

Switzerland-Armenia Association (SAA)
P.O. Box 497
3000 Bern 14
Switzerland
Phone: 41 76-399-16 25
Email: shahinian@armenian.ch
Web: www.armenian.ch

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CONTACT: Sarkis Shahinian

E-mail: shahinian@armenian.ch

SWITZERLAND-ARMENIA ASSOCIATION (SAA) CALLS UPON SWISS FEDERAL COUNCIL TO CONDEMN THE BRUTAL MURDER OF AN ARMENIAN OFFICER

Bern - The Switzerland-Armenia Association strongly condemns the murder of Lt. Gurgen Markarian the young Armenian officer (26 years old) executed by an Azerbaijani officer in Budapest, Hungary. This terrifying crime perpetrated during the training as a part of NATO's Partnership for Peace Program, is the reflection of the exaggerated anti-Armenian feelings incited by Baku as a result to his total disability of reaching a political resolution of the conflict. This dram occurred in the eve of the conference on the conflict of Nagorno Karabakh organized by the Center of Security Policy and supported by the Helvetic Confederation to be held in Geneva, Switzerland

On February 19, 2004 the Armenian officer was murdered by an Azerbaijani participant with ghastly cruelty - with axe and knife. The attempt of the Azeri officer Lt. Ramil Safarov (27 years old) on the life of a second officer of the Armenian Armed Forces was blocked.

The SAA believes that Armenian nation, strong enough to give the due moderated response to such cruelty, will be supported by international democratic communities. We expect an immediate and unequivocal condemn of this horrible homicide, which is the consequence of anti-Armenian and bellicose remarks of Azerbaijani leaders, while both Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh are pursuing a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

This unfortunate act, reinforced by the evidence of the cruelest massacres against Armenians of Sumgait (1988), Baku and Kirovabad (1990), underlines once again that the co-existence of Armenians and Azeris under the same political and territorial roof in Karabagh remains impossible and should never be reconsidered.

The grisly murder is not just a deplorable act, but an obvious and direct result of the anti-Armenian hysteria stirred up by official authorities of Baku. It is the moment for Azerbaijan's leadership to assume responsibly of his actions, including the President Aliyev to condemn this vicious murder. The murder at the Hungarian University of National Defense, came a month after Azerbaijan refused to allow three Armenian officers to attend the conference organized by NATO (Partnership for Peace) held in Baku.

The Switzerland-Armenia Association expects NATO Head Quarter in Brussels and international democratic communities to give an immediate reaction and condemn this horrifying murder. The SAA expects NATO to take the most serious measures in order to sanction Azerbaijan for having tolerated such cruel forms of terrorism in his ranks. Taking into consideration the role of Switzerland in the NATO Partnership of Peace, the SAA expects the Swiss Federal Council to condemn this murder and distance from such alliance, which could prejudices the good name of Switzerland at international levels.