

PRESS RELEASE

PAN-EUROPEAN MOBILISATION OF ARMENIANS

**IN SUPPORT OF ARTSAKH REFUGEES
(NAGORNO-KARABAKH)**



Calling on the European authorities and Heads of State to punish Azerbaijan for the crimes committed against the Armenians of Artsakh

**On 27 and 28 January 2024
In 55 towns across Europe**

Press contacts [europeansforartsakh@gmail.com](mailto: europeansforartsakh@gmail.com)

Website: <http://www.europeansforartsakh.eu/>

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FREE ARTSAKH

PAN-EUROPEAN MOBILIZATION
27TH/28TH JANUARY 2024

Austria Vienna	France Arnouville	France Valence	Greece Thessaloniki
Belgium Brussels	France Cannes (3 Feb)	France Villeurbanne	Netherlands Almelo
Belgium Mechelen	France Châteauroux	Georgia Tbilisi	Netherlands Amsterdam
Bulgaria Burgas	France Clermont-Ferrand	Germany Berlin (2 Feb)	Netherlands Arnhem
Bulgaria Haskovo	France Décines	Germany Bremen	Romania Bucharest
Bulgaria Plovdiv	France Grenoble	Germany Cologne	Romania Constanța
Bulgaria Ruse	France Issy-les-Moulineaux	Germany Hamburg	Romania Iași
Bulgaria Shumen	France Marseille	Germany Giessen	Spain Barcelona
Bulgaria Sofia	France Meyzieu	Germany Karlsruhe	Spain San Sebastian
Bulgaria Varna	France Nice	Germany Munich (4 Feb)	Sweden Södertälje
Cyprus Limassol	France Le Plessis-Robinson	Greece Athens	Sweden Stockholm
Cyprus Nicosia	France Palaiseau	Greece Kavala	Sweden Västerås
France Alfortville	France Paris	Greece Piraeus	UK London
France Antony	France Strasbourg	Greece Serres	

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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

Organises large-scale mobilisation in support of the Armenians of Artsakh and calls for :



UNIVERSAL MOBILISATION

Several cities in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Georgia, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Republic, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom will be taking part in events.

On Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 January 2024



INITIATIVE PRESENTATION

The "Europeans for Artsakh" movement, supported by more than 500 organisations from over 17 European countries, calls on all citizens of Armenian origin in Europe, all friends of Artsakh and all human rights organisations :

Rallies

on 27 and 28 January 2024 in over 50 European cities

Several events will be held in France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Cyprus, Sweden, Bulgaria, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Spain, Romania and the United Kingdom.

These gatherings are being organised in response to the extremely difficult situation of the people of Artsakh, to the threats currently hanging over Armenia, and in continuity of the exemplary pan-European mobilisation on 1 October in Brussels and in various cities in 17* European countries (more than 30,000 participants), for :

- **Strongly condemning Azerbaijan's genocidal policy and impose sanctions on this dictatorial state;**
- **Making every effort to secure the immediate and unconditional release of of Armenian prisoners of war and hostages, including political and military leaders;**
- **Contributing to the establishment of tangible international security guarantees so that the indigenous Armenian population of Artsakh can exercise their inalienable right to return to their own homeland and to give Nagorno-Karabakh a status that underpins this right;**
- **Putting effective pressure on Azerbaijan to exclude any kind of aggression against the Republic of Armenia.**

European citizens of Armenian origin have been devastated by the depopulation of Artsakh and the dramatic situation of the Artsakh Armenians, the lack of response from the European authorities to demands such as the condemnation of the ethnic cleansing perpetrated by Azerbaijan, and the detention in Azerbaijan of Armenian prisoners of war and hostages.

Europeans for Artsakh deplore the fact that the warnings of the European Parliament, international organisations and representatives of civil society concerning ethnic cleansing in Artsakh have been ignored by the European Commission and the Council of the EU. **Five international reports denounce this crime by Azerbaijan and describe it as genocide.**

** 15 European Union countries: France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, and 2 non-EU countries: Switzerland and the United Kingdom.*

PROGRAMME

The protests will take place in over 50 European cities:

