



PRESS-RELEASE

Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Japan

January 20, 2009

20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in history of the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as a heroism page. Leading of the battle divisions of the Soviet army aimed against wide mass who got out in the streets and squares of Baku for the restoration of the country's independence and to protest against aggressive actions of Armenia, which was raising territorial claims to our country, against protection rendered to this country by the government of the former USSR had brought to the unprecedented tragedy in Azerbaijan. On those terrible days valiant sons and daughters of our Motherland, the country's freedom, honor and dignity of whom was above all, sacrificed their own lives and rose to the top of martyr. Children, women and elderly people were the first victims of this vandalism. In total as a result of illegal entering of troops into Baku city and regions of the republic 133 men were killed, 611 men - wounded, 841 men - illegally arrested and 5 - missing. The soldiers sacked and burnt 200 houses and apartments, 80 automobiles, including ambulance cars.

Entering of troops and introduction of the state of emergency in Baku were rough violence of the USSR Constitution (article 119), Constitution of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic (article 71), International Pact "On civil and political rights of 1966" (article 1) and the sovereign rights of the Azerbaijan Republic. The illegal declaration of the state of emergency in Baku, invasion of armed forces into the city and severe violence against the peace population with use of heavy equipment and killing weapons under conditions of full lack of any resistance from the population was the crime against the Azerbaijani people.

In spite of the fact that a few years has passed since those bloody days, our nation remembers that dreadful night and expresses its deep contempt to those who committed that tragedy. Our republic celebrates the day of tragedy of January 20 broadly every year, which had immortalized in the vital memory of our nation as a Day of the Nationwide Sorrow.

Tragedy of January 20, which brought to huge losses and destruction of innocent people, demonstrated martial spirit, inexorability and pride of our nation, which could not stand the policy of the government of the Soviet leadership under Mikhail Gorbachev. The struggle for independence by patriotic forces within the Azerbaijani people culminated in the adoption of a declaration of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan on August 31, 1991 on restoration of the State independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan.