

# OPERATION “RING” (KOL’TSO)

## AZERBAIJAN’S ETHNIC CLEANSING CAMPAIGN

April-June 1991

As the Soviet Union was collapsing, Azerbaijan planned and implemented a brutal genocidal act, ethnically cleansing border areas of Nagorno Karabakh of its indigenous Armenian population. Approved by Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov, **Operation Ring**, the code name of this criminal action, was carried out by paramilitary units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan, aided by the Soviet Army and the Soviet Internal Troops. Methods used in the operation included raids, roundups, military strikes and forced deportation.

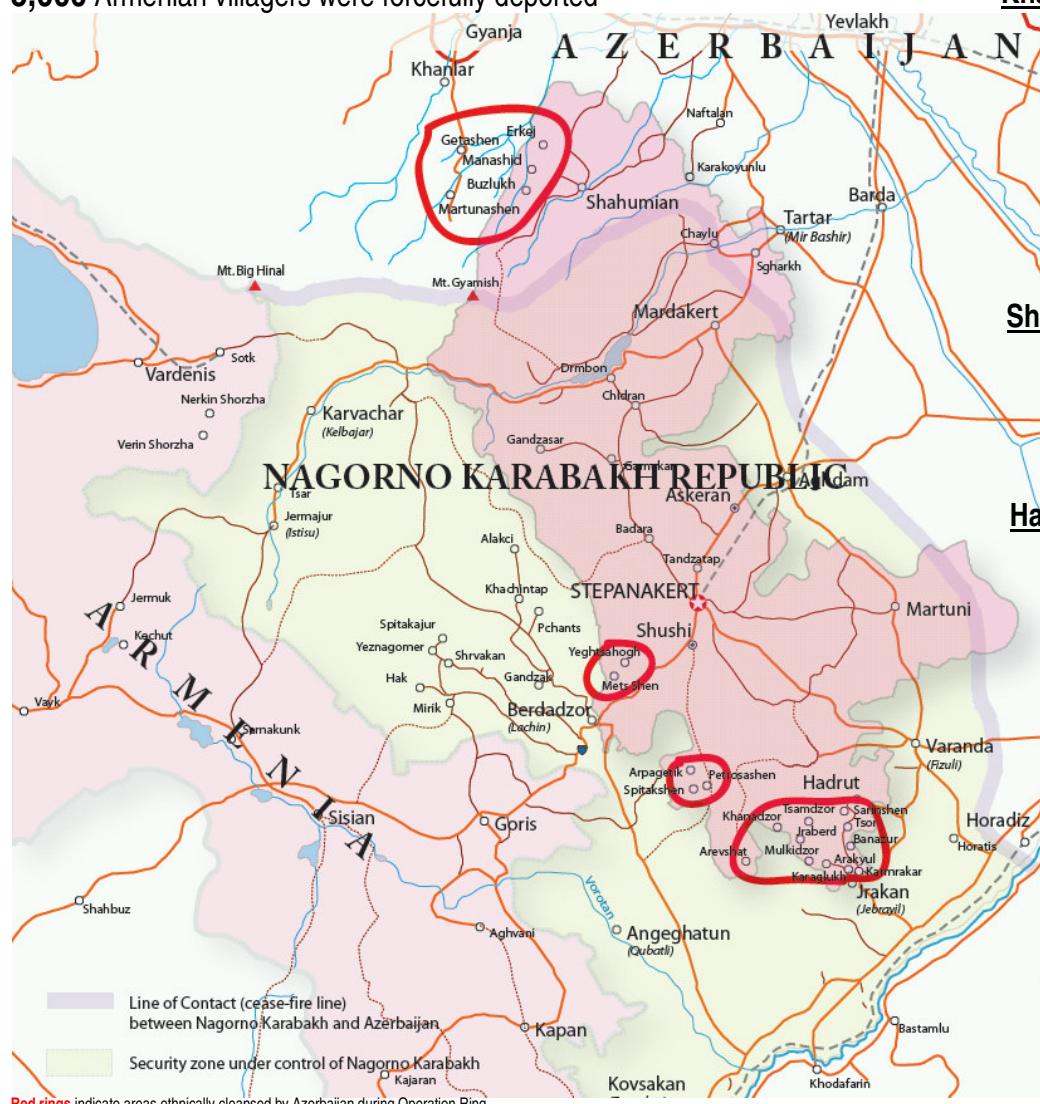


As a result of this brutal act:

**100** Armenians were killed

**700** Armenians were taken hostage

**5,000** Armenian villagers were forcefully deported



The following 24 Armenian villages were ethnically cleansed by Azerbaijan in April-June 1991:

### Khanlar Province (Northern Karabakh)

Getashen  
Martunashen

### Shahumian Province (Northern Karabakh)

Buzlukh  
Erkej  
Manashid

### Shushi Province (Southern Karabakh)

Kirov  
Mets Shen  
Tsakhkadzor  
Yeghtsahogh

### Hadrut Province (Southern Karabakh)

Arpagetik  
Arakyel  
Arevshat  
Banazur  
Jraberd  
Khandzadzor  
Karaglukh  
Karmrakar  
Mulkidzor  
Petrosashen  
Sarinshen  
Sarilanj  
Spitakashen  
Tsamdzor  
Tsor

**Azerbaijan should be held accountable for the organization and implementation of this gross violation of human rights on a mass scale.**

**Operation Ring**, the ensuing all-out war against Nagorno Karabakh and the continued absence of any reassessment and condemnation of its past and ongoing criminal actions on the part of Azerbaijan, reinforces the belief that Azerbaijan cannot be trusted with ensuring the security of the Nagorno Karabakh people. Today, the continuation of Azerbaijan’s genocidal intent is clearly reflected in official Baku’s economic blockade of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh and its intensifying calls to launch a new military attack on Nagorno Karabakh.