

## Answer to Question

### **Background of Azerbaijan's Liberation of the Karabakh Region**

(Translated)

#### **Question:**

More than 100,000 Armenians, numbering 120,000 as of 30/9/2023, evacuated the region of Karabakh. They left the region and took refuge in Armenia after the military operation carried out by Azerbaijan on 19/9/2023 in the region to regain it and cleanse it of the Armenian separatist forces that disarmed and announced their surrender. The Russian peacekeeping forces guaranteeing their security did not intervene. Armenia distanced itself from the fighting and from the peace negotiations that took place between Azerbaijan and the separatist forces. So what happened? Why did Armenia distance itself? Why didn't the Russian forces intervene? What is the position of America and Europe, especially France, which, along with America, are members of the Minsk Group?

#### **Answer:**

To get a clear answer clear, we will review the following matters:

1- We said in the Answer to Question dated 5/10/2020, "...the Armenian revolt against Azerbaijan began in February 1988 with the support of Russia, and they declared their control over the mountainous Karabakh region in 1991, and declared an independent republic for them in it and the war continued until 1994. Azerbaijan therefore lost more than 20% to 24% of the its lands, which include the Karabakh region, which consists of 5 governorates, along with 5 other provinces in the west of the country, in addition to large parts of the governorates of Aghdam and Fuzuli. About a million residents were displaced from these Muslim populated areas." The Armenians carried out ethnic cleansing against the Muslims in those years, killing tens of thousands of them, expelling almost all Muslims from the region and its surrounding areas, and seized their lands and property with the help of the Russians. Therefore, after Azerbaijan carried out its last operation, the Armenians who seized the region 30 years ago became afraid of punishment or revenge, so they began to flee the region, heading towards Armenia. Azerbaijan opened the Lachin corridor for displacement. The Prime Minister of Armenia said, "There will not be any Armenians left in Karabakh within days" and claimed that "there is ethnic cleansing and displacement." (Al Jazeera 28/9/2023).

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry responded to him and said in a statement, "Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan is fully aware that the Armenian population are leaving Karabakh of their own free will. Azerbaijan did not target civilians at all in its recent operation in Karabakh, citing the statement of Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan himself that "there is no direct threat to the civilians in Karabakh." The statement added, "We are ready to provide them with better living conditions than they had when they were hostages of the military junta established by Armenia." The Kremlin said, "It sees no reason for Armenians to flee the region." (Anadolu, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat 28/9/2023), and France-Presse Agency reported 29/9/2023 that "those it met in the Armenian border town of Goris, where all the men have experience in the army and fighting, burned their uniforms, military documents, and even much more." Thus, it appears that the Azerbaijani forces did not aim to kill or displace Armenians as they did 30 years ago against Muslims.

2- America was working to remove Armenia from Russia's influence and extend its influence there through Turkey by concluding agreements between the two parties to bring them closer together, as what happened in 2009. But the Armenian parliament did not approve the agreement and it was not implemented, instead Armenia even canceled this agreement permanently. We referred to this in the Answer to Question that we issued on 5/10/2020, and we said, "But nine years later, in March 2018, under Russian pressure, Armenia officially canceled the agreement due to its submission to Russian influence. Thus, America missed the opportunity to take Armenia from Russia through this agreement with Turkey. Instead, Russia strengthened its influence in

Armenia and strengthened its missile arsenal at its base, the Armenian Gyumri base, and then signed a joint air defense agreement in December 2015 with Armenia and deployed a squadron of MiG-29 aircraft, and thousands of soldiers, armour, long-range S-300 air and missile defense systems, as well as SE-6 medium-range air defenses. Russia introduced it to its market, the Eurasian Economic Union, which came into effect on 01/01/2015, along with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. These countries, including Armenia, have become a market for the disposal of Russian products under the name of free movement of goods and services in all fields. The gross domestic product of this market is more than 5 trillion US dollars, and most of it is in favour of Russia.” **End Quote.**

We said in the aforementioned Answer to Question, “Russia stands behind Armenia, a country with a small area, population, powers and capabilities in relation to Azerbaijan. Russia is the one that funds and supports Armenia with weapons and equipment and everything necessary to survive. Armenia is a member of the collective security organization led by Russia and it has a large military presence there...” **End Quote.**

If this support stops, Armenia will fall and will not be able to stand up to Azerbaijan, which has become supported by Turkey and America behind it. Then came the circumstances of the year 2020, in which Azerbaijan was able to recover one of the regions, in the military operation carried out by Azerbaijan with the support of Turkey, which began on 27/9/2020 and lasted 44 days, and then an agreement was concluded between Azerbaijan and Armenia on 9/11/2020, according to which Armenia will withdraw from the Azerbaijani occupied regions, with the exception of the Karabakh region, which has a majority of Armenians who declared it a republic. Russia agreed with the two parties and with Turkey to bring its forces of approximately two thousand soldiers into the region until negotiations take place to decide the fate of the region, and Russia was satisfied with that.

