Azerbaijan) national minorities are subjected to discrimination

The stereotype is seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“National minorities in Azerbaijan are persecuted and subjected to religious repressions, ethnic cleansings, assimilation.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.

### Examples:

“Unlike Armenia, we are not a mono-state. All ethnicities, people of all confessions live as a family in our country. This is our specifics. This is how we think. Meanwhile, Armenia is

possible the only country of the world, and not an island state, too, where no other ethnicity resides but for Armenians.”

“The politics of discrimination, waged by Armenian against the national minorities that reside in the country, and the creation of a monoethnic state - this is a truth universally acknowledged, and the protests against such activities have long been voiced both in Armenia, and abroad.”

**Comment:** According to the reports of international human rights organizations, Armenia is not classed as a country, where significant discrimination of national minorities is noticeable. The individual incidents, the statements by certain people do not allow making such strong generalizations. The use of this stereotype causes in the Armenian society distrust towards the capability of the Azerbaijani party to view the situation objectively.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to fully exclude the use of this stereotype in media, given the present situation in Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. However, in those cases when the content of the stories does not require quoting from official sources, political statements, the journalistic could present the objective picture, refer to data of international organizations. When talking about specific examples of national minority discrimination, it is recommended to refrain from generalizations.

### **ARMENIAN MEDIA spread misinformation on Karabagh conflict and wage an information war against Azerbaijan**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijani propaganda misleads the global community, and the Azerbaijani media are means of information war against Armenia.”**

The stereotype is equally frequently encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Example:**

“To sum up, one can say that this one more example of Armenian misinformation was shattered into pieces, and so did all the attempts of the Armenian party to mislead the global and the Armenian community itself with regard to Karabagh conflict.”

**Comment:** Armenian media are far from being perfect. According to international organizations, they are unfree, subject to political and economic pressure. They are not always sufficiently professional, some of them are involved in information war. However, the dogmatic form that such statements take in Azerbaijani media, moreover, since the same international organizations rank the freedom of expression in Azerbaijan and the objective reporting by the media of this country lower than those of Armenia, and hence the evaluation made by the stereotype is at least just as true for them, too. The use of this

stereotype only comes to intensify the distrust that Armenian audience has towards Azerbaijani media, disbelief in the possibility of unbiased coverage of developments in the neighbor country and relations between the two countries.

**Recommendation:** We think it appropriate for journalists to try and refrain from such biased assessments that promote this stereotype. In the cases when public figures are quoted on the subject, it is recommended that specific facts be cited to support the statements. It is also preferable to address the negative sides of Armenian media within the context of common media problems, typical of both sides of the conflict.

**ARMENIANS are endemic to Karabagh/the Caucasus. The state of Armenia is founded on Turkic territories**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has the “mirror” versions in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijanis/Turks are endemic in South Caucasus”**; **“Azerbaijan has been founded on historical Armenian land.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, less so - in writings of journalists.

### Examples:

“The Armenians, who created their state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the lands of our ancestors, who received by bits and pieces Irevan, Zangezur and other territories, they got all this from Russian rulers.”

“Had it not been for Frunze, had it not been for the Red Army and the geopolitical aims of the Bolsheviks, who, while balancing between Ataturk and the Armenian nationalists, gave this solution to the Armenian issue, at the expense of Azerbaijani territories, had it not been for all of this, believe me, Armenia would hardly become an entity from a historical perspective.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is very inadvisable if for no other reason but the fact that it is based on questionable data, dismissed by numerous sources. However the real or the supposed migration processes on the South Caucasus give no ground to grant greater or smaller rights to different nations that were formed in the region and have set up states of their own. This arbitrary interpretation of history and its use as a basis for stereotypes that degrade neighbors impedes the search for compromise in Armenian-Azerbaijani controversy. This stereotype strengthens in the Azerbaijani society the notion of Armenia and Armenians as a party whose interests can be neglected in the resolution of Karabagh conflict - due to historical factors. This approach causes very strong response in Armenian society, intensifies the hostility.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to expect the elimination of this stereotype from media discourse given the present state of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. All the more so since it is often communicated by historians, experts. At the same time,

lessening of its public impact must be a task for media who feel responsible for the future relations between the two societies. The journalists are recommended to remove the historical debate from the current affairs agenda, thus avoiding the stereotyping of scientific notions and their use in pure propaganda.

### The ARMENIANS falsify history, claim the cultural values of other nations

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan/Azerbaijanis have no/falsify their history, expropriate the history of others and claim the cultural values of other nations.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### Examples:

“The history and the culture of the region were presented in the poorly Armenian 'mythological' version that does not hold water.”

