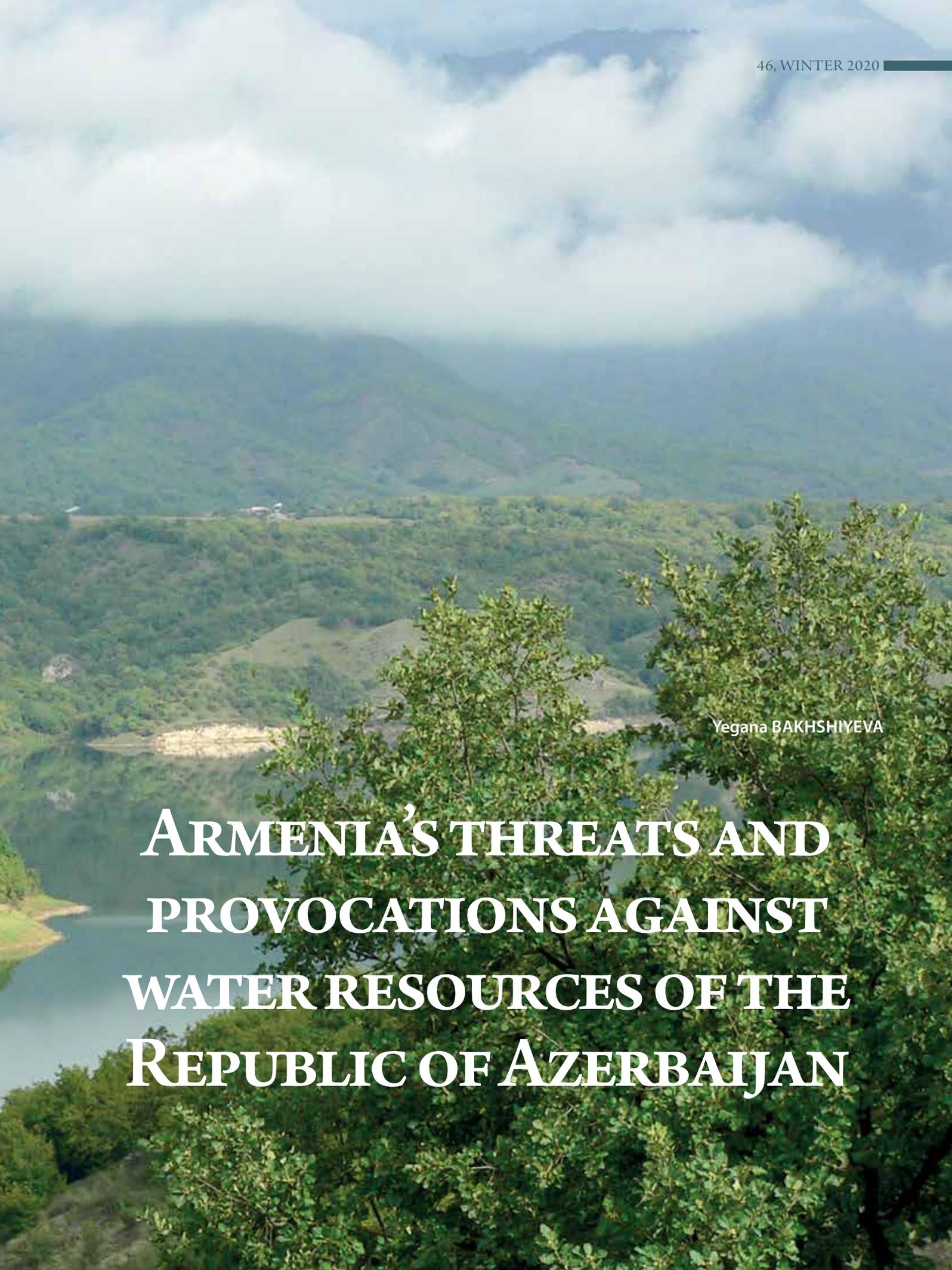




# Armenian terrorism

*Sarsang reservoir (view from the village of Heyvali)*





**ARMENIA'S THREATS AND  
PROVOCATIONS AGAINST  
WATER RESOURCES OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

Yegana BAKHSIYEVA



**A**s one of the concepts in ecological science, environmental terror is deliberate damage caused by a particular country or person to the flora and fauna of another country and destruction of its natural resources. For more than 30 years, the Republic of Azerbaijan has been suffering from environmental terrorism committed by its western neighbour Armenia. At present, Armenia's terrorist war against Azerbaijan is being waged in various ways. This terrorist policy pursued by Armenia against Azerbaijan has reached the level of a kind of cyberterrorism, covering ideological, scientific, cultural, spiritual and social spheres. The pollution of rivers coming from the territory of Armenia and forming sources of drinking water in Azerbaijan with chemical, biological and other radioactive waste has become sustainable. This factor deeply undermines the right of the regional population to live in safety.

