



The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20500

November 9, 2023

Mr. President,

In your Oval Office speech to the American people on October 20, you declared: *“Tonight, there are innocent people all over the world who hope because of us, who believe in a better life because of us, who are desperate not [to] be forgotten by us, and who are waiting for us.”* You spoke this truth as you encouraged the public to support an extraordinary \$105 billion security package for the defense of peoples experiencing the horrors of war in Ukraine and Israel, and the threat of war in Taiwan.

The dangers to these people are great indeed. But I write now to remind you of another set of innocent and desperate people who have had hope in the United States, but who were excluded from your speech. They have been waiting, so far in vain, for constructive American action to stop an ongoing process of genocide. I speak of the Armenian people and especially the 120,000 Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh.

In September, Azerbaijan, openly supported by its Muslim supremacist ally Turkey, finally achieved its goal of ethnically and religiously cleansing Nagorno Karabakh of its Armenian Christian population. Azerbaijan accomplished this by means of a nine-month-long blockade of Nagorno Karabakh, capped by a two-day *blitzkrieg*. During this attack, Azerbaijan took at least eight prominent Karabakhi Armenians hostage, holding them as bargaining chips. In doing so, Azerbaijan and Turkey reached another milestone in the historic process of the Armenian Genocide.

Speaking on behalf of your administration only five days before Azerbaijan’s military assault, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Yuri Kim informed the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations: “The United States will not countenance any action or effort—short-term or long-term—to ethnically cleanse or commit other atrocities against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh.” Yet, it has been countenanced by the United States.

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The world still awaits your condemnation of the perpetrators of this genocidal crime against humanity, and the imposition of U.S. sanctions against them. As for the victims, they waited in vain throughout their ordeal for your word of comfort, for your reaffirmation of their right to self-determination – a right rooted in the UN Charter, and which had been supported by the OSCE Minsk Group and by previous administrations – and for an American security package with their name on it. They still wait for deeds to prove that the United States is there for them too.

Azerbaijan's ethnic/religious cleansing operation in Nagorno Karabakh was executed with impunity, despite the Genocide Prevention Alerts issued by CSI, the first Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno Ocampo, the Lemkin Institute, and other human rights activists, and despite International Court of Justice's rulings against Azerbaijan's blockade.

There is no getting around a grim reality: Your administration did not act in defense of the fundamental human rights of the people of Nagorno Karabakh. Instead, it sacrificed them as valueless expendables in the context of the United States' geopolitical power struggle for ascendancy in the South Caucasus. In her Congressional testimony, Ms. Kim identified the powers whose influence in the South Caucasus your administration is dedicated to combat:

We now have a strategic opportunity to combat malign influence in the region from actors like Russia, China, and Iran by achieving a durable peace that will expand our bilateral economic and security cooperation and provide greater energy security for European partners and allies.

Ms. Kim's policy statement is particularly noteworthy for the absence of reference to the combined malign influence of Azerbaijan and Turkey - the neo-Ottoman political, military, and economic constellation that orchestrated and perpetrated the ethnic/religious cleansing. These states are the heirs of the perpetrators of the great Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916 and the waves of anti-Armenian massacres and pogroms that followed in the South Caucasus. Their respective presidents, Aliyev and Erdogan, are deniers of the Armenian Genocide and glorifiers of its ultranationalist and Muslim supremacist perpetrators. They are also military and economic partners of the United States. As such, they have become regarded by your administration as indispensable regional powers, pillars of NATO's security architecture in South Caucasus and beyond, despite their aggressive behavior.

In your Oval Office speech, you referred to a fundamental political truth: "*When dictators don't pay a price for their aggression, they cause more chaos and death and more destruction. They keep going, and the cost and the threats to America and to the world keep rising.*" Yet, you have not exacted a price from these aggressive authoritarian tyrants. You have instead granted them immunity. Thus, the malign influence of this emerging neo-Ottoman power structure is evident in conflicts that ring the perimeter of the old Ottoman

Caliphate: Israel, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Cyprus, Ukraine, and the former Yugoslavia. They now have their eyes fixed on the Republic of Armenia.

Azerbaijan, with Turkey at its side, makes irredentist claims against the Republic of Armenia, calling it “West Azerbaijan.” It has already militarily occupied swathes of Armenia’s borderland territory and periodically shells land within the borders of the Republic of Armenia. It has threatened to use force to open a corridor under its control through Armenian territory. Azerbaijan and Turkey thus lord over an Armenian state that is incapable of defending the Armenian people and its own borders. Armenia’s government, fearing further aggression, makes public demonstration of its desperate readiness to sign a capitulation treaty with Azerbaijan.

The people of the Republic of Armenia are increasingly anxious about their future. Will what happened to the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh happen to them too? Will the United States also regard them as expendable in the pursuit of geopolitical advantage? Is the United States empowering this neo-Ottoman, anti-Armenian axis to combat the regional influence of Russia, China and Iran, as suggested by Ms. Kim’s congressional testimony?

These fears, Mr. President, are grounded in a dark reality that cannot be changed by spin doctors at the White House or at the State Department’s Global Engagement Center. But it is within your power to change it. In your Oval Office speech, you confidently declared: *“We are the United States of America – the United States of America. And there is nothing – nothing beyond our capacity if we do it together.”* A reorientation of American policy to combat the malign influence of Azerbaijan and Turkey is overdue. But it is not too late.

The United States must press for a UN Security Council Resolution, modeled on UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999) regarding Kosovo, calling for the establishment of a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return to Nagorno Karabakh in safety, the international civil presence can operate, a transitional administration can be established, and humanitarian aid can be delivered.

The United States must also simultaneously impose severe sanctions against the political and military architects and other enablers of Azerbaijan’s religious/ethnic cleansing of Nagorno Karabakh; call for the suspension of Azerbaijan’s membership in NATO’s “Partnership for Peace Program”; and halt all US military aid to Azerbaijan. These measures must remain in place until Azerbaijan releases its hostages, withdraws its armed forces from the territory of the Republic of Armenia and from Nagorno Karabakh, creates conditions for the return of the dispossessed population of Nagorno Karabakh to their homes and reaffirms their right to self-determination.

As you have said, Mr. President, the United States has the capacity to achieve this. All that is required is the will on your part to lead. The power and prestige of the United States as an upholder of a rules-based world order, anchored in the UN Charter and the international human rights instruments, will be enhanced by such a display of leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Eibner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

John Eibner, Ph.D. (London)
President
CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY INTERNATIONAL (CSI)

P.S. The eight Armenian Karabkhi hostages referred to above are Ruben Vardanyan, Arayik Harutyunyan, Bako Sahakyan, Arkadi Ghukasyan, Davit Ishkhanyan, David Babayan, Levon Mnatsakanyan, Davit Manukyan. Three civilians from Nagorno Karabakh were abducted by Azerbaijan between July 29 and September 19 - Vagif Khachatryan, Rashid Beglaryan, and Madat Babayan.

Cc: The Hon. Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State.