“Every Azerbaijani, Turk or Georgian knows that our neighbor 'of many sufferings' loves claiming the history, the land, the customs and the cultures of the neighboring nations and countries.”

**Comment:** The criticism of the possible questionable interpretations of history of other countries is twinned in Azerbaijani media with the absolute replication of similar interpretations by Azerbaijani historians. These dogmatic approaches come to reinforce the mistrust of Armenian public towards the neighbor country, contribute to further hostility. Besides, due to many centuries of cohabitation, many nations of the region have similarities in their customs and traditions. The use of this stereotype is inadvisable as factors that would normally serve to unite people are thus used by Azerbaijani media to divide them and set them off against each other. And the point-blank statements that it is common for Armenians to appropriate the cultural values of others are insulting, have components of racism and cause hostility in response.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate this stereotype from media discourse given the present state of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Particularly, since it is often pronounced by historians, experts. It is however preferable for journalists to refrain from using this stereotype in their own statements. In the cases when there is a factual base for accusations of fraud, references should be made to reliable sources, and the same should be demanded from interviewees. It is also recommended to avoid the counterproductive disputes regarding the 'ethnicity' of customs, traditions, cuisine etc. in stories of their own. This would have restricted the negative impact of the stereotypes on public sentiment.

### **ARMENIANS have a tradition of political terror**

The stereotype is relatively seldom used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan is a terrorist state, a criminal country that supports the international terrorism.”**

The stereotype is encountered in writings of journalists, less so - in speeches by officials, politicians, experts.

#### **Example:**

“Considering the Armenian traditions of political terror, such an attempt can become too costly, and Serzh Sargsyan who headed the secret services of Armenia during the 'quiet coup' of 1998, accompanied by a number of political assassinations, knows this better than anyone else. But he is also aware: making official claims to Turkey is too risky for Yerevan.”

**Comment:** This stereotype is mostly used in the context of the terrorist attack on the Armenian parliament on October 27, 1999 and the assassinations of Turkish politicians and diplomats by members of Armenian nationalist groups. Defining the Armenian nation by these events looks like a wish to insult and artificially discredit. Naturally, it causes negativism in return.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate this stereotype from media discourse given the present state of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Journalists are recommended to refrain from unjustified generalizations in stories of their own. This could serve to limit the negative impact of the stereotype on public sentiment.

### **The LEADERSHIP OF ARMENIA is incompetent**

The stereotype is often used in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“The Leadership of Azerbaijan are incompetent, indecent and silly people.”**

The stereotype is encountered in speeches by officials, politicians, experts, writings of journalists.

#### **Example:**

“The book is to disclose the disgusting nature of those who 'pay the piper' today in Armenia, both within the country and outside its borders. The articles, published on Day.az and included in the book, reveal the nature of the leaders of Armenian Diaspora, of



Armenia itself and certain representatives of the country. The authors of the articles not only show the shallowness of their life, the danger of their ideas but also give the real names of what is being disguised by the enemies with beautiful words and deeds.”

**Comment:** Various tools are used by Azerbaijani media to make the negative assessment of the competence of Armenian leaders, their decision making. These are both humiliating nicknames, dogmatic statements, pseudo-satirical essays (the special project of “Jokes about the Armenian Foreign Ministry” on Day.az news portal). The use of this stereotype in Azerbaijani media is seen by the Armenian society to be not simply an attitude towards certain members of the Armenian government but towards all Armenians. The response is hence correspondingly negative.

**Recommendation:** It is hardly possible to eliminate this stereotype from media discourse given the present state of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Journalists are recommended to refrain from inappropriate generalizations in stories of their own, and keep true to the norms of professional ethics when using irony and satire.

## INACCURATE (OR REASONABLY QUESTIONED) INFORMATION IN MEDIA OF ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

The publications in the media of Armenia and Azerbaijan that deal with the relations of the two countries contain numerous examples of inaccurate information, misrepresented facts and quotations. Opinions and exaggerated conclusions based on such information continue to mislead the society. This is confirmed by the findings of monitoring of both traditional (TV, radio, newspapers) and new media.

The vast majority of information consumers, the ordinary Armenians and Azerbaijanis, can hardly check the validity of the journalistic communications. There are virtually no contacts between the citizens of the two countries, and very often the media are the only bridge linking them. This results in one of the most substantial problems in the relations of the two countries: basing on inaccurate information, received daily from media, public opinion is formed that leads to actions nurturing mutual hostility. Thus the inaccurate, questionable information intensifies the false judgments, and the judgments that base on it easily turn into rigid stereotypes.