In general, the aspects of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict related to water resources, as well as the use of fresh water sources and hydraulic facilities by the enemy state in committing acts of hydro terrorism, hydro sabotage and environmental sabotage have not been sufficiently studied. Armenia's policy of environmental terrorism against Azerbaijan is very different in terms of its nature and implementation mechanisms.

At the same time, the unconstructive approach demonstrated by international organizations to the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict serves to worsen the situation in the region. Armenia is prolonging the settlement of the conflict under unfounded pretexts, taking advantage of the dual position of the OSCE Minsk Group, which serves to preserve the conflict. With the support of its foreign patrons, Yerevan is delaying the conclusion of any agreement with the countries of the region on the management, use, protection of transboundary water resources and determination of water quotas, claiming that its country is the legal successor of the Armenian SSR and continuing to rely upon the water sharing agreements the USSR signed with Turkey in 1924 and with Iran in 1957.

Three fourths of the territory of Azerbaijan is located in the lower reaches of the Kura River basin. Every year, more than 350 million cubic metres of water are chemically and biologically polluted in Armenia and discharged into the Kura River basin. As a result, the microflora and microfauna in the territory of Azerbaijan along 43 km of the Aras River were completely destroyed. As a result of the direct impact of Armenia's environmental terrorism policy, the level of water pollution in the Aras River is many times higher than the norm. The acidity of the river decreased to pH 2.4 and the microflora fell by 180-200 times. At the same time, valuable fish species

went extinct in the Aras River. The number of previously recorded fish species fell from 21 to 16 in 10-15 years (5, pp. 15-29).

Organic pollutants that are naturally neutralized and detected in the Aras River are many times higher than the norm. The amount of phenols in the water in this area is 220-1,160 times, heavy metal salts (copper, molybdenum, etc.) 36-48 times, nitrogen-phosphorus salts 26-34 times, chlorides 28 times, and hydrocarbons of petroleum origin is 73-113 times higher than the norm. At the same time, high-temperature industrial wastewater has a negative impact on the temperature and gas regime of the river. The results of the analysis of samples taken from the bottom of the river show that the amount of heavy metals in the Aras River is much higher than the norm. The amount of toxic substances in the water is 50% higher than the norm. For this reason, the pollution of the Aras River with various types of toxic waste poses a threat to the existence of flora and fauna.

Thus, taking into account that the main tributaries of the Aras River pass through the territory of Armenia, that the Metsamor NPP operates in the country despite international pressure and discharges its waste into the Zangi tributary of the Aras River, as well as the fact that Armenia has not joined the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, it is possible to conclude that an environmental catastrophe will be inevitable. By the way, there are opinions not only in the Republic of Azerbaijan, but also in the Republic of Turkey that the operation of the Metsamor NPP poses a serious threat to the ecology of the region, especially in the regions bordering on Armenia such as Igdir, which is only 15 kilometres away from the power plant. According to experts, the Metsamor nuclear power plant in Armenia and the Kozladuy nuclear power plant in Bulgaria are the most dangerous enterprises in Europe (6, pp. 24-39).

Also, along with the Sarsang reservoir, which is important for agriculture and has the highest relief in Azerbaijan, there are other reservoirs with a total water capacity of 80 million cubic metres left in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia. These include the Khachinchay Reservoir, built in 1964, the Ganligol Reservoir, built in 1965, the Arpachay Reservoir, built in 1977, the Agdamkend Reservoir, built in 1962, and more than 160 water depots, which have become a real source of danger.