- **Austria:** Vienna;
- **Belgium:** Brussels, Liège Belgium, Mechelen;
- **Bulgaria:** Burgas, Haskovo, Plovdiv, Ruse, Shumen, Sofia, Varna;
- **Cyprus:** Limassol, Nicosia;
- **Czech Republic:** Jihlava, Prague;
- **France:** Alfortville, Antony, Arnouville, Cannes, Châteauroux, Clermont-Ferrand, Décines, Grenoble, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Marseille, Meyzieu, Nice, Palaiseau, Paris, Le Plessis-Robinson, Strasbourg, Villeurbanne
- **Germany:** Berlin, Bremen, Cologne, Duisburg, Frankfurt, Giessen, Mainz, Munich, Nuremberg, Stuttgart ;
- **Greece:** Athens, Kavala, Piraeus, Rhodes, Serres, Thessaloniki ;
- **Georgia:** Tbilisi;
- **Netherlands:** Almelo, Amsterdam;
- **Romania:** Bucharest, Constanța, Iași;
- **Spain:** Barcelona, Madrid;
- **Sweden:** Södertälje, Stockholm, Västerås;
- **United Kingdom:** London.

In France, the rallies will take place in:

On 27 January in :

- Clermont-Ferrand from 1pm to 5pm - Place de Jaude
- Grenoble at 4pm at the Maison de la Culture Arménienne - 15, Cour de la Libération et du Général de Gaulle
- Meyzieu at 4 pm in front of the Town Hall - Place de l'Europe
- Nice at 12.30 pm in front of the Théâtre de Verdure - Espace Jacques Cotta
- Villeurbanne at 16:00 at the Maison de la Culture Arménienne - 68, avenue Marcel Cerdan
- Strasbourg on 27 January at 13 :00 pm, in front of the European Court of Human Rights - allée des Droits de l'Homme.

28 January in :

- **Alfortville** at 12.00 in front of the Town Hall - place François-Mitterrand
- **Antony** at 5.00 pm at the Espace Patrick Devedjian - 144, avenue Léon-Blum
- **Arnouville** at 12.30 pm in front of the Armenian Genocide Memorial - 74, rue Jean-Jaurès
- **Châteauroux** at 1.00 pm in front of the Town Hall - 1, place de la République
- **Décines** from 9 am to 7pm at the Salle des Fêtes - Place Roger-Salengro

- **Issy-les-Moulineaux** at 12.30 pm in front of the Armenian Apostolic Church - 6 avenue Bourgain
- **Marseille** at 12 noon in front of the church known as Saint-Jérôme (Église apostolique arménienne Saint Sahak et Saint Mesrob) - 6, bd Charles-Zeytountzian
- **Marseille** at 12.00 noon in front of the Beaumont church (Saint Grégoire l'Illuminateur church) - 8, impasse des Monts (13012)
- **Marseille** at 12 noon in front of the Prado church (Cathédrale apostolique arménienne des Saints Traducteurs) - 339, avenue du Prado
- **Palaiseau** at 11am at 11 rue de la Pie Voleuse
- **Palaiseau** at 11am at Place de la Victoire
- **Paris** at 1pm in front of the Statue of Komitas - Place du Canada
- **Le Plessis-Robinson** at 4pm at the Square de la Liberté - in front of the statue of General Andranik
- **Valence** at 5pm in front of the Boulevards fountain - 15, bd Bancel ;

3 February in :

- **Cannes** at 6pm at 35 rue Pasteur.

In Greece, the rallies will take place in:

On 27 January in :

- **Piraeus** at 18.00-20.00 Municipal Theatre Square SERRES time 12.00-13.00 Armenian Club

On 27 January in :

- **Athens** at 18.00-20.00 Syntagma Square THESSALONIKI time 12.00 in front of the Armenian Hatskar KAVALA time 12.00-14.00 Garden of the City Hall

On 4 February in :

- **Munich** at 13:00 pm Hugo-Troendle-Straße 6, 80992



THE FUTURE OF THE HOSTAGES DEPENDS ON US!

23 Armenian hostages, including 8 leaders of the Republic of Artsakh, are still being held illegally in Baku jails in alarming conditions.

The Armenian people are suffering a real tragedy in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). Azerbaijan launched a massive military aggression against the indigenous Armenian population of Artsakh in September 2020 and, more recently, on 19 September 2023. This unprecedented aggression led more than 150,000 Armenians, including 30,000 children, to leave their homeland and take refuge in the Republic of Armenia, under the worst possible conditions.

