

13. November 2020

**Open Letter to the co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group regarding the current conflict resolution process on Nagorno-Karabakh/Artsakh**

We, the undersigned European-Armenian organisations, call upon the members of the OSCE Minsk Group to re-engage in the conflict resolution process by reviewing the current statement which was signed without the participation of two of the three OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, the U.S.A. and France.

This document, forced onto the Armenians, is not a result of the OSCE Minsk Group process which has the international mandate to address the status and security issues related to Artsakh. The statement is extremely unbalanced in its conditions, does not provide basic security for the people of Artsakh and provides prolific grounds for violent escalations in the immediate and near future. The document fails to address key outstanding issues such as:

1. **Failure to duly consider the right to self-determination of the people of Artsakh, as one of the agreed Basic Principles of the OSCE Minsk Group, infringes on their intrinsic human rights and leaves vast room for renewed Azerbaijani aggression.** The numerous confirmed instances of war crimes committed by Azerbaijan against Armenian civilians, as well as its continuing hateful rhetoric reveals Azerbaijan's aggressive ambition to ethnically cleanse the remaining areas of Artsakh of its Armenian population and eliminates any hopes for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Recognising the right to self-determination of the people Artsakh will provide the local population with basic protection against ethnic cleansing as it did in the case of Kosovo.
2. **The forced transfer of the Armenian populated territories of Artsakh into Azerbaijan's control is in a gross violation of fundamental human rights, the historical legacy of the region and** completely ignores the security of the ethnically-Armenian internally displaced people facing a humanitarian crisis amid a global pandemic.
3. The current conditions of the peacekeeping mission will inevitably result in violence and human rights abuses against the indigenous Armenian population of Artsakh, making the region uninhabitable for them.
  - a. It has been agreed that six months before the first five years term, the peacekeeping forces can withdraw if either party requests it, allowing a dangerous window for violent escalations and aggressions immediately thereafter.
  - b. Given Turkey's aggressive role in the war through its direct supply of weapons and command expertise, its deployment of jihadist mercenaries, its continued denial of the Armenian Genocide, and its dangerously aggressive rhetoric against Armenia, it should under no circumstances play any role in the peacekeeping operations.
  - c. Alongside Russian peacekeepers there should be deployments of permanent OSCE observers to increase the effectiveness, objectivity and accountability of the peacekeeping operations.

4. **The forced provision of a corridor between Azerbaijan and its exclave Nakhichevan is a grave violation of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia** feeding into Azerbaijan's and Turkey's imperialistic ambitions. It is completely unacceptable and has to be removed.
5. **The legal status and maintenance of the crucial Lachin corridor remains unclear** and needs to be defined to ensure the free movement of people and goods to and from Armenia. Such a narrow corridor also threatens the people of Artsakh with being trapped and encircled immediately as soon as Azerbaijani aggression is renewed.
6. **Armenian cultural heritage in Artsakh and the surrounding areas**, including historical sites and artefacts, must be recorded and protected properly to stop the ongoing cultural genocide.

**Given these severe shortcomings, we urge an immediate renegotiation of this statement signed by the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan, and the Prime Minister of Armenia on 10. November. A meaningful and fair agreement can only be reached under the supervision of honest brokers represented by the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk group. This will guarantee a ceasefire agreement that is acceptable and fair for both sides. No changes to the pre-ceasefire situation in the regions of Kelbajar and Lachin must be enforced unless the terms of the ceasefire document have been properly reviewed and the Minsk group can guarantee sustainable safety of the Armenian population in the region.**

**--- The signatories:**

- European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy
- Armenian Educational and Cultural Society "Hamazkayin" (Europe)
- Armenisch-Apostolische Kirchengemeinde in Österreich (Austria)
- Wiener Mechitharisten-Congregation (Austria)
- Armenische Studenten Vereinigung (Austria)
- Armenisch-Katholische Kirchengemeinde (Austria)
- All Armenian Fonds in Österreich (Austria)
- Austrian-Armenian Cultural Society (Austria)
- „Hovannes Schiraz“ Samstagsschule (Austria)
- Jugendorganisation der armenisch-apostolischen Kirchengemeinde in Österreich (Austria)
- Homenetmen Vienna (Austria)
- The Austrian Armenian Committee for Justice and Democracy (Austria)
- Comité de défense de la cause arménienne (Belgium)
- Armeense Culturele Vereniging Narek (Belgium)
- Centre Culturel Arménie ARAKS Liège (Belgium)
- Armenian Youth Federation (Belgium)
- Armenian Relief Society in Bulgaria (Bulgaria)
- Armenian General Benevolent Union "Parekordzagan" (Bulgaria)