The problem on unreliable information in articles on Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, according to experts, is conditioned by two factors: firstly, poor professionalism and little competence of journalism with regard to the subject matter covered; secondly, the confrontation between the states, the societies and the resulting involvement of media of the conflicting countries in this confrontation.

As to the first factor, there are specific recommendations that would allow if not completely eliminating but at least minimizing the presence of inaccurate information in media. The second factor is more complex, overcoming it will depend primarily on the good will of media managers and journalists.

Of the whole totality of inaccurate (or reasonably questioned) information encountered in the publications on Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, this section of the glossary includes those that are most persistent and play a particularly negative role due to the greater sensitivity of the audience with regard to them.

All articles of this section follow the outline, common for all sections: the frequency of use of inaccurate information is mentioned, as well as the existence of “mirror” version in the media of the other party; the most frequent source of such information is noted (journalists, experts, politicians, officials); examples from media publications are quoted. The media cited are not specified, as inaccurate information of this kind can be encountered in other media outlets with almost identical frequency. Besides, each article is accompanied by a brief overview of the reasons for the negative perceptions of the counterpart audience of such information, and, as required, recommendations are presented as to how media can avoid disseminating inaccurate information.

**INACCURATE  
(OR REASONABLY QUESTIONED)  
INFORMATION IN THE MEDIA OF ARMENIA**

**MISREPRESENTATION of statements by officials, quotations from speeches by politicians, experts, public figures, journalists, as well as of their names and titles**

This type of inaccurate information is among the most frequently present kinds in Armenian media.

This is a common problem that has its “mirror” reflection in the media of Azerbaijan.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians and officials.

**Examples:**

“The elite of Azerbaijani society ceased to exist after Armenians left Azerbaijan. This was stated by Rustam Ibragimbekov in his interview to Russian “Pravda” newspaper.”

**Comment:** In reality the interview says: “Imagine a city where 1.5 million people lived. Half of them left for some reason, including Azerbaijanis, and instead came two million of people who are unready for urban life.”

“The victory of Azerbaijan in case the war resumes is impossible, because I know personally the courage of Armenian and Karabagh warriors”, said (...) the French Co-Chairman of the OSCE Minsk Group Bernard Fasier in the course of the Rose-Roth seminar of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.”

**Comment:** Three days after this information was disseminated Bernard Fasier called the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister and refuted the communication by the Armenian media, noting that he “as a diplomat and a military officer could not commit such a grave mistake and indulge in assessing the army and patriotic spirit of a certain party”.

Elhar Shaggi-oghlu instead of Elhan Shahinoglu (head of a research center)

A meeting between the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Turkey Chakir Hashimov with a Turkish diplomat Unal Cepkoz is reported, while the former’s name is Zakir Gashimov, and the latter’s - Unal Cevikoz.

The AR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Araz Azimov is presented as the “special representative of the President of Azerbaijan on the frontline” even though there is no title of this kind, etc.

**Comment:** Such misrepresentation, whatever its reasons may be, are seen by the audience in Azerbaijan as intentional. It is considered that they aim at misinforming people regarding the stance of the political leadership and the prominent public figures of Azerbaijan, at forming false ideas about this state and its people, at starting a conflict. And the spelling mistakes are seen by people as humiliating, even more so when in their distorted version they do sound insulting or revoke unpleasant associations: e.g., “elhar” in Azerbaijani means “disgraced in front of the nation”, and “cepkoz” is translated from Turkish as “crossed eye”.

**Recommendation:** Journalists must take more care in checking the names and last names, titles of people that they quote or make reference to in their articles. Today the Internet allows doing it. The quotations must be exact, with the name of the document specified, the time and place of the event where they were pronounced, placed in the context. In the cases when it is impossible to check the quotation, it must not be used by the journalists, or at least, the journalist must notify the public that the quotation is unverified. When there is a mistake in media, it can be corrected once it is discovered. Unfortunately, in the majority of cases the editorial offices refuse to publish or broadcast the refutations that come from the other party to the conflict, thus enhancing the negative response from the audience of the other side.

### AZERBAIJANI party violates the ceasefire unilaterally

This statement is often present in Armenian media.

The media of Armenia and Azerbaijan, as a rule, report the incidents along the frontline simultaneously, providing contradicting interpretation of the incidents, whether the initiators of the shootings or the casualties.

Such information by media of both countries is disseminated with references to the statements of their official agencies, in particular, the Ministries of Defense.

#### Example:

“In 1992-1994 9 documents were adopted to achieve ceasefire and they all were violated by Azerbaijan (...). Azerbaijan persists in violating the ceasefire to this day.”