The Okhchuchay River, flowing in front of Sharikan village in Zangilan District of Azerbaijan, is being pol-

luted by chemical waste waters (without neutralization) of the Gajaran copper-molybdenum and the Kafan copper ore processing plants and biologically polluted waters of the cities of Kafan and Gajaran (including villages, hospitals, agricultural facilities) in Armenia. This turned the river basin into a "Dead Zone" (3, pp. 87-98). 43 km of the riverbed in Azerbaijan and 455 square kilometres of the catchment area are constantly being polluted. As a result, the microflora and fauna in the river water have been destroyed, and the process of self-purification has stopped (9).

The main reason for the pollution of the Agstafachay, another transborder river and the right tributary of the Kura River, is the discharge of one million cubic metres of waste a year from the Armenian towns of Ijevan and Dilijan. As a result, the amount of phenols in the river exceeded the norm by 35-45 times. The reservoir built on it is a serious threat to the population of the north-western regions of Azerbaijan.

The Khonashen River, which flows from west to east, is polluted by sewage and waste from the Khojavend Central Hospital, located 200-300 metres away, as well as waste from the pig and livestock complex located 200 metres from the river. It should be noted that a small lake was formed after farmers blocked this river, which passes through the occupied territories. This water source is the only water source in the area, which is used both as drinking water and for various purposes (irrigation of crops, animal husbandry, etc.). Ecological-sanitary samples taken from this water source revealed that the number of microbes in them was many times higher than the norm. The river is further polluted by water growing mainly as a result of floods during the rains, and the river water flows into the Orjonikidze canal (2, pp.135-138).

The pollution of water bodies in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas has become commonplace. Even the state statistics bodies of Armenia unhesitatingly disseminate information on the amount of harmful substances discharged into water bodies in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Garasu River, which flows in the direction of the villages of Ashagi Veyselli and Agburun, is completely impossible to use for domestic purposes due to its pollution by Armenians. Skin diseases have been observed on the bodies of residents using water from the Kondalanchay and Guruchay rivers flowing through the territory of Fuzuli District, and the pollution of these rivers by Armenians has caused various diseases (7, p.54).

Another river flowing from west to east, the Gargar River, feeds mainly on rain and snow and is polluted by various types of waste near Agdam, Asgaran, Khankendi and other settlements. The lack of information about the current environmental situation in the occupied territories is a great problem. Armenia, which controls these territories, deliberately hides the real environmental situation there, and therefore it is possible to make only general assumptions about the situation.

Hydrometeorological observations in the occupied territories are of great importance in the study of hydrometeorological conditions in the Republic of Azerbaijan, especially in meteorological forecasts and in the assessment of water resources. Meteorological stations such as Khankendi, Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar, Agdam, Fuzuli with long-term observation stations in this area, Vaguaz, Sugovushan in Tartarchay (Armenians called it Madagiz), Umudlu at the Sarsang reservoir, Vankli in Khachinchay, Aga Korpu in Gargarchay, Girmizibazar in Kondalanchay, Minkand in Zabukh, Lachin in Hakarichay, Salva and Sayifli in Okhchuchay were the latest model radio-hydrometeorological stations with all kinds of equipment, and as a result of the occupation, hydrometeorological observations were stopped at 17 hydrological stations and the established base was destroyed. The compulsory suspension of hydrometeorological observations at hydrological stations does not allow studying the hydrometeorological conditions of the area. The amount of damage estimated at market value as of the assessment date of the remaining hydrometeorological observation stations and existing infrastructure in the occupied territories is around 7,703,200 manat (4, p.34-42).

The water resources of the occupied districts of Kalbajar and Lachin are of strategic importance in the hydro policy of Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh separatist regime. Armenian statisticians hope that the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's population will reach 200,000 in the future, and forecast that the annual demand for fresh water for agricultural and domestic use will be 365 million cubic metres. This is 59% more than the reserves of the Sarsang water reservoir. It is no coincidence that the liberation of Kalbajar and Lachin districts from Armenian occupation is assessed in Yerevan as the inevitable collapse of the so-called regime and the seizure of the initiative in hydro policy by the Azerbaijani side. David Babayan, head of the information department of the so-called "Nagorno-Karabakh republic", writes about this possibility in his article "Wa-

ter Security Problems of the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh in the Context of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict": "In the context of supplying Nagorno-Karabakh with drinking water, Kalbajar and Lachin districts play an exceptional role. In general, the existence of the Nagorno-Karabakh republic and its water security depend on the status of those territories. If Azerbaijan regains these territories, not only the NKR, but also Armenia will face a disaster, because the source of the Arpa and Bargushad rivers, which feed the Lake Goycha, the main source of fresh water in Armenia, comes from these districts."

