is forbidden to give this questionnaire to the arrestee to fill out. It should be filled out according to the words spoken by the detainee and compared and checked with the documents." The Arrestee Questionnaire was most likely prepared to be sent to Moscow together with the recommended judgment/verdict for approval.

Another document, dated September 2, 1944, is a two-column form letter titled "Extract from Protocol No. 37" and subtitled "Special Meeting of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR."[3] Its typewritten contents document the decision taken in Moscow, i.e. the formalized indictment, the verdict and the penalty. The left-hand column is headed, "It was heard." There is a reference to "203. File No. 10907/ NKVD Armenia SSR," below which are recorded the full name of the accused and basic information about him, followed by a notation of Articles 19-61, -63, -65 and -68 of the Criminal Code of Armenia SSR as the basis of the accusation. These few lines, I assume, summarize the contents of the recommended judgment/verdict sent from Armenia.

---

3 The Special Meeting of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR was established in 1922 with powers similar to those of the Special Meeting of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (1882–1917) of Tsarist Russia. Empowered with the right to imprison or exile in absentia, this extrajudicial administrative body was established to alleviate the burden of state courts overwhelmed with the cases of alleged anti-revolutionary or socially dangerous persons whom Stalin intended to dispose of. Because of its association with the old body from the tsarist period, the Special Meeting was later renamed the Special Commission. Its rights and provisions, especially in terms of the length of the penalty it could apply, also went through changes. It was also promulgated that the reason for the indictment and sentencing should be attached to each case. In 1940, the Special Meeting of the NKVD was given the right to confiscate the property of the accused, and in 1941, due to the military situation, it was given the right to execute the condemned.