3- But after Russia’s war on Ukraine and the difficulty it faced in resolving the battle, and it has been continuing since it began on 24/2/2022 until today, America found in it its opportunity to (withdraw) Armenia from Russian influence or to participate with it, and to compensate for its failure in its past attempt that began in 2009, as we mentioned above... especially since America had created an access to Pashinyan, the Prime Minister of Armenia... America began conducting joint exercises with Armenia on 11/9/2023 for 10 days near the Armenian capital, Yerevan. This angered Russia, as it denounced it when it was announced a week before that it took place, which indicates that Armenia took this decision without informing Russia in a move that shows its intention to abandon its dependence on Russia and follow America.

The Kremlin spokesman Peskov said on 7/9/2023 [“It is clear that conducting such maneuvers does not allow the situation in the region to stabilize or enhance the atmosphere of mutual trust... and that Russia will continue its duties as a guarantor of security.” (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, 7/9/2023)]. The Prime Minister of Armenia, Pashinyan, had directly denied Russia’s announcement that Armenia would host the Collective Security Organization exercises for this year, which forced Russia to hold them in Belarus on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. Pashinyan refused to send Armenian forces to participate!

4- In this atmosphere, America suggested to Aliyev, through Turkey, to attack to liberate the Karabakh region. On 19/9/2023, Azerbaijan announced conducting a military operation to liberate the Armenian-occupied Karabakh region, and demanded complete and unconditional Armenian surrender, and declared its control over about 90 Armenian sites in the region. While the Armenian authorities in Karabakh announced that [“the death toll from the Azerbaijani military operation that lasted one day in the region rose to 213 dead and 400 wounded, and more than 7,000 people were evacuated from 16 villages.” Noting that the region is inhabited by about 120,000, most of whom are Armenians, after they expelled its Muslim people with the help of Russia 30 years ago. While Azerbaijan announced that it had lost about 192 soldiers and more than 500 soldiers were injured in the military operation that took place to retake Karabakh. The President of Azerbaijan, Aliyev, announced on 20/9/2023 that his country had regained its sovereignty over Karabakh. Baku announced that Armenian militants starting to hand over their weapons. (Al Jazeera; Al Arabiya 21/9/2023)]. Russia did not object, as it currently does not want to be busy in a war as long as it is busy in the Ukraine war.

5- Armenia itself did not participate in the recent fighting against Azerbaijan, and distanced itself from it and did not even condemn the operation, as if the intention was to expose Russia and embarrass it for its preoccupation with Ukraine and show it has let down the Armenians by not defending them as a prelude to turn away the Armenians from Russia in whole or in part. Armenia is not capable of war against Azerbaijan without Russian support. That is why Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan called for a lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and to guarantee the rights and security of the people of Karabakh. Armenia is unable to confront Azerbaijan without Russia's help, and as long as Russia and the "Russian peace forces" did not move alongside the Armenians in the region, but rather moved away, accordingly, the Armenian separatist forces surrendered and began handing over their weapons, and the Armenian authorities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region said on, Thursday 28/9/2023, that Armenia itself did not participate in the recent fighting against Azerbaijan, and distanced itself from it and did not even condemn the operation, as if the intention was to expose Russia. And its embarrassment over its preoccupation with Ukraine, and then its failure of the Armenians by not defending them, is a prelude to the Armenians turning away from Russia, completely or partially. Armenia is not capable of war against Azerbaijan without Russian support. That is why Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan called for a lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and to guarantee the rights and security of the people of Karabakh. Armenia is unable to confront Azerbaijan without Russia's help, and as long as Russia and the "Russian peace forces" did not move alongside the Armenians in the region, but rather moved away, Accordingly, the Armenian separatist forces surrendered and began handing over their weapons, and then the Armenian authorities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region said, Thursday 9/28/2023:

[The President of the unilaterally declared republic, Samvel Shahramanyan, signed a decree dissolving all state institutions as of 1/1/ 2024. According to the decree, the unilaterally declared republic will no longer exist starting from that day, according to what Reuters news agency reported. (Asharq Al-Awsat, 28/9/2023)]. The Kremlin announced [that it had taken note of the Karabakh authorities' announcement that it would dissolve itself on 1/1/2024. Russia's lack of intervention in the Azerbaijani military operation prompted Armenia to accuse Moscow, its traditional ally, of abandoning it. (Asharq Al-Awsat, 28/9/2023)]. Thus, Russia appeared before the Armenians as if it had abandoned defending them because it was busy in Ukraine!

6- America in continuing its contacts with the Azerbaijani and Armenian parties appears as if it were the one managing the conflict, so US Secretary of State Blinken made phone calls with the presidents of the two parties, Aliyev and Pashinyan, and invited them to dialogue, and assured the latter of "Washington's support for Armenia's sovereignty." He stated "that kind of just and durable peace that we're working toward would be a tremendous benefit to both countries, to the region, and also, I think, a strong change for the better in the current of history after 30 years of conflict."

