

### **State Reply**

Alert 128/2020

#### **“Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs strips Russian Journalist Ilya Azar of Press Accreditation”**

Since September 27, more than 400 foreign journalists applied for the accreditation of MFAs of Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) to cover the Azerbaijani aggression. All of them have been issued required accreditation and have been able to reflect on the events on the ground. Details of security and procedural measures have been explained to each and every journalist by the media teams of the Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Artsakh. None of those journalists violated the rules of conducting professional duties in the zone of hostilities (measures undertaken for their own security) and Mr. Azar's case is the only one.

Before entering the territory of Artsakh, the Foreign Ministry of Armenia has informed Mr. Ilya Azar that for covering the situation on the contact line between Artsakh and Azerbaijan, as well as on the territory of Artsakh, it was necessary to contact the Permanent Mission of Artsakh in the Republic of Armenia or obtain accreditation from the Artsakh Foreign Ministry in Stepanakert, and follow the necessary instructions and restrictions. While being in Artsakh for a few days, Mr. Azar has not applied for accreditation. When this fact was discovered on October 6, the MFA of Armenia decided to suspend his temporary accreditation upon his return to Armenia. When the representative of the MFA in the Goris press centre enquired from Mr. Azar why he had not applied for accreditation, he claimed in an arrogant manner that he had forgotten about that request. Upon his return to Yerevan on October 8, Mr. Azar was informed about the suspension of his accreditation.

In regards to the correlation between the publication of the article on Nagorno-Karabakh written by Mr. Azar and his accreditation suspension, we inform you that the decision of his accreditation suspension was made at a point then MFA found out about this breach of the required procedures and had preceded the publication of the above mentioned article on October 7.