Moreover, contrary to the commitment made to free prisoners of war (article 8 of the 2020 ceasefire declaration, which provided for the exchange of prisoners of war, detainees or hostages, as well as the return of the remains of soldiers who died in combat), **Baku is still holding prisoners of war and hostages.**

The Armenian state and people still have a lot to lose, and Azerbaijan is still holding Armenian prisoners and hostages. Will the victor write history? **Will Europe watch silently as Azerbaijan rewrites history in its own way?**

"What are Azerbaijan's objectives in capturing and holding hostage the military and political leaders of Artsakh? It aims to break the resistance of the Armenian people, to humiliate them, to show them that they are not in a position to defend themselves, that if anyone tries to fight, they will find themselves in this situation", says former Armenian mediator Arman Tatoyan. According to Luis Moreno Ocampo, the first Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (2003-2012): **"The continued detention of the Artsakh leaders is a message to the Armenians: if you return, you will be starved, humiliated or killed. Their imprisonment is the culmination of genocide"**.

"The end of an armed conflict implies the return of prisoners of war after the cessation of hostilities, without preconditions," explains Aram Orbelyan, an expert in international law. *"As soon as a precondition is imposed, the prisoners of war are immediately reduced to the status of hostages, which is prohibited both by the United Nations Special Convention on Hostages and by Article III of the Geneva Convention¹, still in force, which stipulates that the taking of hostages of the above-mentioned persons is prohibited at any time and in any place and under any circumstances"*.

"What does the charge of illegally crossing the border have to do with a war crime? ", A combatant enjoys immunity for acts of war and participation in military service, in the same way that a judge enjoys immunity for his judicial acts. But when a prisoner is tried for illegally crossing a border, where

¹ The Convention establishes the principle that prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the end of active hostilities.

is the border in the conflict? The United Nations has just called on Azerbaijan to decriminalise illegal border crossing, which violates the rights of migrants, even under peaceful conditions", explains Siranush Sahakyan, legal representative of the Armenian hostages and human rights defender. "Can a combatant be tried for carrying a weapon? He has immunity. What further proof do we need to understand that these indictments are false and that there is fundamentally something else going on? Azerbaijan uses them to advance its demands."

These prisoners are not simply prisoners of war; for Azerbaijan, they are a bargaining chip.

What's the deal? "A card in exchange for prisoners, an improvement in relations with one country or another, a country playing the role of mediator and prisoners returning. Azerbaijan even approaches the Armenian authorities to ask them to deport the inhabitants of the Latchine villages in exchange for prisoners of war, to put pressure on them to make territorial concessions or sign a peace treaty in exchange for prisoners of war. The Armenian media widely reported that the wife of Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, was talking to the wife of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of Turkey, on board a means of transport, saying to each other, "Do you have many prisoners?". "Yes!". "Don't let them go so easily, keep them, you'll need them!" explained Siranush Sahakyan.

In other words, prisoners of war, civilians and military and political leaders in Artsakh are hostages as soon as their duty is not respected and their factor is used to serve an objective.

The dictator Aliyev is holding the leaders of Artsakh hostage in order to deny the existence of Artsakh by criminalising its leaders and thus completing his genocidal plan. Is President Aliyev making Europe an accomplice to his actions?



FREE ARAYIK HARUTYUNYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN



ARAYIK HARUTYUNYAN

Arayik Harutyunyan is an Armenian politician and statesman, the former President (2020-2023) of the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh, born on 14 December 1973, in Stepanakert in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (RSSA, Soviet Union). He holds a doctorate in Technical Sciences. Previously a deputy in the National Assembly, he served as the Minister of State (2017-2020) and is the Chairman of the Azat Hayrenik Party. Harutyunyan was taken hostage and abducted to Baku by the Azerbaijani authorities on 3 October 2023.



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Arayik Harutyunyan is an Armenian politician and statesman, the former President (2020-2023) of the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh, born on 14 December 1973, in Stepanakert in Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region (Soviet Union). He holds a doctorate in Technical Sciences. Previously a deputy in the National Assembly, he served as the Minister of State (2017-2020) and is the Chairman of the Azat Hayrenik Party. **Harutyunyan was taken hostage and abducted to Baku by the Azerbaijani authorities on 3 October 2023.**

Ruben Vardanyan is an Armenian businessman, philanthropist, public figure and politician, born on 25 May 1968, in Yerevan, Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Vardanyan is inter alia the co-founder of the Aurora humanitarian initiative. He served as State Minister of the Republic of Artsakh from 2022 to 2023. **On 27 September 2023 Vardanyan was taken hostage and abducted to Baku by Azerbaijani authorities.**

FREE RUBEN VARDANYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN



RUBEN VARDANYAN

Ruben Vardanyan is an Armenian businessman, philanthropist, public figure and politician, born on 25 May 1968, in Yerevan Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, (USSR). Vardanyan is inter alia the co-founder of the Aurora humanitarian initiative. He served as State Minister of the Republic of Artsakh from 2022 to 2023. On 27 September 2023 Vardanyan was taken hostage and abducted to Baku by Azerbaijani authorities.



