

The Prime Minister
Government House 1
0010 Yerevan
Republic of Armenia



June 1, 2023

“Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” (Jeremiah 6:14)

“Under the pretext of peace ... a new genocide and depatriation” (Supreme Spiritual Council, Armenian Apostolic Church, Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, May 23, 2023)

Prime Minister,

Christian Solidarity International (CSI) supporters around the world share the deep dismay felt by the 120,000 Armenian Christians of Nagorno Karabakh upon learning of your publicly declared readiness to recognize Azerbaijan’s sovereignty over them and their land in a peace treaty in return for unspecified guarantees of dialogue between Stepanakert and Baku regarding their minority rights.

Our unease is compounded by your simultaneous silence over Nagorno Karabakh’s right to self-determination, as expressed in the OSCE Madrid Principles of 2007 and in the joint statement issued by the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Ilham Aliyev and Serzh Sargsyan, on November 2, 2008. The two presidents declared:

“The final legal status of Nagorno Karabakh will be determined through a plebiscite allowing the free and genuine expression of the will of the population of Nagorno Karabakh.”

Following your unilateral concession, Azerbaijan’s ultra-nationalist dictator established a military checkpoint on the Lachin Corridor and has renewed threats of violence against not only Nagorno Karabakh, but also against the Republic of Armenia itself.

The Supreme Spiritual Council of the Armenian Apostolic Church, presided over by His Holiness, Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, condemned your arbitrary acceptance of Azerbaijani sovereignty over the Armenian people of Nagorno Karabakh “under the pretext of peace” in the belief it “will inevitably confront our brothers and sisters in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) with a new genocide and depatriation”.

Given Azerbaijan’s past and current use of force against the people of Nagorno Karabakh and against the Republic of Armenia, including extensive anti-Armenian Christian ethnic/religious cleansing and the process of anti-Armenian genocide since the end of the 19th century, the judgment of the leadership of the Armenian Apostolic Church carries with it the seal of prophetic authenticity.

CSI urges you to reaffirm Armenia’s commitment to work for the fulfilment of the

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Madrid Principles, including the right to self-determination for the population of Nagorno Karabakh, and to confirm President Sargsyan's instruction to Armenia's foreign ministry to pursue within the framework of the OSCE a comprehensive peace agreement with Azerbaijan based on the Madrid Principles to which the presidents of both Armenia and Azerbaijan have already given their assent.

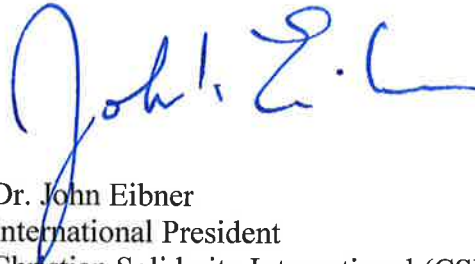
Failure now enhances the prospects of the ethnic/religious cleansing of Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh and of the fulfilment of President Aliyev's declared aspiration to transform the Republic of Armenia into "West Azerbaijan".

The restoration of democracy in the Republic of Armenia was a crucial element of your pledge to the Armenian people and to the international community as you took office as prime minister in 2018. A referendum in Armenia to ratify any treaty you sign with Azerbaijan would be confirmation of that pledge.

CSI has supported the people of Nagorno Karabakh's right to self-determination and has provided humanitarian aid to victims of Azerbaijani aggression since the dark days of the first Nagorno Karabakh war. Personal memory of sheltering together with brave Karabakhi civilians in a damp and cold Stepanakert cellar as Azerbaijan battered the city with Grad missiles from its military stronghold in Shushi will forever be etched on my heart and mind.

CSI will continue to support the right of the people of Nagorno Karabakh to exercise their right to self-determination as long as they insist on it. We appeal to you to do likewise.

Respectfully,



Dr. John Eibner
International President
Christian Solidarity International (CSI)