



ՆԱԻՐԻ



נאירי



Պետախ-Տիկվայի իսրայելահայերի «Նաիրի» միությունն נאירי - איגוד ארמנים ישראלים בפתח תקווה
Общество армян „Наири” г. Петах-Тиквы Nairi - Union of armenians in Petah-Tikwa

Union of Armenians in Petah Tiqwa “Nairi”
The head of organization, International journalist and Analyst
Mr. Artiom Chernamorian
Shapira Herman Zvi 34, entry “A”, PetahTiqwa, Israel
E-mail: Artiomhay@gmail.com, Mobile: 054-8082735
08 September 2023

His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu
Prime minister of Israel
Jerusalem

Dear Prime Minister Netanyahu:

The State of Israel was formally established by the Israeli Declaration of Independence on 14 May 1948, and was admitted to the United Nations (UN) as a full member state on 11 May 1949. Our state, as a member of the United Nations, signed all agreements of this international organization. We stand firm in our respect for International laws and human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights starts with the recognition of inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Irrespective of their residence, all human beings are entitled to human rights and dignity, and should be treated with the highest respect and care, even at times of war. Unfortunately, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh are deprived of such treatment, finding themselves in unbearable conditions of a total siege.

Mr. Prime Minister, allow me to present the events, facts and figures which represent the current realities in blockaded Nagorno-Karabakh.

November 9, 2020 - A trilateral statement is signed by the leaders of Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan, according to Paragraph 6 of which “The Lachin Corridor (5 km wide), which will provide a connection between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia..., shall remain under the control of the Russian Federation peacekeeping forces.”

December 12, 2022 - Azerbaijan blocks the Lachin corridor under the false pretext of environmental concerns. Since then, gradual utilization of limited domestic stocks has resulted in an acute food shortage and closures of stores. Prior to the blockade, around 90% of all consumed food was imported from Armenia, and with every passing day, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh do not receive 400 tons of daily essential goods. Currently, there is a severe lack of essential goods, including flour, sugar, as well as medicine, fuel etc. Basic nutritional standards for children are not being met.

Moreover, due to the absence of fuel and targeting of farm workers by Azerbaijan, almost all agricultural work has halted. As a result, approximately 10,000 hectares of land adjacent to the contact line remain uncultivated.

December 20, 2022 - The UN Security Council discussed the issue for the first time and the vast majority of council members called on Azerbaijan to lift the blockade.

Since December, 2022 periodically and March, 2023 completely (in sum for around 180 days) – Azerbaijan disrupted the only supply of natural gas to Nagorno-Karabakh. Halting the gas supply has already led to a number of adverse humanitarian consequences, such as: (1) disruption of hospitals, (2) disruption of the education process at schools and kindergartens, (3) disruption of vitally important institutions and social services, (4) inability of people to heat their homes, (5) loss of access of many households to hot water, (6) lack of fuel for vehicles, etc.

Since January 9, 2023 (now more than 210 days) - Azerbaijan has disrupted the supply of electricity through the sole high-voltage line between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Since then, relying on limited local resources of electricity, Nagorno-Karabakh has implemented rolling power outages with only a few hours of energy supply.

February 22, 2023 - The International Court of Justice indicated a provisional measure in the ongoing case concerning the Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia v. Azerbaijan), according to which Azerbaijan shall “take all measures to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions.”

April 23, 2023 - Azerbaijan, in violation of the ICJ decision and the Trilateral Statement of November 9, 2020, installed a checkpoint in the Lachin corridor.

June 15, 2023 - Azerbaijan further blocked the Lachin corridor by banning any access to Nagorno-Karabakh, including humanitarian aid transported by the International Committee of Red Cross.

July 6, 2023 - The International Court of Justice reconfirmed its provisional measure from February 22, 2023.

July 25, 2023 - ICRC, the only international humanitarian organization that has been operating in Nagorno-Karabakh for more than 30 years, stated: “despite persistent efforts, the ICRC is not currently able to bring humanitarian assistance to the civilian population through the Lachin corridor or through any other routes.”

