

The humanitarian crisis is worsening daily in Nagorno-Karabakh: The Human Rights Defender strongly condemns the gross violations of the fundamental rights of Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh by Azerbaijan

It is the 247th day that the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh are under blockade, and two months (as of June 15) that the latter have been deprived of any kind of humanitarian aid, including basic necessities and food.

The Human Rights Defender records that the blockade of the Lachin corridor by Azerbaijan has resulted in the gross violation of the fundamental rights of the residents of Nagorno-Karabakh, including the rights to life, dignity, physical and mental health and healthcare, freedom of movement, food and an adequate standard of living, housing, and other socio-economic and cultural rights. The blockade has a particular adverse impact on the rights of representatives of vulnerable groups, such as children, women, persons with disabilities, etc. In particular, 9000 persons with disabilities, 20,000 older persons, and 60,000 women are under the blockade.

The humanitarian disaster caused by the blockade is manifested in all spheres of the normal life of residents, in particular:

- The standard of living of the people is in a deteriorated state. Since June 15, the complete disruption of humanitarian aid supplies has created a crisis situation, including the risk of hunger and starvation. The residents of Yeghtsahogh, Hin Shen, Mets Shen and Lisagor communities of Shushi region of Nagorno-Karabakh are in a particularly terrible situation since they are under complete blockade as a result of the establishment of the Azerbaijani checkpoint. Locally produced seasonal agricultural products from different regions and communities of Nagorno-Karabakh are no longer delivered to densely populated places - Stepanakert, Martuni and Martakert. In all grocery stores, the total absence or scarcity of food, basic necessities, and hygiene items was recorded, and the acquisition of the latter is carried out through huge queues.
- In this context, it is also necessary to address the impossibility of providing humanitarian aid from the Republic of Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh. Since June 15 as a result of blocking the possibility of providing humanitarian aid by Azerbaijani authorities, the humanitarian aid has remained standing as of today, arriving at Kornidzor village from Yerevan on July 26. On July 28, the representatives of the Defender's office together with the representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Armenia and international organizations arrived in Kornidzor, the humanitarian convoy sector, and got acquainted with the situation on the spot.
- Due to the daily deterioration of people's health and malnutrition, cases of fainting also continue to increase. According to the information registered by the Human Rights

Defender's office a person died from starvation in NK. A resident of Stepanakert, K. Hovhannisyan, died as a result of chronic malnutrition, protein and energy deficiency.

- The blocking of the Lachin corridor has a negative impact on the realization of the right to health care of the people, taking into consideration the prohibitions on the transfer of patients in need of medical care to Armenia. The transportation of patients and transportation of medical supplies is carried out with the intervention of the ICRC and Russian peacekeepers. At the same time, since June 15, the Azerbaijani side has completely blocked the delivery of humanitarian aid by Russian peacekeepers and the ICRC, leading to the worsening of the humanitarian situation. There have been cases of shortage of medicines, and in some cases, the complete absence of medicines.
- At the same time, in the absence of sufficient food, there has been an increase in the number of premature births in NK. A case of death of an unborn child was also registered in Haterk village of Martakert region. The pregnant woman could not reach the hospital on time because of fuel shortage for emergency vehicles.
- Since July 25 due to an acute shortage of fuel public transport has not been functioning at all.
- On July 29, fundamental violations by the Azerbaijani authorities were recorded during the process of transferring patients to Armenia through ICRC. In particular, Azerbaijan abducted 68-year-old Vagif Khachatryan from the checkpoint located in the vicinity of the Hakari bridge, who was being transported to Armenia for medical treatment accompanied by the ICRC. The results of the Defender's study prove that the unlawful interference with the fundamental rights of a person is being carried out in a violation of international legal guarantees and standards.
- Issues related to the provision of drinking water as a result of electricity supply failures were also recorded, affecting both the quantity and quality of water provided to the residents of NK.

The Defender considers it necessary to emphasize again that the current humanitarian catastrophe is a direct manifestation of the ethnic cleansing and genocidal policy by the Azerbaijani authorities incited and adduced by Armenophobia, the ultimate goal of which is to empty Nagorno-Karabakh of its indigenous Armenian population, through terrorizing them, subjecting them to constant physical and psychological attacks and pressures, depriving them of their normal life and creating desperate conditions for life.

The Human Rights Defender especially emphasizes the urgency to stop the irreversible and intensifying developments of the humanitarian disaster, as well as the extreme necessity to provide real opportunities for the implementation of humanitarian missions.

At the same time, the Defender's office continues to collect and analyze facts on a daily basis regarding the Armenophobic policy of the Azerbaijani authorities, as well as the continuous gross violations of human rights in Nagorno-Karabakh as a result of the blocking of the Lachin

corridor, and comprehensively present them to international organizations with a human rights mandate. I attach great importance to the appropriate response of international organizations with a mandate to protect human rights and to take effective steps as a matter of urgency.