

Dear _____

I am calling your attention to the humanitarian urgency to facilitate a demining process in Azerbaijan's Karabakh region. Since the end of last year, 30 civilians, including 3 journalists, have senselessly lost their lives to the landmines planted across the region. All of them left behind grieving families. 157 Azerbaijani citizens have received serious injuries from landmines just since last year.

For three decades the picturesque mountains and towns of Karabakh have become associated with war, following Armenia's UN-condemned occupation of the region since 1992. Formerly vibrant, culturally abundant Azerbaijani towns, villages, and cultural heritage have been razed to the ground and destroyed almost entirely. The largest investment made into the occupied region was the estimated \$340 million dollars in landmines that were planted across Karabakh by the Armenian forces and government.

Last year, the 2020 Karabakh War ended with an agreement that mandated Armenia to finally return the occupied territories to Azerbaijan, allowing a chance for the nearly 1 million Azerbaijani IDPs that were ethnically cleansed from Karabakh in the 90s, to return home.

Although reconstruction and revival of the land has begun, the landmines deem the region unliveable.

I ask you to pressure the Armenian government to release the landmine maps, which they have refused to do in the 10 months since the end of the 2020 Karabakh war. The several maps that Armenia did release as a result of earlier US-facilitated negotiations turned out to be 75% invalid. It is imperative that we approach this as a humanitarian, not a political issue – the lives of innocent civilians are at stake, and Armenia's refusal to provide these crucial maps are not only crippling the peacebuilding process between the two countries but are senselessly and maliciously endangering the lives of local civilians.

I also ask that you raise awareness about the urgent need to facilitate a demining process in Azerbaijan's Karabakh region amongst policy makers, the media and social media.

I look forward to sharing your response with my community.

My best regards,