The next target of the environmental terrorist act by Armenia was Injichay, which passes through the villages of Gulustan and Talish in the Republic of Azerbaijan and takes its source from Mount Murov. On 19 November 2010, severe pollution was observed in Injichay. Thus, the residents of Tapgaragoyunlu village observed that there was a thick foam on the Injichay, their only source of water, from 14:00 to 15:00 in the afternoon and reported it to the Territorial Department of Ecology and Natural Resources No 13 of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (Goranboy, Naftalan, Samukh, Dashkasan, Goygol). An operational group consisting of specialists from the Ministry was established to assess the environmental situation, and the group soon carried out measurements at the water body through mobile devices. The water samples were analyzed for harmful chemicals in the central analytical laboratory of the ministry, and as a result, it was established that the quality of river water had deteriorated significantly. The analysis shows that the concentration of hydrogen in the Injichay water, which belongs to the hydrocarbonate water group, dropped sharply from alkaline to acidic, and the oxygen regime of the water was significantly violated. The amount of harmful pollutants such as surfactant synthetic organic substances (detergents), nitrogen compounds, especially ammonium and metal compounds was many times higher than the norm.

Hundreds of different mineral springs in the territory occupied by the enemy make up 39.6% of the total geological reserves of Azerbaijan's mineral waters. The area, especially Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar districts have huge reserves of mineral water. In the Lachin-Kalbajar region, 63 springs are divided into Istisu (Kalbajar District) and Iligsu (Lachin District) types. These waters are not inferior to world-famous waters such as Karlovy Vary, Narzan, Kislovodsk, Zheleznovodsk in terms of composition, quality and healing properties, and even surpass them in some respects. Mineral waters located in the territory

*Sarsang reservoir*





### *The Tartar River*

of Kalbajar District are especially distinguished by their favourable gas and chemical composition, high temperature and large natural resources. These mineral waters have healing properties for both external and internal diseases. Therefore, a large resort and a mineral water filling plant were built on the Istisu spring in the 1980s. The plant produced 800,000 litres of water per day. Various internal diseases were treated here with the help of the Turshsu mineral spring, located 17 km from the city of Shusha. Water from the sour mineral spring was supplied to Shusha through a pipeline. Also, the deliberate pollution of natural water basins in the occupied territories such as Boyuk Alagol, Kichik Alagol, Zalkhagol, Janligol, Garagol, Alagol, Ishigli Garagol caused additional environmental problems for the Republic of Azerbaijan in the future (4, p.18).

The damage Armenia has caused to nature in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan does not end here. Armenia occupied 2 reserves, 4 sanctuaries and many valuable natural-historical monuments in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan. These are the Basitchay State Reserve, the Garagol State Reserve, the Lachin, Gubadli and Dashalti reserves, and reserves along the Aras. In addition, 269,000 hectares of forests and 6 geological objects were destroyed. The reserves and sanctuaries remaining in the occupied zone are in a very bad condition. In a place called Argunash near Fizuli District, the Arme-

nians completely destroyed a forest for construction materials, cut down valuable trees in the area to build a road between Hadrut and Tug, and damaged the flora of those trees. While getting the world-renowned Michael Zukkov Prize in November 2006, President Ilham Aliyev commented on the environmental situation in the occupied territories: "20% of our territory is under Armenian occupation and the environmental situation in those areas has been deplorable for many years. The occupying forces that occupied those lands not only destroyed our historical, cultural and religious monuments, they also attacked our nature."

Armenia's policy of terrorism against humanity has posed a serious threat to the hydro-environment of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The act of occupation, which resulted in the pollution of the Kura and Aras rivers, the destruction of the mineral springs of the Republic of Azerbaijan under occupation, the burning and destruction of forest areas, and the illegal misappropriation of mineral and raw material resources have become a state policy. Armenia's negative attitude towards nature and natural resources has increased and reached the highest level in the 21st century. In general, the collapse of the unified ecosystem in the territories occupied by Armenia marked the beginning of a great catastrophe in the South Caucasus. Unfortunately, the activities of the occupying state, which contradict the norms of international law, are left beyond the control of interna-

*The Tartar River in Kalbajar (ruined Azerbaijani villages are visible on the banks)*



tional organizations, while world powers are indifferent to such inhumane behaviour. 🌟

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