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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

FREE DAVIT ISHKHANYAN
ILLEGALLY DETAINED BY AZERBAIJANI DICTATORSHIP



DAVIT ISHKHANYAN

Davit Ishkhanyan is a politician and statesman who has been serving as the President of the National Assembly of the Artsakh Republic since August 2023. Ishkhanyan was born on 27 December 1968, in the village of Ashan, Martuni region, Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region (USSR). He previously held the position of deputy in the Supreme Council during the first convocation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. In 2015, Davit Ishkhanyan was elected as a deputy of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic National Assembly. Ishkhanyan is a member of the Bureau of the political party Armenian Revolutionary Federation. On 3 October 2023, Davit Ishkhanyan was illegally arrested by Azerbaijani forces in Stepanakert and abducted to Baku.



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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

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Bako Sahakyan is an Armenian politician and statesman. He served as the third President of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh/ from 2007 - 2020, holding the rank of Major General in the Armenian Armed Forces. Born on 30 August 1960, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union), he held the position of Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Artsakh after serving as the Director of the National Security Service of the Republic of Artsakh. **He was taken hostage in Stepanakert by the Azerbaijani authorities and was abducted to Baku on 3 October 2023.**

FREE BAKO SAHAKYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN

BAKO SAHAKYAN

Bako Sahakyan is an Armenian politician and statesman. He served as the third President of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh/ from 2007- 2020, holding the rank of Major General in the Armenian Armed Forces. Born on 30 August 1960, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union), he held the position of Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Artsakh after serving as the Director of the National Security Service of the Republic of Artsakh. He was taken hostage in Stepanakert by the Azerbaijani authorities and was abducted to Baku on 3 October 2023.

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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

FREE DAVIT BABAYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN

DAVIT BABAYAN

Davit Babayan is an Armenian politician and statesman, a political scientist with a doctoral degree in History. He served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh from 2021 - 2023 and is an associate professor. Born on 5 April 1973, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union), he is the founding president of the Conservative Party of Artsakh and holds the diplomatic rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. He was taken hostage on 28 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities.

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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

Davit Babayan is an Armenian politician and statesman, a political scientist with a doctoral degree in History. He served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh from 2021 - 2023 and is an associate professor. Born on 5 April 1973, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union), he is the founding president of the Conservative Party of Artsakh and holds the diplomatic rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. **He was taken hostage on 28 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities.**

Arkady Ghukasyan is an Armenian politician and statesman. He is the second President of the Republic of Artsakh (1997-2007). He is born on 22 June 1957 in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region (USSR). He was Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, former Ambassador in charge of Special Missions of the President of the Republic of Armenia. **On 3 October 2023, Arkady Ghukasyan was illegally arrested by Azerbaijani forces in Stepanakert and abducted to Baku.**

LIBEREZ ARKADY GHUKASYAN
DETENU ILLEGALEMENT PAR LA DICTATURE AZERIE

ARKADY GHUKASYAN

Arkady Ghukasyan est un homme politique et un homme d'État arménien. Il est le deuxième président de la République d'Artsakh (1997-2007). Il est né le 22 juin 1957 à Stepanakert, dans la région autonome du Haut-Karabagh (RSSA, Union soviétique). Premier ministre des Affaires étrangères de la République du Haut-Karabagh, ancien ambassadeur chargé des Missions spéciales du président de la République d'Arménie. Il est arrêté à Stepanakert et transféré à Bakou le 3 octobre 2023 par les forces azerbaïdjanaises.

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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

FREE LEVON MNATSAKANYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN



LEVON MNATSAKANYAN

Levon Mnatsakanyan is an Armenian military officer, a former commander of the Defense Army, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh (2015-2018), and a lieutenant general. He was born on 14 September 1965, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union). Serving as the commander of the Defense Army and the first deputy chief of staff, he was taken hostage on 29 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities, at the checkpoint of the Hakari Bridge, established following the illegal blockade of the Lachin/Berdzor corridor by Azerbaijan.



