

To:
UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres
EU President Ursula von der Leyen
German Chancellor Angela Merkel
French President Emmanuel Macron
Dutch Prime-Minister Rutte
UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson



Copy: Bärbl Kofler, Human Rights Ombudsperson

11 November 2020

Call for Peace and Human Rights in Nagorno-Karabakh - we call on EU member states and the UN for immediate support and action

As civil-society feminist networks and non-governmental organisations, we are extremely concerned about the situation in the Caucasus, a region where we work with civil society partners in all Caucasus countries for peaceful and sustainable development.

We express our deepest regrets to the families of the thousands of victims of this conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh on both sides in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Call for application of UN SCR1325

As a global network and non-governmental organisations, we work closely with women and environmental civil society organisations in all countries in the Caucasus region, and this has always been a relationship of mutual respect with an aim at finding sustainable and inclusive solutions for common challenges.

We call on the creation of an international peace council to guide the peace process for Nagorno-Karabakh, with representatives of civil society from the non-recognized territory, including in particular women from both the Armenian and Azeri populations, in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>).

Call for independent OSCE Observers

On 10 November 2020, a Russian-brokered peace agreement was announced in which Armenia will give up many of the Armenian communities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The fact that this conflict between two neighbouring countries has been supported by Turkey bringing foreign militias, and lead to the involvement of Russia, has resulted in a war of increasingly international proportions, further accentuated by the shooting of a Russian helicopter over Armenian territory by Azeri forces on 9 November 2020.

This conflict is threatening to destabilize the Caucasus region. The proposed peace-deal in which Russian peace-keepers will be deployed in the region, will not be sufficient to ensure that human rights will be guaranteed.

We call on the EU and UN to support the establishment of a protection zone and the installation of **independent OSCE observers** (see <https://www.osce.org/conflict-prevention-and-resolution>).

We call on all EU Member States to take urgent actions to ensure the peace agreement/cease fire will not be broken, and to negotiate a long-term solution for lasting peace and redress the destruction of livelihoods, culture and nature.

Call for investigation

Violence is never a solution. Sustainable economic and social development and peace can only be achieved by dialogue and cooperation. We condemn the military action in the region, in particular during a global health pandemic¹.

We call on the UN to urgently investigate if war crimes are being/have been committed, if there has been any use of weapons in violation of the Geneva conventions, and to hold the perpetrators to account. It appears that the BBC² and Human Rights Watch³ have evidence of cluster bombs and the indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets.

Call to end sales of war material to parties involved

The most important measure to de-escalate the conflict, is to end providing arms and fighters by foreign nations to the conflicting parties as well as the countries that are providing war materials to the fighting parties.

We call on all EU member states and Germany in particular to immediately **put an end to all arms** sales and other war materials (drones⁴) to Turkey so that they cannot be used in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, following the good example of other nations that have already taken this measure⁵. It is a disgrace that a large share of arms sales from Germany⁶ continue to go to Turkey including via other countries. We need a EU-wide weapon-embargo.

Call to halt and review infrastructure projects

We also call on the EU and its Member states to halt infrastructure investment projects including pipeline investments and to create criteria based on peace and sustainable development for future cooperation in the region. Furthermore, the EU and countries responsible for fuelling the conflict should support the internally displaced with health and social support, reconstruction efforts of towns and the clean-up of agricultural and forest land polluted and damaged by munition.

Immediate action for peace is required, the EU and UN need to act now, and the OSCE should be deployed immediately with a long-term mission to provide observers in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and along the corridor.

With our sincere regards,

Sascha Gabizon, Executive Director WECF International, on behalf of

- Women Engage for a Common Future, WECF International, the Netherlands
- WECF e.V Deutschland, Germany
- WECF France
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Germany
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Denmark
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) UK
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Italy
- Foundation Max van der Stoel, the Netherlands

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¹ Covid19 spreading in Nagorno-Karabakh <https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-pandemics-azerbaijan-armenia-europe-14f519a45ce899c2c7a52cba7c876850>

² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w172x2z19cr1b32> HARDtalk Newshour, at 21:25

³ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/10/23/azerbaijan-cluster-munitions-used-nagorno-karabakh> Human Rights Watch

⁴ [Die Produktion von Kampfdrohnen in der Türkei und die Rolle Deutschlands](#) 03.08.2020 German companies help Turkey build Drone-fleet

⁵ <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000121196470/lieferung-gestoppt-keine-oesterreichischen-motoren-fuer-tuerkische-kampfdrohnen-mehr> 5 Nov 2020 Austria ends sales for motors of Turkish drones

⁶ <https://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/waffenexporte-tuerkei-109.html> Weapons from Germany: Turkey remains its best client 06.2020