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H.E. Josep Borrell Fontelles  
High Representative for Foreign  
Affairs and Security Policy  
European Union  
Geneva and Brussels

Geneva and Brussels, 1 August 2023

Your Excellency,

We at the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Conference of European Churches (CEC) are deeply concerned about the current situation in Nagorno – Karabagh. The plight of Armenian citizens, call on us all to exert in our relevant spheres of responsibilities the maximum effort at persuading Azerbaijan to respect the orders of the International Court of Justice to immediately lift the blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh by reopening the Lachin Corridor.

The humanitarian crisis in the blockaded enclave of Nagorno-Karabagh (Artsakh) is escalating into tragic levels of experiences with the prolonged deprivations and sufferings of civilians. We are, thus, prompted to stress the urgency of finding solutions to the ongoing crisis. We reiterate our previous statements and positions on the need for urgent and immediate action by the international community.

The Lachin corridor is the only road that links the region to Armenia and it has been blocked for more than seven months, seriously affecting the lives and living conditions of 120,000 people, including children. They are lacking food, medication, electricity, and fuel supply. Their fundamental human rights are increasingly violated on a daily basis.

We have urged Azerbaijan and other actors to be involved in the process of establishing stability to put new efforts into the immediate lifting of the blockade by reopening the Lachin corridor to enable the free and safe passage of civilians, unimpeded transport, and

flow of goods along it to guarantee the accessibility of humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Armenian population of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh).

The ever-tightening blockade continues to put the people of Nagorno Karabakh into seriously deteriorating circumstances. It prevents furthering the progress toward settlement of outstanding issues between Azerbaijan and Armenia from their November 9, 2020, agreement as well facing in full the legal, political and ethical consequences of the atrocious 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war.

The WCC and the CEC urges the European Union and the whole international community to step up immediately their efforts and act without delay to bring the blockade to an end in order to save the lives of the Artsakh residents and to restore and respect their fundamental rights and freedoms.

In this regard, we believe that a step in the direction to normalize relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan through the sustained dialogue between Baku and Stepanakert/Khankendi is most necessary.

We reiterate our firm conviction that lasting peace could be built only on the genuine commitment of all interested parties in negotiations who take seriously the full observance of all human rights and the fundamental freedom of all people based on mutual trust and respect.

We continue to hope and pray for the ending of this blockade so that peace, harmony and justice may prevail.

Respectfully,



*Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay*  
General Secretary  
World Council of Churches  
Churches



*Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen*  
General Secretary  
Conference of European