America, in the name of its State Secretary, did not defend the sovereignty of the Armenians in Karabakh, but rather only defended the sovereignty of Armenia, and demanded installing of peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

This indicates that it, that is, America, approves of the Azerbaijani military operation and that this is in its interest to impose American hegemony over the region. America seeks to win over Armenia, just as it won Azerbaijan through Erdogan, and makes it give up its dependence on Russia when it sees the latter letting it down. America has succeeded to some extent in this, as the Armenians seem to think that Russia had failed them and could not guarantee their security, and they are a poor people, confined between mountains, few in numbers and equipment, its forces are weak compared to Azerbaijan, which is many times superior to them in numbers, equipment, forces, wealth, sea, and climate. America began contacting them and holding meetings between their officials and the Azeris after the Azerbaijani operation in 2020 to pull the rug from under the feet of the Russians. It so happened that Secretary of State Blinken gathered his Azerbaijani and Armenian counterparts in Washington on 20/9/2022 and 8/11/2022.

7- Europe tried to intervene but failed. France was one of the countries most disturbed by the operation, as its President Macron announced that he ["condemns in the strongest terms the military operation initiated by Azerbaijan in the Karabakh region" and called for an "immediate cessation of the attack." (France 24, 20/9/2023)]. However, it was unable to communicate with the

two countries, and it tried, with the help of Germany, to play an effective role in the case. It, along with Germany, invited diplomatic officials from Azerbaijan and Armenia to Brussels on 26/9/2023, to discuss with them the course of the recent events. France also called for an “International diplomatic action in the face of Russia’s abandonment of Armenia. It considered that the displacement in Karabakh was taking place within the sight of complicit Russia, which is deploying a peacekeeping force in the region.” Germany called, through its Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, “to allow international observers to be sent to Karabakh,” and considered that This “will constitute evidence of confidence that Azerbaijan is serious about its commitment to the security of the people of Karabakh.”

And it will increase its aid to the Armenians from two million euros to five million euros through the Red Cross. (Al-Arabiya; Al-Jazeera, 27/9/2023). France wants to continue to have a role, whatever it may be, and is urging Germany to join it to have a role...this role is still ineffective in the face of the American role, which almost holds all the cards of the case!

8- The conclusion is that the Karabakh events indicate the following matters:

a- Russia has most likely realized that this war is directed and planned against it by America through Erdogan’s Turkey and Azerbaijan, which has become its guardian, and will occupy it to no avail and disperse its forces. It is now focusing on its war in Ukraine, which is a fateful war that it does not want to lose. Russia knows that if it loses it, it will lose everything, and if it wins it, it will be able to restore its influence in the areas it has lost. At the same time, it does not want to clash with Turkey, which it needs in these circumstances and the blockade imposed on it. It is its gateway to the Western world. It also wants to maintain its relations with Azerbaijan, as it has investments there, especially in energy resources worth \$6 billion. The volume of trade exchange between them is more than \$4 billion. As for Armenia, it depends on it in everything...it is not unlikely that it will restore it to its full influence as it was if it won the war in Ukraine.

b- It is understood from America’s actions that it is behind this war, and it wants to distract Russia with it if it adheres to the Collective Security Treaty, which includes Armenia. Its charter stipulates that “an attack on any of its members is considered an attack on the rest of the members.” This requires it to intervene to protect the Armenians, as it intervened at the beginning of 2022 in Kazakhstan, the other member of this organization, especially since it has a military base in Armenia, and it strengthened it by establishing two new sites in southern Armenia near the borders of Azerbaijan, considering the two sites as an additional security guarantee. If it intervenes according to the treaty, its forces will weaken in Ukraine. It is clear from all of this that America took advantage of Russia’s current conditions in Ukraine and pushed Azerbaijan to attack.

c- The attempts of Europe, especially France and Germany, to have a role in the events are unsuccessful, as we explained above.

d- The colonialist kuffar have strong enmity among themselves. Their interests guide them, even if they are satanic and brutal, their values are devoid of right and truth. Therefore, Azerbaijan’s push to liberate the Karabakh region from the Armenians at a time when Russia is busy in the war against Ukraine is not out of love for Azerbaijan, the Muslim country. Rather, it is a prelude to introducing American influence into Armenia and withdrawing Armenia’s dependence on Russia after Russia let Armenia down and did not support it in the region. If circumstances changed and Armenia’s occupation of the region would have achieved a goal for America, then it would support Armenia’s occupation of Karabakh again! The Armenian occupation of the region lasted about 30 years, America did not intervene in it as it intervened today. This is how the colonial kuffar are. They have no fixed values of good and evil.

﴿هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرْهُمْ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

**“They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah condemn them! How can they be deluded from the truth?”** [Al-Munafiqun: 4]

19 Rabi’ Al-Awal 1445 AH

4/10/2023 CE