

36 years have passed since the tragic events of January 20, 1990, which entered the history of the Azerbaijani people as the Bloody January tragedy. 36 years ago, on the night of January 19-20, the bloody tragedy committed against the civilian population by the leadership of the former USSR aimed at suppressing the national liberation movement of the Azerbaijani people is celebrated every year in our country as January 20 - National Mourning Day.

On January 20 - National Mourning Day, represents a date of deep sorrow and at the same time great pride in our modern history, we commemorate with deep gratitude all the Azerbaijani Martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country.

In order to suppress the national liberation movement in Azerbaijan through the use of military force, units of the former Soviet Army carried out a large-scale operation against the civilian population in Baku and other cities of the country on the night of January 19-20, 1990. As a result of this tragedy, 150 civilians were killed, 744 individuals sustained serious injuries, and 4 people went missing.

Despite the complexity of the period and the measures taken by the former Soviet authorities to prevent the dissemination of information about January 20, the truth of the brutal massacre was brought to the attention of the international community immediately, the day after the tragedy, and this achievement is inseparably linked to the name of the National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev. On January 21, 1990, immediately following the tragedy, the Great Leader Heydar Aliyev issued a decisive statement at the Permanent Representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, condemning this bloody tragedy committed against the Azerbaijani people and succeeded in breaking the information blockade, informing the truth of the events to the international community.

It should be underlined with pride that the tragedy of January 20 became a decisive turning point in the restoration of Azerbaijan's state independence. The Azerbaijani people showed their loyalty to the traditions of the struggle for freedom. The sons of the homeland who gave their lives on that bloody day wrote a bright page in the heroic chronicle of the Azerbaijani people. On January 20, 1990, which, along with the tragedy, was engraved in the history of Azerbaijan as a day of national pride, the Azerbaijani people conveyed to the whole world that they deserve to live free, sovereign and independent.

At a special session of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan held in February 1994, a legal and political assessment of the January 20 tragedy was conducted. During this session, the resolution "On the tragic events committed in Baku on January 20, 1990" was adopted,

and January 20 was officially declared the National Mourning Day.

Today, the three-colored national flag of Azerbaijan is flying in all sovereign territories of the country. With the restoration of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, a glorious period began in the history of modern Azerbaijan, bringing spiritual solace to the souls of the sons of the Motherland who sacrificed their lives 36 years ago for the freedom, independence, and territorial integrity of the country during the bloody events of January 20, 1990. The Azerbaijani people deeply honour and cherish the memory of the martyrs of January 20.

Each year, the anniversary of the tragedy is marked by nationwide commemorative events. Citizens across the country pay tribute by visiting the Alley of Martyrs, honouring the fallen with pride, respect, and enduring gratitude.

**Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Turkmenistan**