**Comment:** In virtually all cases of shootings there are no certain proofs as to which party is to blame. None of the countries has independent sources, capable to present an objective picture of what happened. At the same time, the lack of those responsible for violated ceasefire year in and year out, lack of punishment result in escalation of such phenomena. The need to investigate each case gains urgency, otherwise the threat of full-fledged military action would become realistic.

**Recommendation:** The journalists could contribute to the independent investigation, if they refuse from relying solely on official sources. Joint investigation of Armenian and Azerbaijani journalists could be particularly effective.

### **IN AZERBAIJAN Turks are persecuted, they are induced to sell off their property and return to their country, the entry regime is toughened**

This statement was most frequent in Armenian media in 2009-2010. Subsequently, the frequency reduced.

It is to be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

#### **Examples:**

“Baku has started a demarche against Ankara. The Turks are induced to sell cheap the buildings they had bought and the property they had accumulated and to return to Turkey.”

“I (*Ed. Note:* the author of the article) see the benefit of Armenia from the normalization of relations in the weakened relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan that will be focused on the problem of MK. (...) In the relations of Turkey and Azerbaijan there are negative transformations that can lead to a change in the entry regime for Turkish citizens to Azerbaijan.”

“According to the source, Azerbaijan sold Turkey to Israel.”

**Comment:** At a certain period of time the relations of Azerbaijan and Turkey did indeed experience tension due to the Turkish-Armenian protocols signed in Zurich and the possible opening of the border between these two countries. Yet the information quoted by Armenian media on the repressions that Turkish citizens are subjected to in Azerbaijan, including that above, is invalid. Thus, for example, the duration of negotiations on the visa waiver for Turkish citizens did not mean toughened entry. The dissemination of such information in Armenian media is seen by the public of Azerbaijan as an attempt to set Azerbaijan against its strategic partner, seed hostility and climate of distrust between them.

**Recommendation:** It is not difficult to verify the majority of such information. The Armenian media can double check them through different resources available. It is also recommended to make a reference to the information source, and not to present the questionable information as verified.

### **500 THOUSAND Armenian refugees (other invalid figures are mentioned, too) have left Azerbaijan**

This statement is seldom present in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan (the number of Azerbaijani refugees is exaggerated).

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians and officials.

### Examples:

“500,000 Armenians were ousted from Azerbaijan during the war.”

“In Armenia (...) there are around 1.5 million of refugees, citizens of Azerbaijan, living in Armenia.”

**Comment:** The official data of state structures of both countries regarding the number of refugees from Azerbaijan to Armenia, who left their places of residence as a result of the conflict, is smaller than the figures above. As the Agency of Immigration of the Ministry of Territorial Administration of Armenia reports, in 1988-1992, the country received 360 thousand Armenians, deported from Azerbaijan. As of 1997 the number of refugees here amounted to 311 thousand, of which 65 thousand at the moment of count were out of country. The dissemination of exaggerated data is seen in Azerbaijan with irony, enforces the stereotype in the society that Armenians are inclined to exaggerated their losses and tragedies, intensifies the disbelief in the capability of Armenia to take an objective and productive stance in conflict resolution.

**Recommendation:** Journalists can avoid such mistakes by using the official data and accurately referencing the source. In the cases when such inaccurate data are contained in speeches of experts, politicians or statements by state officials, the articles can be accompanied with background information based on official data.

### **AZERBAIJAN supports international terrorism, the country is often visited by international terrorists that it cooperates with**

This statement is seldom present in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in media of Azerbaijan: **“The territory of Mountainous Karabagh is home to criminal and terrorist groups.”**

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

### Example:

“The members of Bin Laden family on a private plane throughout 1997-2001 repeatedly visited Baku, a fact known to the authorities of both Azerbaijan and Turkey.”

**Comment:** There is not a single fact that would prove the assistance provided by Azerbaijan to the international terrorism. On the contrary, the world powers have repeatedly stressed the role of Azerbaijan in the fight against it. In the view of this fact, such accusations are perceived very negatively by the Azerbaijani audience, as an attempt to discredit the country in the eyes of the international community and are seen as a component of “information warfare”.

**Recommendation:** When encountering such information, journalists must verify it with reliable sources.

### **IN AZERBAIJAN there are major laboratories to produce drugs, drug smuggling to Europe is made via this country**

This statement is seldom present in Armenian media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Azerbaijan: **“Mountainous Karabagh produces and exports drugs.”**

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians and officials.

