Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2023

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

The Honorable Janet Yellen
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Re: Nagorno-Karabakh

Dear Secretaries Blinken and Yellen,

We urge the Departments of State and Treasury to immediately exercise discretionary authority to impose sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (Global Magnitsky Act, Title XII, Subtitle F of P.L. 114-328; 22 U.S.C. §10101 et seq.) on individuals in the government of Azerbaijan associated with the military attacks against and brutal blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh. These actions represent a gross violation of human rights and the perpetration of violent conflict, which both pose a direct assault on American values and interests. The perpetrators of these human rights violations must be held to account by the United States.

Since December 12, 2022, Azerbaijan has blocked the Lachin Corridor, the only route connecting Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh, depriving some 120,000 Armenians of freedom of movement and access to food, medication, hygiene products, and other commercial goods. The blockade's effects are particularly acute for at-risk groups, such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities and chronic health conditions, whose access to healthcare services is severely limited or disrupted. Local journalists have reported a rise in miscarriages and premature births due to pregnant women not having access to proper nutrition and prenatal care. Azerbaijan has also undermined the region's gas and electricity supply, impacting the functioning of medical and educational institutions and cutting heat as yet another winter approaches.

After over nine months of trying to starve out the ethnic Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azerbaijani military launched a full-scale assault on the region on September 19, resulting in a ceasefire and the capitulation of the local government on September 20. This attack has exacerbated concerns about the worsening of the humanitarian crisis, and statements from the government of Azerbaijan about "re-integration" raise the specter of ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide. Additionally, an explosion at a fuel station killed at least 125 civilians and

wounded nearly 300 as thousands of ethnic Armenians fled Nagorno-Karabakh in fear of violence from Azerbaijani forces. This horrific incident tragically underscores the urgent need for humanitarian aid and access.

America is a world leader on international human rights and must continue to serve as a mediating force and supporter of peace in the region. In order to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its actions in blockading and assaulting Nagorno-Karabakh, we respectfully request that your departments exercise existing authorities under the Global Magnitsky Act to impose targeted sanctions on the individuals in the Aliyev government that are responsible for or participated in the violation of human rights in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

David G. Valadao
Member of Congress

John Fetterman
United States Senator

Charles J. "Chuck"
Fleischmann
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Tom McClintock
Member of Congress

Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Dan Goldman
Member of Congress

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Val Hoyle
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

Greg Landsman
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

David J. Trone
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Katie Porter
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Susie Lee
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

Andy Kim
Member of Congress

Lori Trahan
Member of Congress

Bradley Scott Schneider
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
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Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Susan Wild
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress

Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress

Cori Bush
Member of Congress