

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2020

Minsk Group Co-Chairs
OSCE
Wallnerstrasse 6
1010 Vienna
Austria

Dear Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group:

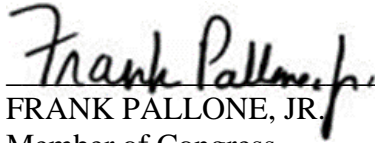
We are gravely concerned about the military exercises reported to be held by the Republic of Azerbaijan from May 18 to 22, 2020. These exercises are dangerous, violate diplomatic agreements and have the potential to destabilize security in the South Caucasus at a time when the COVID-19 global pandemic has taken hundreds of thousands of lives and threatened the health of many more. We strongly urge the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to condemn these egregious actions taken by the Azerbaijani military.

Even in normal circumstances, these exercises would be unacceptable due to their offensive nature and the failure to follow diplomatic notification practices. On May 14, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry released information describing military exercises that would take place from May 18 to 22. Azeri reports state that the exercises are expected to include 10,000 servicemen, 120 artillery and armored vehicles, 200 missile systems, 30 aviation units, and various unmanned aerial vehicles. The failure to provide adequate notification as prescribed under the OSCE sponsored 2011 Vienna Document and the size of the exercises demonstrates Azerbaijani President Aliyev's intention of further aggravating historical tensions with the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

We cannot allow Azerbaijan to use the global coronavirus pandemic as cover for these dangerous military operations. We urge the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to immediately condemn the reckless actions of the Azerbaijani military and work with other important voices in the international community to halt the many other provocative actions being taken by the regime of Azerbaijani President Aliyev.

We look forward to your prompt reply to this request.

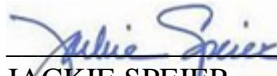
Sincerely,


FRANK PALLONE, JR.

Member of Congress


GUS M. BILIRAKIS

Member of Congress


JACKIE SPEIER

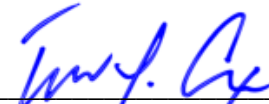
Member of Congress


ADAM B. SCHIFF

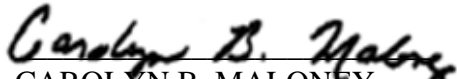
Member of Congress


JIM COSTA

Member of Congress


T.J. COX

Member of Congress


CAROLYN B. MALONEY

Member of Congress


JUAN VARGAS

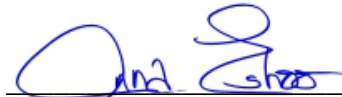
Member of Congress


LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

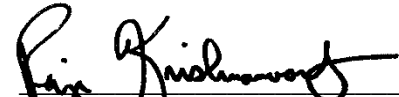
Member of Congress


GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

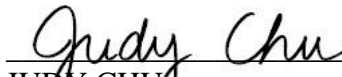
Member of Congress


ANNA ESHOO

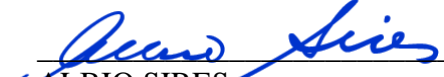
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RAVI KRISHNAMOORTHY

Member of Congress


JUDY CHU

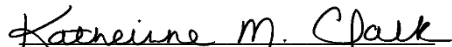
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ALBIO SIRES

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THOMAS R. SUOZZI

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KATHRINE M. CLARK

Member of Congress


JAN SCHAKOWSKY

Member of Congress


JAMES R. LANGEVIN

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