#### **Example:**

“In Azerbaijan there is a major laboratory that produces drugs. (...) Azerbaijan is not only a country, where drugs are produced, it is also a transition route to supply drugs from Afghanistan and Iran to Russia and Europe.”

**Comment:** Similarly to other countries of the world, there are facts of production, consumption and trafficking of drugs in Azerbaijan. However, this does not allow for generalizations. The Azerbaijani society believes that this information is being disseminated by Armenian media to damage the international image of the country, intensify the anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in the Armenian society.

**Recommendation:** Journalists must not draw unjustified conclusions on the basis of single facts.

### **MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH as a self-determined nation was recognized to be a subject of international right**

This statement is seldom present in Armenian media.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts and politicians.

### Example:

“Artsakh as a self-determined nation was recognized to be a subject of international law owing to a subtle diplomatic trick.”

**Comment:** Mountainous Karabagh has never been recognized a subject of international law as a severing state or self-determined nation. Speaking about “recognition” in this context, the journalists, experts and politicians mean that at a certain stage Armenians of Mountainous Karabagh were involved in the negotiations, yet the format was further modified. This information is disseminated in some cases by the opposition to criticize the Karabagh policy of the incumbent authorities, in others - to convince the audience that the international recognition is inevitable. The latter causes in Azerbaijan a very strong negative response, enhancing Azerbaijani audience’s opinion that the ambition of Armenia to involve MK representatives in the negotiations is due not to the wish to consider the interests of the population of the region but is rather a diplomatic maneuver to gain advantage in the resolution.

**Recommendation:** Journalists must seek greater competence in such sensitive issues, not to be used in manipulations of biased politicians.

### OTHER INACCURATE INFORMATION

The media of Armenia present numerous inaccurate or reasonably questioned data on Azerbaijan that appear occasionally. Yet in its entirety such information, received as a rule from anonymous sources and having nothing to do with reality, disrupt the trust between the two countries.

There is no direct “mirror” version for the majority of such allegations in media of Azerbaijan, but the phenomenon as such is typical for them, too.

Such inaccurate information can be seen in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians and experts.

### Examples:

“Presently the emissary from Baku under the pretext of the military actions starting soon to “regain Karabagh” are raising money from Azerbaijani sellers on the markets of Moscow (...). As it has become known, the current fundraising is for the first time accompanied with a specific date, March 21, 2010, as the start of the military campaign in Karabagh. (...) The war is to be waged with the money of Azerbaijani sellers from Moscow markets and with the hands of Lezgins, Russians, Jews, Talishes and sometimes Azerbaijanis that are drafted into army with commendable inevitability.”

“The stock exchanges and major banks, the financial circles of Baku are seized with panic. The former Chair of Azerbaijan State Oil Company saw the bitter end of oil revenues coming.”



“The Transcaucasia editorial office of “Regnum” (...) in Yerevan also exists with the budget of the strategic investigative services of Azerbaijan.”

“Azerbaijan announced its readiness to become a NATO member. Under such circumstances RF will never take a pro-Azerbaijani decision.”

“(…) The discovery of the great Azerbaijani scientist, according to which the aboriginals who welcome Columbus in America spoke Azerbaijani.”

“The majority of drafted soldiers from Azerbaijan (*Ed. Note:* in the war of 1941-1945) were Armenians, too.”

**Comment:** Every “fact” of this kind adds on a hue to the negative image of Azerbaijan, “proves” the negative features of its people and is seen accordingly by the audience of the other country. The commonly used inaccurate or questionable information in media confirms the opinion of Azerbaijan society that Armenia is engaged in large-scale information warfare against this country, and induces reciprocal action.

**Recommendation:** To restrict the dissemination of inaccurate information, the journalists only have to follow basic professional norms, verify the validity of figures, quotations, names, use as many sources as possible, reference them correctly, etc. Given the specifics of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the representatives of media who claim to be committed to quality and responsible journalism in both countries could initiate the development of common rules for covering the conflict and various other aspects of life in each other’s countries.

**INACCURATE  
(OR REASONABLY QUESTIONED)  
INFORMATION IN THE MEDIA OF AZERBAIJAN**

**MISREPRESENTATION of statements by officials, quotations from speeches by politicians, experts, public figures, journalists, as well as of their names and titles**

This type of inaccurate information is among the most frequently present kinds in Azerbaijani media.

This is a common problem that has its “mirror” reflection in the media of Armenia.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by experts, politicians and officials.