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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

Levon Mnatsakanyan is an Armenian military officer, a former commander of the Defense Army, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh (2015-2018), and a lieutenant general. He was born on 14 September 1965, in Stepanakert, in the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly part of the Soviet Union). Serving as the commander of the Defense Army and the first deputy chief of staff, **he was taken hostage on 29 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities, at the checkpoint of the Hakari Bridge, established following the illegal blockade of the Lachin/Berdzor corridor by Azerbaijan.**

Davit Manukyan is an Armenian military officer holding the rank of Major General. He was born on 15 October 1971, in Jermuk (Armenian SSR, Soviet Union). He held various military positions within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia and the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh (1992-2022). As the first deputy commander of the Artsakh Defense Army, he retired from the military in 2022. **He was taken hostage on 27 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities, at the checkpoint of the Hakari Bridge, established following the illegal blockade of the Lachin/Berdzor corridor by Azerbaijan.**

FREE DAVIT MANUKYAN
TAKEN HOSTAGE AND ABDUCTED BY AZERBAIJAN



DAVIT MANUKYAN

Davit Manukyan is an Armenian military officer holding the rank of Major General. He was born on 15 October 1971, in Jermuk (Armenian SSR, Soviet Union). He held various military positions within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia and the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh (1992-2022). As the first deputy commander of the Artsakh Defense Army, he retired from the military in 2022. He was taken hostage on 27 September 2023 by the Azerbaijani authorities, at the checkpoint of the Hakari Bridge, established following the illegal blockade of the Lachin/Berdzor corridor by Azerbaijan.



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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

Armenian human rights organisations, such as the **International and Comparative Law Center** (Armenia), have investigated the matter and provided this information. The number and identity of Armenians held hostage in Azerbaijan are currently being determined on the basis of fact-finding. **Another 80 other Armenians have been identified as being held on Azerbaijani territory, which Azerbaijan refuses to recognise.** Azerbaijan does not accept that another 80 Armenians are being held hostage on its territory. These 80 people are considered to be **forcibly disappeared.**

LIBERER TOUS LES OTAGES ET PRISONNIERS ARMENIENS



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EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH

ARMENIAN HOSTAGES HELD ILLEGALLY IN AZERBAIJAN

Data collected and analysed by Siranush Sahakyan and Artak Zeynalyan ², legal representatives and human rights defenders:

DATES OF THEIR CAPTURE :

End of October 2020:	KHOSROVYAN Alyosha , born in 1967, status: prisoner of war; MKRTCHYAN Lyudvig , born in 1969, status: prisoner of war;
On 10 November 2020:	EULJEKJIAN Vicken , born in 1979, status: civilian;
On 11 November 2020 :	DAVTYAN Davit , born in 1993, status: civilian ; SUJYAN Gevorg , born in 1989, status: civilian;
29 July 2023:	KHACHATRYAN Vagif , born in 1955, status: civilian;
1 August 2023:	BEGLARYAN Rashid , born in 1962, status: civilian;
End September 2023:	BALAYAN Levon , born in 1978, status: prisoner of war; ALLAHVERDYAN Davit , born in 1988, status: prisoner of war; BEGLARYAN Vasili , born in 1993, status: prisoner of war; MARTROSYAN Garik , born in 1972, status: prisoner of war; PASHAYAN Melikset , born in 1971, status: prisoner of war; STEPANYAN Gurgen , born in 1987, status: prisoner of war; GHAZARYAN Erik , born in 1985, status: prisoner of war; BABAYAN Madat , born in 1952, status: civilian;
27 September 2023:	VARDANYAN Ruben (Social entrepreneur and philanthropist, former Minister of State), born in 1968, Status: Political prisoner; MANUKYAN Davit (former Deputy Commander of the Defence Forces), born in 1971, status: political prisoner;
28 September 2023:	BABAYAN Davit (former Minister of Foreign Affairs), born in 1973, status: political prisoner;
29 September 2023:	MNATSAKANYAN Levon (former Commander of the Defence Forces), born in 1965, status: political prisoner;
3 October 2023:	GHUKASYAN Arkadi (Former President), born in 1957, status: political prisoner; ISHKHANYAN Davit (President of the Parliament), born in 1968, status: political prisoner; SAHAKYAN Bako (former President), born in 1960, status: political prisoner. HARUTYUNYAN Arayik (former President), 1973, status: political prisoner ;
















² International and "Comparative Law Center" (Armenia) et "Armenian Legal Center".

