Re: Nagorno-Karabakh

Dear Secretaries Blinken and Yellen,

We urge the Departments of State and Treasury to immediately exercise discretionary authority to impose sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (Global Magnitsky Act, Title XII, Subtitle F of P.L. 114-328; 22 U.S.C. §10101 et seq.) on individuals in the government of Azerbaijan associated with the military attacks against and brutal blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh. These actions represent a gross violation of human rights and the perpetration of violent conflict, which both pose a direct assault on American values and interests. The perpetrators of these human rights violations must be held to account by the United States.

Since December 12, 2022, Azerbaijan has blocked the Lachin Corridor, the only route connecting Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh, depriving some 120,000 Armenians of freedom of movement and access to food, medication, hygiene products, and other commercial goods. The blockade’s effects are particularly acute for at-risk groups, such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities and chronic health conditions, whose access to healthcare services is severely limited or disrupted. Local journalists have reported a rise in miscarriages and premature births due to pregnant women not having access to proper nutrition and prenatal care. Azerbaijan has also undermined the region’s gas and electricity supply, impacting the functioning of medical and educational institutions and cutting heat as yet another winter approaches.

After over nine months of trying to starve out the ethnic Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azerbaijani military launched a full-scale assault on the region on September 19, resulting in a ceasefire and the capitulation of the local government on September 20. This attack has exacerbated concerns about the worsening of the humanitarian crisis, and statements from the government of Azerbaijan about “re-integration” raise the specter of ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide. Additionally, an explosion at a fuel station killed at least 125 civilians and
wounded nearly 300 as thousands of ethnic Armenians fled Nagorno-Karabakh in fear of violence from Azerbaijani forces. This horrific incident tragically underscores the urgent need for humanitarian aid and access.

America is a world leader on international human rights and must continue to serve as a mediating force and supporter of peace in the region. In order to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its actions in blockading and assaulting Nagorno-Karabakh, we respectfully request that your departments exercise existing authorities under the Global Magnitsky Act to impose targeted sanctions on the individuals in the Aliyev government that are responsible for or participated in the violation of human rights in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

David G. Valadao
Member of Congress

John Fetterman
United States Senator

Charles J. "Chuck"
Fleischmann
Member of Congress
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Tom McClintock
Member of Congress

Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress

Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress

Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress

David J. Trone
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress
Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress

Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress

Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress

Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress
Susan Wild  
Member of Congress  

Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress  

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress  

Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress  

Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress  

Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress  

Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress  

Cori Bush  
Member of Congress