**Examples:**

“As a reminder, according to the OSCE fact-finding mission, launched after the 59<sup>th</sup> UN session to investigate the resettlement of territories, around 15-16 thousand people are settled on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Thus, there are around 8-12 thousand residing in Lachin, 1.5-2 thousand - in Kelbajar region, 1 thousand - in Agdam region, 1 thousand - in Zangelan and 1.5 thousand - in Gubadli. 100 people live in Jebrail and 10 in Fizuli.”

**Comment:** In the official report of the OSCE fact-finding mission of 2005 different figures were presented: in Kelbajar around 1,500, in Agdam - from 800 to 1,000, in Zangelan - from 700 to 1,000; in Kubatli - from 1,000 to 1,500; in Fizuli - less than 10; in Jebrail - less than 100 residents (the report also makes a reservation that while the figure of 3,000 residents, provided by the authorities of Mountainous Karabagh, corresponds to the findings of the mission, the mission however believes the population of the whole area to be somewhat greater). Besides, the population of the whole Lachin area is not more than 8,000. Thus, if the maximal numbers are taken into account, as well as the estimation of the Lachin region population made by the mission, in total the territories adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh were in 2005 populated by around 13,000 people, and not 15-16 thousand.

“Notably, the information regarding this address was provided to the Armenian press by the head of the “Foreign Office” of the separatist regime Masis Mayilyan.”

**Comment:** Masis Mayilyan was the Deputy Foreign Minister and not the Foreign Minister of Mountainous Karabagh.

**Recommendation:** The journalists must take greater care in double-checking the names and the positions of the people whose opinions they quote in their writings. The Internet

sources today enable doing it. The quotations must be exact, accompanied with the title of the document that they are taken from, the time and the location where they were pronounced, to be placed in the context. In the cases when it is impossible to check the accuracy of the quotation, it must either be not used by the journalist or at least it should be marked as non-verified for the audience to be aware. In the cases when media make mistakes, these can be corrected the minute they are discovered. Unfortunately, in the majority of cases the media refuse to publish corrections or refutations that come from the opposing party that only serves to intensify the negative response from the other side.

### ARMENIA occupied 20% of Azerbaijani territory

This statement is present in the majority of publications in Azerbaijani media that deal with the Karabagh conflict.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians, experts.

#### Examples:

“The Vice Speaker (*Ed. Note:* of Azerbaijani parliament Ziyafet Askerov) believes that Armenia is in a dead-end and, pressured by the international community, it will have to sit at negotiations table sooner or later. The international organizations are already fully aware that Armenia is an aggressor country that occupied 20% of Azerbaijani territory.”

“The conflict between the two countries of South Caucasus started in 1988 due to the territorial claims of Armenia to Azerbaijan. Mountainous Karabagh and seven adjacent regions - 20% of Azerbaijani territory - are occupied by Armenian troops.”

**Comment:** The inaccuracy of this information could be proven by any calculation of the territory of the former Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region (without the part controlled by Azerbaijan) and the adjacent Azerbaijani areas controlled by Armenian forces. Thus, the reports of the International Crisis Group (ICG) quoted a number of 16.8%, some Armenian sources use the number of 13.4%. Thomas de Waal, the author of “Black Garden” book on Karabagh conflict, mentions 13.62%. The recurrent referral to 20% not only misleads the public as to the accurate information but also contradicts the existing approaches to the conflict resolution, according to which the territories of Mountainous Karabagh and adjacent regions are considered separately. It also causes the irritation (in past) and irony (presently) among the Armenian audience regarding the assessment given to the situation by the Azerbaijani side, disbelief in the capability and willingness of the latter to address the conflict resolution in an unbiased and productive manner.

**Recommendation:** In the cases when the accuracy is imposed by the context, it is advisable for journalists to use the data based on real calculations or to refer to reputable international organizations (such as ICG). The stories where the context allows for “approximations” the alternative version of “around 20%” looks exaggerated from the viewpoint of the public perception. It would be more appropriate to use alternative

versions, close to the estimations of neutral observers: “around 17%” (according to ICG) or “around 14%” (according to Thomas de Waal).

### **AZERBAIJAN has a million (over a million) refugees**

This statement is present in the majority of publications in Azerbaijani media that deal with the Karabagh conflict.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia (the number of Armenian refugees is being exaggerated).

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians, experts.

#### **Examples:**

“The Head of the Press Service of the AR Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mehtin Mirza told “Trend” in this regard that the issue of paying a contribution to the Armenian party cannot be serious: ‘On our behalf, we are asking: who will be paying the contribution to over one million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons (...)’.”

“The TV program only showed the Azerbaijani shepherd, the author spoke about a million refugees in Armenia and Azerbaijan. But this is not true, there is one million of refugees in Azerbaijan only”, the political scientist (*Ed. Note: Vafa Guluzadeh*) was indignant.”