ARMENIANS UNLAWFULLY HELD IN AZERBAIJAN

STATUS

- POW
- CIV
- POLITICAL PRISONER

AND DATES OF THEIR CAPTURE

 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>					
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End of October	November 10	November 11	July 29	August 1	End of September	End of September	End of September	End of September	End of September

2020

2023

 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>	 <small> Name: Harutyunyan Arayik Nationality: Armenia Year of Birth: 1973 Status: Political prisoner </small>
September 27	September 28	September 29	September 29	October 3	October 3

2023

Siranush Sahakyan and Airtak Zeynalyan, who serve as legal representatives and human rights defenders, have collected and analyzed this data.

HARUTYUNYAN ARAYIK (FORMER PRESIDENT), 1973, STATUS: POLITICAL PRISONER ;

AZERBAIJAN'S THREATS AND AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

The Azerbaijani state makes no secret of its territorial ambitions, particularly with regard to southern Armenia, in the Syunik region, which it sees as an obstacle to the unification of the Turkish world.

Since the end of the Third Artsakh War in 2020, Azerbaijani armed forces have attacked the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia on several occasions, notably in 2021 and 2022, occupying more than 200 square kilometres. The Azerbaijani armed forces have conquered dominant positions in various areas around the only interstate road between Armenia and Iran, as well as in the vicinity of a number of major cities.

After the war, the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem constantly spoke of the need to open up the so-called "Zangezur corridor", rarely concealing its willingness to use military force to achieve this objective. Even if the Armenian side is prepared, for its part, to unblock regional transport infrastructures and thus enable a connection between most of Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, the official in Baku still wants an extraterritorial corridor through Armenian territory, over which the sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia will not extend.

Official Azerbaijani circles even openly claim territorial rights against the Republic of Armenia, regarding the latter's territory, including the capital Yerevan, as "historic Azerbaijani territories". Azerbaijani political thinking has gone so far that the political concept of "Western Azerbaijan" and the issue of the return of around half a million Azerbaijani refugees to Armenia have been promoted in Baku under state patronage. On the latter point, Azerbaijan's Milli Mejlis (Parliament) adopted a corresponding declaration at the end of December. The propagandists of "Western Azerbaijan" even raise the prospect of creating autonomy in Armenian territory, in the provinces of Syunik and Gegharkunik. Baku also forgets that some 400,000 Armenians were forcibly displaced from Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani armed forces occupying the territory of the Republic of Armenia remain there to this day, while in an interview given on January 10, 2024, President Ilham Aliyev announced that these troops would not leave the occupied territories. Azerbaijani armed forces pose a direct threat to dozens of peaceful localities in Armenia, and have often made agricultural work impossible.

Another threat to Armenia is the issue of so-called enclaves. During the years of the USSR, certain territories of Soviet Armenia were ceded to Soviet Azerbaijan for agricultural purposes, on strategically important interstate routes linking the Republic of Armenia to Iran and Georgia. Today, Azerbaijan claims these enclaves and threatens to use military force if they are not provided for. Meanwhile, Baku doesn't even say a word about Artsvashen, located on Azerbaijani territory and turned into an enclave by Azerbaijan's current policy. Moreover, Baku does not even take into account the fact that the Soviet enclaves were territories of the Armenian state, ceded to Azerbaijan by decision of the USSR leadership for agricultural purposes. Today, in the absence of the USSR, Azerbaijan's right to use these territories also disappears.

As for the Azerbaijani state and the circles close to power, they make no secret of their territorial ambitions, particularly with regard to southern Armenia, in the Syunik region, which they see as an obstacle to the unification of the Turkish world.

At state level, Azerbaijan is pursuing a policy of hatred towards Armenians and the complete destruction of the Republic of Armenia's military-political security system, which presents the danger of committing all kinds of crimes against the Republic of Armenia.



THE NEED FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST AZERBAIJAN

The application of international sanctions against Azerbaijan has two major implications:

1. Prevent further military aggression against the Republic of Armenia, which is considered highly possible on the part of this state.
2. Punish Azerbaijan as a state and its political-military leadership for war crimes and gross violations of human rights..