July 26, 2023 - The Republic of Armenia sent a humanitarian convoy, which as of now remains at the entrance of the Lachin corridor. Azerbaijan denies the humanitarian convoy access.

August 2, 2023 - The UN Secretary-General reiterated his deep concern over the challenges related to the freedom of movement along the Lachin corridor, recalling the previous statement on the need to implement the Orders of the ICJ, “including the Orders issued on 22 February 2023 and reaffirmed on 6 July 2023, related to measures to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin corridor in both directions”. The Secretary-General further expressed particular concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation on the ground and called for “urgent steps to facilitate access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need.”

August 7, 2023 - A group of UN human rights experts, including the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, expressed alarm over the ongoing blockade of the Lachin corridor by Azerbaijan and the dire humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh which “has left the population facing acute shortages” and “placed the lives of the residents – especially children, persons with disabilities, older persons, pregnant women, and the sick – at significant risk.”

In sum, due to the blockade, economic activity is nonexistent in Nagorno-Karabakh. Thousands of people are left unemployed, as employers are unable to pay their salaries. Even those people that have money are not able to buy anything, as in-store shelves are empty. Women, children, and the elderly stay in long queues in order to be able to buy some bread or fruits and vegetables. The most vulnerable in our society have to pass dozens of kilometers on foot to reach empty shops and pharmacies. The authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh have resorted to the issuance of ration coupons for certain food products, including rice, porridge, sugar, etc. Hunger is widespread and there are already starvation related deaths.

For the past two decades, the Union of Armenians in Petah Tiqwa "Nairi" has worked tirelessly to foster a strong bond between Armenian and Jewish communities. This collaboration, supported by the Petah Tiqwa municipality, has been instrumental in bridging cultural divides and creating lasting connections.

As we both know, Armenian people have a rich and storied history, and the challenges they have faced are not to be understated. I have come to understand that our shared humanity transcends nationality or ethnicity, a truth that my family's history strongly reinforces. My grandfather, Petros Chernamorian, risked his own safety during World War II to save the life of my grandmother, Sofia Ya'acov Barim. His actions were a testament to the fact that compassion knows no borders or backgrounds. It is with this spirit in mind that I feel compelled to address an issue that deeply concerns me.

It is imperative that we hold ourselves accountable to our principles and demand that other nations do the same. Israel's history is a testament to resilience and justice. Yet, reports of arms transactions with Azerbaijan implicated in human rights violations and conflicts are deeply troubling. We cannot, and must not, be complicit in actions that perpetuate suffering and injustice. I hereby demand, in the strongest terms possible, that you use your influence and authority to intervene on behalf of the innocent civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh. The blockade on the Lachin corridor must be lifted immediately, and unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance restored. It is not just a matter of human decency; it is a moral obligation that we cannot shirk.

I cannot ignore the stark irony, that while we stand for democracy and human rights, we are supporting a regime that engages in severe human rights violations. The sale of weapons that contribute to the suffering of fellow human beings is an affront to our principles. It is imperative that you, as the leader of a Jewish nation, take a decisive stand against such actions.

I want to believe that Israel and your government will prevent a new Armenian genocide. Israel sells this regime weapons, to be used against Armenia, which is a fellow democracy and one of the world's oldest Christian civilizations.

I want to pray that you will be the single political leader, and also the head of our state, who can open the Lachin corridor and save 120,000 Armenians from starvation.

I implore you to be the voice of justice, not just for the Armenian people, but for the universal principles we hold dear. I demand that you immediately address President Aliyev and demand the opening of the Lachin corridor. I insist that you use your authority to prevent further loss of life and alleviate the suffering of those who are currently at the mercy of an unjust blockade.

The time for diplomatic language and cautious steps is over. We demand action, justice, and adherence to our principles. It is our moral duty, as representatives of the State of Israel, to ensure that justice prevails and that innocent lives are safeguarded.

I expect a prompt response that outlines the actions you will take to address this crisis. Our expectations are rooted in the values we share, and we demand these values translate into tangible action.

Sincerely,
Artiom Chernamorian

08 September, 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Artiom Chernamorian', written in a cursive style.