

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 2, 2022

Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator
USAID
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Blinken and Administrator Power:

We are deeply concerned by the lack of meaningful humanitarian aid to the vulnerable Armenian population in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) and urge you to take immediate steps dedicating significant resources to these individuals.

The people of Artsakh continue to face severe hardships caused both by the deadly 44-day war that Azerbaijani forces provoked in 2020 and the ongoing aggressions committed against innocent civilians. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has acknowledged that over 90,000 refugees displaced to Armenia, the majority of whom are women, children, and elderly, are suffering through an acute humanitarian crisis.

The \$5,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2021 funding that USAID has committed, and the assistance allocated through the United Nations' Armenia Interagency Response Plan (IA-RP) have been wholly insufficient to address this crisis. Many families have bravely returned to their homes in Artsakh despite the ongoing threat of violence from Azerbaijani troops and the food, shelter, and energy insecurities they face. We are also extremely concerned that the individuals who remain in Artsakh have not received any of the previously allocated U.S. assistance.

Our country has historically promoted peace in Artsakh through U.S. government-funded landmine and unexploded ordnance clearance efforts. We have also supported rebuilding through millions of dollars of direct aid for humanitarian assistance initiatives like maternal health care and clean drinking water projects. The need for this assistance has only grown due to Azerbaijan's indiscriminate bombing campaigns in 2020 and the ongoing provocations by their troops which further endanger food, water, energy, and other critical resources for these communities. It is especially urgent because of the recent evacuation and closure of the Lachin/Berdzor corridor, forcing Armenian families to leave their homes and shutting off a vital route used for transportation and communications between Artsakh and Armenia.


We strongly urge the Department of State and USAID to significantly increase funding that will directly assist the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh, including assistance for housing, food security, water and sanitation, health care, rehabilitation, and demining and UXO clearance services they need to safely rebuild their lives, homes, and communities. We also urge you to take every action possible to protect the historic and cultural Armenian sites in territory held by Azerbaijan, which many reports indicate are currently under threat.

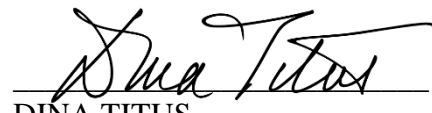
We request an update on the specific actions the Biden Administration has taken to help at-risk Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh and any planned actions moving forward, including information on programs, partners, budgets, and deliverables. This update should differentiate between which resources were allocated to the Republic of Armenia to aid displaced people and the assistance allocated to those still living in Nagorno-Karabakh.


Additionally, the most recent publicly available report from USAID on Nagorno-Karabakh from February 2021 is outdated and no longer provides the data that we need to make sound policy decisions. We strongly urge you to conduct an updated needs assessment on the humanitarian crisis and share it with interested stakeholders as soon as possible.

We appreciate your consideration of these requests and look forward to your timely reply.


Sincerely,


FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress


DINA TITUS
Member of Congress


DAVID G. VALADAO
Member of Congress


JACKIE SPEIER
Member of Congress


ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
WILLIAM R. KEATING
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
JAMES A. HIMES
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
KATIE PORTER
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
GRACE MENG
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
JOSH GOTTHEIMER
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
JAN SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
TONY CÀRDENAS
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
ZOE LOFGREN
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
RO KHANNA
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
ADRIANO ESPAILLAT
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
BRAD SHERMAN
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ALAN LOWENTHAL
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CHELLIE PINGREE
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
ANDRÉ CARSON
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TED W. LIEU
Member of Congress

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GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
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_____/s/_____
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Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
CHRIS PAPPAS
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SUSIE LEE
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
LLOYD DOGGETT
Member of Congress

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JASON CROW
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CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

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ANNA G. ESHOO
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
MIKE LEVIN
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_____/s/_____
ANDY KIM
Member of Congress

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JOSEPH D. MORELLE
Member of Congress

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RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY
Member of Congress

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RICK LARSEN
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JUDY CHU
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TOM MALINOWSKI
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SCOTT PETERS
Member of Congress

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