**Comment:** These data are indirectly refuted by the findings of the USSR population census of 1989, according to which the number of residents in the area, currently controlled by Armenian forces, did not exceed 750 thousands, including the Armenians who resided there and whose number is about the same as that of the Azerbaijani population that left Armenia. Thomas de Waal, making a reference to Arif Yunusov, the head of the Department of Conflict Resolution and Migration of the Institute of Peace and Democracy of Azerbaijan, presents the following data: “The total number of displaced persons among the Azerbaijani population comes to 750 thousand, that is, much less than ‘one million’ that President Aliyev mentioned.” The negative effect resulting from the use of this inaccurate information, similarly to the example of 20% of the territory, not only misleads the public, but also irritates (previously) and causes irony (presently) among the Armenian audience with regard to the Azerbaijan’s assessment, disbelief as to its capability and willingness to approach the conflict resolution objectively and productively.

**Recommendation:** In this case, too, the journalists and media are recommended to use trustworthy international sources, avoid incorrect approximations.

### **IN THE COURSE of armed conflict the Armenian forces gained control over seven regions of Azerbaijan**

This statement is often present in Azerbaijani media.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians, experts.

### Example:

“According to him (*Ed. Note:* former Ambassador of Turkey in OSCE Yalim Erali), initially it will center around the return of 5 occupied regions. Yet it should be noted that Armenians occupied 7 regions of Azerbaijan, besides Mountainous Karabagh.”

**Comment:** As of the time when the ceasefire agreement was signed in May 1994, the Armenian forces controlled five regions of Azerbaijan in full and two regions - partly. The allegations that the Armenian forces control seven regions, adjacent to Mountainous Karabagh is an exaggeration, can be easily countered by topographic sources. The negative effect of multiplying this inaccuracy lies in the fact that it becomes a basis for other inaccurate data, in particular the 20% of occupied territories or a million of refugees, it misleads the public and makes the Armenian audience doubt the capacity and willingness of the Azerbaijani party to approach the conflict resolution in an unbiased and productive manner.

**Recommendation:** Journalists must be aware that there can be no small things in delicate matters of this kind, and the dissemination of accurate information contributes to the formation of climate of confidence so vital for conflict resolution.

## MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH produces and exports drugs

This statement is relatively rare in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“In Azerbaijan there are major laboratories to produce drugs, drug smuggling to Europe is made via this country.”**

It can be encountered in speeches by officials, politicians and experts, less often in writings of journalists.

### Examples:

“According to him (*Ed. Note:* Ali Hasanov, the Chairman of the State Commission Against Drug Addiction and Illegal Drug Trafficking), today the UN is aware of three routes for drug trafficking through the territory of Azerbaijan: 1) Afghanistan-Iran-Azerbaijan; 2) Afghanistan-Pakistan-Iran; 3) Afghanistan-Central Asia-Azerbaijan. “Azerbaijan intends to demand that the UN consider the inclusion in this list of a new route, Afghanistan-Iran-Mountainous Karabagh, the territory of which today is out of control of either Azerbaijan or the global community”, A. Hasanov said at the session of the state commission.”

“On his behalf the deputy of Milli Meclis Mayis Safarli reminded that it is Baroness Cox who is one of the most consistent “allies to the criminals in Mountainous Karabagh”. By the

way, as our secret services and media report, particularly the media of Russia, today there are numerous plantations that produce drugs in Karabagh. And I have no doubt that Caroline Cox has her finger in this matter. She would not be going there with no good reason.”

**Comment:** Given how common the drugs are in the modern world, it is not improbable that certain cases of drug addiction and drug smuggling took place in Mountainous Karabagh. However, this cannot be a justification for alleging that Mountainous Karabagh produces and exports drugs. Armenia has a state program against drug addiction, Interpol fights against the dissemination and trafficking of drugs, as well as other international organizations. The Armenian society sees such allegations as misinformation, an attempt to discredit Mountainous Karabagh at any cost.

**Recommendation:** In such cases one should rely solely on reputable and credible sources. When quoting other sources, the media are suggested to provide a specific reference and keep a distance from these statements.

### **IN MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH and adjacent regions rivers are polluted, natural resources are destroyed, the area is home to nuclear waste repositories**

This statement is often present in Azerbaijani media.

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians and experts.

#### **Examples:**

“Presently Armenians are destroying valuable tree species that can be used for construction and production of furniture and are selling the wood abroad via Armenia”.