- ARF “Tashnagzutyun” (Bulgaria)
- ANKB “Khad Tad” (Bulgaria)
- „Yerevan“ newspaper (Bulgaria)
- „Vakhan“ newspaper (Bulgaria)
- "Parekordzaghan" newspaper (Bulgaria)
- Croatian Armenian Association (Croatia)
- ARF Dashnaksoutiun (Cyprus)
- Armenian National Committee of (Cyprus)
- Armenian Youth Federation of Cyprus (Cyprus)
- Homenetmen - AYMA (Cyprus)
- Hamazkayin (Cyprus)
- Armenian Relief Society of (Cyprus)
- St. Gregor Illuminator Armenian Church Community (Czech Republic)
- Armenska-Apostolske Kirke i Danmark (Denmark)
- Danish Armenien Association (Denmark)
- Alliance Pan Arménienne (France)
- FRA "Nor Seround" (France)
- Comité de défense de la cause arménienne (France)
- Croix Bleu des Arméniens de France (France)
- Armenian Youth Federation (France)
- France - Arménie Magazine (France)
- Ararat International Academy of Science (France)
- Armenian Church Community (Finland)
- Zentralrat der Armenier in Deutschland (Germany)
- Armenisch Diözese in Deutschland (Germany)
- EAE – European and Armenian Experts (Germany)
- Verein Armenischer Mediziner in der BRD (Germany)
- Homenetmen Deutschland (Germany)
- Armensicher Kulturverein Baden-Württemberg (Germany)
- Armenische Landsmannschaft in Bayern (Germany)
- Silva Kaputikian Verein (Germany)
- Deutsch-Armenisches Komitee für Gerechtigkeit und Demokratie (Germany)
- Hay OWL – Armenische Jugend e.V. (Germany)
- ARI Jugendverband der Armenier in Deutschland (Germany)
- Armenian National Committee of Greece (Greece)
- Armenian Youth Federation Greece (Greece)
- Armenian Apostolic Church Community of Hungary (Hungary)
- Armenian Relief Society of Greece (Greece)
- Unione degli Armeni d'Italia (Italy)
- Centro Studi e Documentazione della Cultura Armena (Italy)
- Associazione Culturale Italo-Armena Incontroverso (Italy)

- Armenian Association of Latvia (Latvia)
- Hay Tad Netherlands (Netherlands)
- Homenetmen Almelo (Netherlands)
- Armenian Cultural Association (Norway)
- Ormiański Komitet Narodowy Polski (Poland)
- Armenian National Committee of Poland – Warsaw (Poland)
- Armenian Apostolic Community in Slovakia (Slovakia)
- Armenian Community in Barcelona (Spain)
- Asociación Armenios en La Rioja (Spain)
- Asociación Armenia Ararat (Spain)
- Asociación El RACO DE ARMENIA (Spain)
- Asociación Cultural Armenia de Barcelona (Spain)
- Armenian National Committee of Spain (Spain)
- Armenian Youth Federation (Sweden)
- HOMENETMEN Södertälje (Sweden)
- HOMENETMEN Västerås (Sweden)
- Armenian Relief Society in Stockholm (Sweden)
- Armenien Relief Society in Södertälje (Sweden)
- Raffi Kultur Förening Uppsala (Sweden)
- Swedish Armenian Committee for Justice and Democracy (Sweden)
- Armenischer Kulturverein Basel (Switzerland)
- Centre Armenien, Geneva (Switzerland)
- Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland
- Armenian Revolutionary Federation (UK)
- Armenian Community Council (UK)
- Tekeyan cultural association - London Branch (UK)
- Armenian Liberal Democratic Party - London Branch (UK)
- Armenian National Committee of United Kingdom (UK)
- The diocese of the Armenian Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland (UK)
- Centre for Armenian Information & Advice (UK)
- The Oxford University Armenian Society (UK)
- Armenian Institute (UK)
- Armenian Relief Society of Great Britain (UK)
- Armenian Saturday School (UK)
- Caia Hayashen Center for Information and advice (UK)
- Armenian Youth Federation London ‘Khanasor’ Chapter (UK)
- HOMENTMEN London (UK)
- Hamazkayin United Kingdom (UK)
- Tekeyan Cultural Association London (UK)
- Haystan All Armenian Charitable Trust (UK)
- Armenian House GB (UK)

- St. Yeghiche Armenian Church (UK)