In particular, Azerbaijan:

- executed a genocidal policy against the indigenous people of Artsakh: clear measures of ethnic cleansing, including tactics aimed at starving the population. Contrary to the UN Security Council resolution of December 14, 1974 on the definition of the act of aggression, an aggression was carried out against the self-determined entity (the Republic of Artsakh).
- occupies territories under the sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia.
- commits extrajudicial and illegal executions.
- is guilty of inhuman torture of prisoners, prisoners of war and other hostages, killing them in dozens of cases.
- has captured political prisoners, persecutes and arbitrarily arrests its own citizens.
- hinders freedom of expression, movement, media and organizations
- lacks independence in the judiciary
- does not guarantee freedom of participation in the political system
- pursues discriminatory policies towards women and gender issues
- limits religious freedom
- destroys or falsifies the spiritual cultural heritage of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh).
- perpetuates a vicious tradition of exploitative child labor.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE QUESTION OF NAGORNO- KARABAKH (ARTSAKH)

Today, it is essential to ensure the right of the people of Artsakh to return to their ancestral lands, with the establishment of effective international conditions and guarantees that will ensure that the people of Artsakh can live in freedom and dignity in their homeland.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict differs from other conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union in that the people of Artsakh exercised their right to self-determination in a legally irreproachable manner before the collapse of the Soviet Union and before Azerbaijan left the USSR. Thus, **Nagorno-Karabakh was never part of independent Azerbaijan**, as it was not part of Azerbaijan at the time of the sovietisation of Azerbaijan in 1920.

In accordance with the internal legislation of the USSR and the international laws of the USSR, in particular that of 1990, **Nagorno-Karabakh declared its independence on 2 September 1991**, confirmed by a national referendum on 10 December, some two months later. Azerbaijan

opposed the desire of the people of Artsakh to live freely and with dignity in their own country through a genocidal policy of massacres and ethnic cleansing. In particular, following the pogroms, dispossessions and threats that took place in Sumgait in February 1988, in Baku in January 1990, in Maragha in April 1992 and elsewhere, the territory of Azerbaijan was subjected to ethnic cleansing, around 400,000 Armenians were displaced and thousands, whose number is still unknown, were killed.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly resorted to military aggression combined with war crimes against the people of Artsakh: from 1991 to 1994, from 2 to 5 April 2016, from 27 September to 9 November 2020, from 19 to 21 September 2023. The latter was preceded by a blockade lasting almost ten months and a complete siege, resulting in a lack of food, medicines and all basic necessities, and famine. In Artsakh, numerous cases of famine, premature death and abortion were recorded in 2023.

Following the genocidal acts of ethnic cleansing of 19-21 September 2023, **Artsakh was deprived of its indigenous population for the first time in 3,000 years**. More than 100,000 Armenians left their homeland in the space of a few days and were forced to travel to the Republic of Armenia



under threat to their physical existence. During the recent aggression, as in the period before it, **Azerbaijan illegally captured Artsakh citizens in the Latchine corridor, which it controls and keeps closed, and in the surrounding areas, resulting in the arrest of military and political leaders of the Republic of Artsakh, including former presidents, the acting speaker of parliament and former senior officials in the Latchine corridor and in Stepanakert.**

The Armenians from Artsakh who found refuge in Armenia faced a difficult humanitarian, social and psychological situation. The Armenian people have warmly welcomed their compatriots from Artsakh and are doing their utmost to enable them to integrate into society and lead as normal a life as possible.

Azerbaijan, after its actions which, according to eminent **international experts and the 1948 "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide"**, qualify as **genocide**, is now talking about resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The main players in international relations have not found a solution to the conflict..

In the current situation, the paradigm for negotiating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which lasted for some thirty years, has been completely changed. The work of the OSCE Minsk Group, the only internationally recognised format, has emphasised the principle of the right to self-determination, the principle of territorial integrity and the logic of the non-use of force and threats. **Today, it is essential to ensure the realisation of the right of the people of Artsakh to return to their homeland, under the conditions of the application of effective international mechanisms and guarantees, which will make possible the free and dignified life of the people of Artsakh in their homeland. This objective must be achieved by exerting strong international pressure on Azerbaijan, applying a policy of sanctions and imposing appropriate legal penalties on war criminals.**



THE APPEAL OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN EUROPE

To the European institutions and heads of state

Honourable Presidents of the European Council, the European Commission and the EU High Representative/VP,

Distinguished Heads of Member States, Heads of Government of the European Union and Council of Europe,

After nine months of blockade, imposing starvation and all methods of intimidation, on 19 September 2023 Azerbaijan unleashed a large-scale military aggression against the indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh, including 30.000 children. This led to the forced deportation of the entire Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh. Thus, Azerbaijan perpetrated an ethnic cleansing, uprooting an indigenous population from its homeland of millennia.

