



ARMENIA AND NAGORNO KARABAKH

THE LIVES BEHIND THE BORDER CLASHES

On 12 September 2022, Azerbaijan unleashed new offensives on the sovereign territory of Armenia. More than 200 soldiers were killed in the attack, marking the deadliest confrontation between the countries since the six-week war in 2020.

The latest acts of aggression reflect the impunity that has allowed Azerbaijan to carry out wide-reaching and systematic human rights violations against the Republic of Armenia, already perpetrated in Nagorno Karabakh. Since the 2020 war ended, an unsteady peace in the region has been overseen by Russian peacekeepers. However, Azerbaijan's recent assault on Armenia marked the deadliest clash since the six-week war and has raised fears for renewed conflict. There remains an urgent need for the international community, including the UK Government, to call Azerbaijan to account for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and repeated violations of the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh ceasefire agreement.

Meanwhile, life continues at the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre. Since 2020, the Founding Director Vardan Tadevosyan has sought to ensure that all soldiers injured in the 44-day war receive treatment at the Centre. But Vardan's patients receive so much more than physical therapy. On September 27, the Centre's rehabilitation therapists accompanied their patients on the Walk for Martyrs of the Third Artsakh War. The walk took place in memory of those who lost their lives in the 2020 war and was a particularly sombre day for staff and patients.



September 27: Therapists and injured soldiers from the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre attend the Walk for Martyrs of the Third Artsakh War in Stepanakert

Immense dedication and courage have been shown by Vardan and his team of rehabilitation therapists, the majority of whom have chosen not to leave for a safer environment, but stay in Nagorno Karabakh to ensure that those in need of their care are not left alone.

September 27: The Walk for Martyrs of the Third Artsakh War in Stepanakert
Image via @ArtsakhPressAgency Twitter





CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION AMID WORST FLOODS IN SIXTY YEARS

In 2020, we visited Agok School in Abyei and witnessed children being taught underneath trees. This was a legacy of the 2008 Abyei war, in which half of the school’s classrooms were destroyed and more than half of the 4,000 students were forced to find education elsewhere in the region due to the displacement of teachers. Following a period of relative peace, Bishop Michael requested HART’s support to construct four new classrooms to accommodate the return of teachers and their students.

With funding secured from **Guernsey Overseas Aid & Development Commission**, HART and the Diocese of Abyei have been able to enhance the quality of education available in the region. This has been a crucial development for many communities in need of support – for example, in the adjacent region of South Sudan, girls are statistically more likely to die in childbirth than they are to complete primary school. It is our aim, with this funding, to ensure that such shocking realities become a feature of the past.

Unfortunately, annual flooding has caused a delay in project completion.

In 2021 alone, more than 835,000 people were affected by the floods, with Concern International describing the weather event as

“the worst flooding in 60 years.”

However, despite ongoing project delays due to flooding in 2021 and 2022, the classrooms are almost complete.

Recent floods have submerged rural villages across the region. Those affected most by the annual floods come from farming communities where agriculture is the main source

of income and primary food supply. Most of their agricultural land, where sorghum and maize crops are cultivated, is now underwater. These communities can no longer meet their basic food needs and are unable to generate an income.

HART has been granted further support from **Guernsey Overseas Aid & Development Commission** to provide emergency relief to the most vulnerable households in five farming communities in Abyei. This will see female and child-headed households prioritised, as well as widows, the elderly, and people with disabilities.



Floods sweep across Abyei Town

Homes are submerged in annual floods that devastate the region

THE SHAN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK (SWAN) ON THE FRONTLINES OF EMERGENCY RELIEF



"There are no laws to protect civilians – especially for women and children."
– Director of the Women's Wellbeing Programme

Burma's return to military rule by coup has seen more than one million people displaced, a deadly 'cut-off policy' used against civilians, and one of the world's most overlooked humanitarian crises spill out over international borders. Our courageous partners at the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) operate on both sides of the Thai-Burma border, where thousands of people are seeking refuge from military offensives and a new escalation in armed conflicts.