“R.Huseinov (*Ed. Note:* a member of Azerbaijan's delegation to the PACE, Milli Meclis deputy Raphael Huseinov) reminded that he had previously prepared documents for PACE ‘On Armenia’s destruction of historical burials on occupied territories of Azerbaijan’ and ‘On the establishment of nuclear waste repositories by Armenia on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan’.”

**Comment:** The allegations that rivers are polluted, natural resources are destroyed, nuclear waste repositories are established are not confirmed in any way or else are seriously exaggerated. In particular, the nuclear waste repositories are under tough control from International Atomic Energy Agency. Hence the Armenian society sees such allegations as misinformation, an attempt to discredit Mountainous Karabagh at any cost.

**Recommendation:** In such cases one should rely solely on reputable and credible sources. When quoting other sources, the media are suggested to provide a specific reference and keep a distance from these statements.

### THE TERRITORY of Mountainous Karabagh is home to criminal and terrorist groups

This statement is relatively often present in Azerbaijani media.

It has a “mirror” version in the media of Armenia: **“Azerbaijan supports international terrorism, the country is often visited by international terrorists that it cooperates with.”**

It can be encountered in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians and experts.

#### Example:

“(…) We cannot put up with the establishment of PKK bases in Mountainous Karabagh. Most probably, the NATO is against this, too. We informed the Alliance about the PKK bases established in Armenia and Karabagh. (…) Before thinking about the military operation against PKK and other terrorist groups in Karabagh, Turkey must think of fighting against this phenomenon by using international pressure. The information about the presence of PKK bases in Karabagh is important for both Turkey and Azerbaijan. We can use this fact in a political campaign against Armenia and the separatist regime of Karabagh.”

**Comment:** The allegations that terrorist or criminal groups have their bases in Mountainous Karabagh are not confirmed. If they were valid, it would be impossible for the reports of reputable international organizations to bypass them in their reports. The Armenian society sees such allegations as an attempt to discredit Mountainous Karabagh at any cost.

### OTHER INACCURATE INFORMATION

The media of Azerbaijan present a lot of inaccurate or reasonably questioned information on Armenia that appear occasionally. Yet in its entirety such information, mostly received from anonymous sources and with no validity, disrupts the trust between the two countries.

There is no direct “mirror” version for the majority of such allegations in media of Armenia, but the phenomenon as such is typical for them, too.

Such inaccurate information can be seen in writings of journalists, speeches by officials, politicians and experts.

#### Examples:

“The prosecution maintains that the representatives of Azerbaijani secret services inquire whether A. Maziyeu knew the relatives of Nairi Hunanian and Mushegh Saghatelian.

These are the terrorists who are responsible for the bloodshed at the Armenian parliament in late 1990s.”

**Comment:** The members of the armed group that committed the terrorist attack on the Armenian Parliament did not include Mushegh Saghatelian. The latter one was convicted on another criminal case and a different article of the RA Penal Code.

“Having found itself facing the possible failure of its intermediary mission, Russia had to accept the signing of a protocol (*Ed. Note:* the Bishkek Protocol) in accordance with the principles of Azerbaijan: on May 8 the document was signed by the Speaker of the Azerbaijani parliament Rasul Guliyev and the head of Azerbaijani community of Karabagh Nizami Bakhmanov.”

**Comment:** On May 8, 1994 the protocol of Bishkek was signed for Azerbaijan only by Rasul Guliyev. The document has no signature by Nizami Bakhmanov. One can hardly say that the Bishkek Protocol was prepared in accordance with the principles of Azerbaijan.

“The address (*Ed. Note:* the letter of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the USA Hafiz Pashaev) also noted that despite Russia being an intermediary for a ceasefire in 1994, it is through the military assistance provided to Armenia by Russia, including an illegal transfer of arms of 1 million USD total worth, that the Russian state assisted the Armenian aggression.”

**Comment:** The investigation, conducted by the Russian State Duma with regard to accusation of a number of senior military officials who allegedly transferred to Armenia arms of 1 billion USD worth (and not 1 million) in 1996, did not come to confirm this information. The cooperation between Armenia and Russia in 1996 that still continues, in military and technical domains is regulated by interstate agreements. As Moscow and Yerevan have officially announced, these agreements are not directed against third countries.

**Recommendation:** To limit the dissemination of inaccurate information, journalists must only follow basic professional norms, verifying the accuracy of facts and figures, quotations, names, use as many sources as possible, provide specific reference, etc. Given the specifics of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the representatives of media who claim to be committed to quality and responsible journalism in both countries could initiate the development of common rules for covering the conflict and various other aspects of life in each other’s countries.