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Those days Armenians all over the world are remembering the victims of the Sumgait pogroms organized by Azerbaijani authorities against Armenian population. Azeris armed with sharpened iron rods, hatchets, knives, broken bottles killed, raped and burned Armenian residents alive and mutilated their bodies in broad daylight. An unprecedented crime against humanity, which gave its first victims in Sumgait resulted in the further ethnic cleansing of Armenians of Azerbaijan leaving thousands dead and more than 350,000 refugees.

Because those crimes were not thoroughly investigated and the organizers of Sumgait massacre were not punished, Azeri authorities considered this as a green light for further violence, which spread to Baku, Kirovabad (Gandzak), Shemakha, Shamkhor, Mingechaur, Maragha, Nakhichevan and other places. This comes to prove that Sumgait pogroms were the beginning of a big plan for getting rid of Armenian population. And this all was the answer of Azerbaijan to the peaceful and democratic demand of the Armenians to reunite Artsakh to its historical motherland Armenia.

On this 25th anniversary of Sumgait pogroms Armenian community of Belgium once again strongly condemns those genocidal acts of violence against Armenian population. We will never forget those tragic days and will spare no efforts to spread the truth about the true face of Azerbaijani authorities. This is our duty not only in front of our Armenian brothers and sisters, but also in front of international community to prevent tragedies like this to repeat in any place of the globe.

It is also shocking that Azerbaijani government continues the same anti-humane behavior till now spreading hatred atmosphere in Azerbaijan against Armenians. Even the president of Azerbaijan is not losing any opportunity to claim that Armenians are their enemies. He is not even realizing that in that way he is ruining his own people by injecting poison in their hearts and souls. Otherwise how can you explain the fact that Azeri officer is killing Armenian just because of his being Armenian even on the European land. Also the way how axe murderer was returned, pardoned and proclaimed national hero shows the real inhumane face of Azeri government. We truly believe that after this disregard of morality and justice, Azerbaijan once again revealed its true face to the world. Meanwhile we realize that the roots of all this lies back in Sumgait pogroms.

Azerbaijan is even not ready to accept the true voice of its own renowned intellectuals, who from time to time are trying to bring out true humanistic values and heal the poisonous atmosphere of the country. The situation around Akram Aylisli and his brilliant novel "Stone Dreams" shows how poor and little are Azerbaijani authorities. While we Armenians are ready to shake outstretched arm of Akram Aylisli, we are calling Azerbaijani government to do the same with its own history and past. This process can begin by accepting and condemning the first burst of violence and genocide in Sumgait.

**Comité de Défense de la Cause Arménienne de Belgique (CDCA Belgique) and
"Hayasa" Armenian Student Association of Belgium**