

Brussels, Belgium

September 8, 2012

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary,

Dear Mr. Janos Martonyi, dear Mr. Minister,

Referring to the 1983 Strasbourg Convention of the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, the government of Hungary extradited Ramil Safarov on August 31, 2012, to Azerbaijan. Although the parties reported that everything happened according to the international law, the international community strongly condemned this extradition. The reason for that was the immediate pardon and a hero's welcome of the convicted murderer upon his arrival in Baku. Moreover, Safarov was encouraged for his mortal deed by career advancement, received money and an apartment. And all this was done for the murderer who in 2004 brutally killed Gurgen Margaryan with an axe just because he was Armenian. You are very well aware of the case and proceedings.

Hearing the case in 2006, the Hungarian court convicted Safarov "to life imprisonment on charges of premeditated murder with extreme cruelty" without possibility of appeal until 2036. One year later, a Hungarian court upheld the ruling following an appeal. Meanwhile in Azerbaijan he was raised to the rank of an army Major, a national hero, even representatives of the Azeri legislative decided to proclaim Ramil Safarov 'man of the year'. The human rights commissioner of Azerbaijan Elmira Suleymanova delivered another shocking statement that "Safarov must become an example of patriotism for the Azerbaijani youth."

We are strongly convinced that when taking the decision the Hungarian government was very much aware of the hatred atmosphere in Azerbaijan against Armenians, from the proclamations of President Aliev, and there was no doubt, that Safarov would be immediately pardoned. Even more, the Hungarian government should have been aware that such a suspicious agreement could hurt the delicate peace situation in that region.

The Armenian community of Belgium strongly condemns the decision of Hungary's government to extradite the murderer to Azerbaijan, where he was set free and proclaimed a national hero. The fact that Azerbaijan would release the murderer was no surprise to us as for the last decades we have witnessed the continuous policy of their government which encourages violence against Armenians. We truly believe that after this disregard of morality and justice, Azerbaijan revealed its true face to the world. We expect a strong reaction and condemnation from Hungary against Azerbaijan, to put an end that your country sold its Justice for oil and gas blood money. You should also realise, that this can become a worrying precedent for the murder of Armenians in EU, NATO member states.

**Hay Tad (CDCA Belgique), "Hayasa" Armenian Student Association, Hamazkayin - Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, and Armenians Community of Belgium**