On 5 October 2023, the European Parliament (EP) adopted a [resolution](#) by the overwhelming majority where it unequivocally condemns the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh by Azerbaijan. The EP resolution also expresses, “deep dissatisfaction at the fact that regular alerts by Parliament regarding the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the risks of a catastrophic outcome have been disregarded by the Commission and the Council.

The EP resolution calls for a suspension of the Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Partnership in the Field of Energy between the EU and Azerbaijan and urges the Commission to investigate suspicions that Azerbaijan actually exports Russian gas to the EU. Furthermore, the EP Plenary regrets the fact that the President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen characterized Azerbaijan as a ‘trustworthy energy supplier’. For the second time since March 2023, the European Parliament has called on the EU and its Member States to adopt targeted sanctions against the individuals in the Azerbaijani governments responsible for multiple ceasefire violations, the blockade of the Lachin corridor and to carry out investigations into the abuses committed by Azerbaijan that could constitute war crimes.

On 12 October 2023, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution calling on Azerbaijan to avoid any expression of intolerance or revenge for past events, to protect the Armenian cultural heritage of the region, to release all representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh and all Armenian prisoners of war currently detained in Azerbaijan, and to allow Council of Europe institutions and bodies access to the region. The Assembly said that if Azerbaijan did not fulfil its obligations, it would have “no alternative but to request the opening of a complementary joint procedure between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly in response to a serious violation by Azerbaijan of its statutory obligations, and to challenge the credentials of the Azerbaijani delegation at its first session in 2024”.

As EU citizens we call on you to:

1. **clearly and unequivocally condemn the ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh by Azerbaijan;**
2. **follow the appeal of the European Parliament and impose individual targeted sanctions against the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan that has been involved in the illegal blockade of the Lachin corridor, ceasefire violations, the attack of 19 September and the ethnic cleansing of the native Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh;**
3. **use all your leverage to force Azerbaijan to immediately and unconditionally return all the Armenian captives, prisoners of war as well as the leadership of Nagorno Karabakh taken hostage since 19 September 2023;**
4. **contribute to the establishment of tangible international security guarantees so that the indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh can exercise their inalienable right to return to their own homeland and provide Nagorno Karabakh with a status of self-governance that underpins this right:**
5. **provide Armenia with adequate assistance to help deal with the influx of forcefully displaced Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh.**
6. **put effective pressure on Azerbaijan to exclude any type of aggression towards the Republic of Armenia and any action that can endanger the sovereignty of Armenia.**

As citizens of Europe, we deplore the fact that the alerts of the European Parliament, of international organisations, of civil society representatives regarding the risks of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno Karabakh have been disregarded by the Commission and the Council.

We do continue to believe that human rights are more than an instrument used wherever convenient, and that applying double standards towards dictators can only backfire, weakening our democracies. Hence, we also call on our respective governments to use all their leverage to implement the six demands expressed in this letter.

We will be looking forward to your response.

Sincerely,

PRESENTATION OF THE "EUROPEANS FOR ARTSAKH" MOVEMENT

More than 500 organisations from 17 European countries, including more than 200 from France, have joined forces in a united movement, "Europeans for Artsakh", to alert European political bodies and the States of Europe to the situation in Artsakh.

On 1 October 2023, a large-scale demonstration in Brussels brought together thousands of participants, including young people travelling by coach from France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

This pan-European rally was organised by the pan-European movement "Europeans for Artsakh", which brings together more than 500 European organisations. In Brussels, but also in around twenty other European cities, demonstrations took place at the same time to say NO to the continuation of the Armenian genocide, to condemn the crimes committed by Azerbaijan and to say NO to the complicit policy of Charles Michel and Ursula von der Leyen.

This is why we, the organisations representing the Armenian communities in European countries, currently numbering 15, have come together under the "Europeans For Artsakh" platform. We want to join forces, pool resources, develop a strategy and give ourselves the means to defend our interests. We hope that, in time, representative organisations from all European countries will be able to join.

The appeal launched by "Europeans for Artsakh" for the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh has so far gathered signatures from over 500 Armenian and non-Armenian organisations in Europe. We will continue this work to expand the list of supporters and sympathisers, having set a target of 1,000 signatures in the coming months, including non-Armenian organisations.

Since the birth of this movement, new associations and organisations have joined every week.

** 15 European Union countries: France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, and 2 countries outside the European Union: Switzerland and the United Kingdom.*

