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## FORMER KARABAKH OFFICIAL SENTENCED FOR SPYING FOR AZERBAIJAN

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**AVİM's Note:** *As is known, one of the pillars for the "ethnic cleansing" propaganda with regards to the Armenians in Karabakh is the claim that these Armenians were forcefully expelled from Karabakh following Azerbaijan regaining full control of the region in September 2023. This claim has been repeatedly used by some militant circles, yet it has been repeatedly refuted by Azerbaijani officials. The news article below offers proof that the said claim is simply not true. In Karabakh, Armenians who chose not to leave the region after Azerbaijan's victory continue to live there. It seems that Armenian authorities and the aforementioned militant circles have difficulty explaining how Armenians continue to live in Karabakh despite their alleged ethnic cleansing, and so have resorted accusations of espionage and the threat of legal action to dissuade Armenians who wish to remain in Karabakh.*

Azatutyun Radiokayan (22 November 2024)

Naira Bulghadarian

*An Armenian court on Friday convicted a former Nagorno-Karabakh official, who did not flee the region right after its recapture by Azerbaijan, of spying for Baku and sentenced him to 18 years in prison.*

The man, Sargis Galstian, and his wife were among a few dozen Karabakh Armenians who did not flee to Armenia following Azerbaijan's September 2023 military offensive that triggered the mass exodus of Karabakh's population. The couple arrived in Armenia through the Lachin corridor in March.

Galstian was arrested and charged with espionage the next day. Armenian law-enforcement authorities gave very few details of the accusation brought against him, saying only that he admitted working for Azerbaijani security services during and after the 2020 war in Karabakh.

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