



On the night of January 19 to 20, 1990, by order of the USSR leadership, 26,000 Soviet troops invaded Baku and Sumgait, as well as other cities of Azerbaijan. As a result of this military intervention, 147 civilians were killed and 744 were seriously injured. This event went down in the history of modern Azerbaijan as "Black January".

Before these tragic events, the groundless territorial claims of Armenia against Azerbaijan in late 1980s, the aggressive separatist activities of Armenian radicals in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of the former Azerbaijan SSR and the Soviet leadership's support to this illegal activity, as well as the violent and brutal deportation of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from Armenia spurred the expansion of the movement against the Soviet Government in Azerbaijan. The Soviet Army deployed to the country in order to prevent the national movement and break the will of the Azerbaijani people for independence, committed an unprecedented massacre against the peaceful population, violating the norms of international law, the Constitutions of the former USSR and the Azerbaijani SSR.

At a press conference at the Permanent Representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow immediately after the tragic events, National leader Heydar Aliyev strongly condemned this atrocity and demanded political assessment of the massacre against our people and punishment for the perpetrators. At a special session of the Milli Majlis (Parliament) in February 1994, the brutal murder of innocent people on January 20, 1990 was regarded as military aggression and crime, and as a result of the

deliberations in March 1994, decision "On the tragic events committed in Baku on January 20, 1990" was adopted.

Although 31 years passed since the January 20, 1990 events, which were a gross violation of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international legal documents, and was one of the serious crimes of the 20th century by its essence and scope, it had not received an international political and legal assessment. The former Soviet leadership is directly responsible for this crime. According to international law, the events of January 20 must be described as a crime against humanity, and its initiators and perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Today, the souls of our heroic martyrs who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan, and for sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country, have found peace. Under the leadership of the Victorious Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the brave Army of Azerbaijan liberated our territories from occupation, and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is restored.

Independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan will be strengthened, and those who question these supreme principles forming the basis of statehood, and those who promote the revanchist ideas, will be faced with proper response, and all necessary steps will be taken to bring to justice those responsible for various crimes against the People and State of Azerbaijan.