Members of the HART team travelled to Thailand in July 2022, where we were told that the fallout from the military coup had placed even greater pressure on SWAN's emergency relief programmes and forced their operations to adapt to new security challenges. We also heard their concerns for Community Health Workers (CHWs) facing harassment by Burmese military forces in Shan state, Burma:

"One SWAN health worker is in real danger in a village in Shan state. The village is held under suspicion of the Burmese Army for working with the Shan State Army. As a result, the local chief has said that no one is allowed to leave because it will arouse suspicion. She is therefore assisting pregnant women with post-natal care and delivery because they are not able to leave and access hospitals. The health worker fears

the repercussions for carrying out her work inside Shan state, but she knows that the villagers rely on her."
– Director of the Women's Wellbeing Programme

During the visit, HART facilitated a remote training programme for CHWs, covering the management of injuries inflicted by military offensives, including acute burns, resuscitation, triage and management of multiple casualties, acute trauma life support, vector-borne diseases, women's health, childhood nutrition, and management of health in displacement and refugee camps. SWAN's programme participants reported increased confidence in their abilities to deliver medical assistance and later conducted awareness-raising sessions, sharing what they learned with other health care providers.



Teachers from a SWAN-supported nursery travelling to a refugee camp with their students

A THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS...

The inaction of the international community has left many local relief networks in Burma abandoned, forcing them to respond without the necessary resources, support, and security to manage a crisis of this scale. Following the military coup, our generous supporters have helped SWAN to deliver lifesaving aid, healthcare, education, and legal assistance for women and children in emergency situations. Thank you! We are so grateful for your continued support.

CHRISTMAS EMERGENCY APPEAL

Please support HART and our local partners this Christmas, as they continue to transform lives in situations of conflict and disaster.

☘ SUDAN

"HART is one of the few organisations standing alongside people facing a struggle for survival in Sudan's war-torn Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains. We have no words to match your supporters' kindness towards those living not only in abject poverty, but also isolation from the rest of the world."

Benjamin Barnaba, Executive Director of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC)

☘ BURMA

"It seems the rest of the world has forgotten us. People were watching the protests but help never arrived. We have not been able to rely on the central Government, the military or armed groups, but we can rely on HART. It is crucial for SWAN's survival and the survival of those we support."

Director of the Women's Wellbeing Programme at SWAN

☘ NAGORNO KARABAKH

"HART has been by our side continuously since the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre was founded in 1998. It has been our main source of encouragement and the driving force behind the Centre's mission. HART supporters have enabled us to provide life-changing therapies for people with disabilities."

Vardan Tadevosyan, Founder & Director of the Lady Cox Disability Rehabilitation Centre

This Christmas, we are seeking to raise **£30,000** for aid and advocacy. Your gift will be used where it is needed most, helping HART to speak out against injustice whilst providing lifesaving support to our partners on the ground. **Your donations are more than a drop in the ocean for HART and our resourceful local partners. No gift is too small to make a difference. Please consider what you can give and complete the donation form enclosed in this newsletter.**

Thank you!

REPAIRING HOMES AND RESTORING LIVELIHOODS

In 2021, HART secured funding from the **Aall Foundation** to help conflict-affected communities in central Nigeria to return home. For more than a decade, civilians in northern and central Nigeria have suffered brutal attacks on their villages. Men, women, and children have been killed; food supplies ransacked, livestock stolen, homes burnt.

Working with the Diocese of Jos, our project sought to repair fire-damaged houses and provide agricultural assistance to farming communities in order to revive their livelihoods. Despite ongoing security challenges, HART and the Diocese of Jos were able to provide roofing sheets, nails, locks, and hinges to 50 of the most fire-damaged homes. A safe and secure home is a small source of comfort for communities who have suffered near-constant conflict for years.

The impact of the agricultural assistance provided to farming

communities has been far-reaching. Most notably, 27 households have received a grinding machine and/or irrigation water pump. The water pump owners share their pump every day, with each neighbouring household using the pump on their farm for one hour at a time. Each family contributes to the cost of petrol needed to power the pump. When the neighbouring families have finished irrigating for the week, the pump owner leases the pump to other local families for a small fee.

Moreover, the project participants have transitioned from using chemical fertilisers to natural fertilisers. Now that farmers are able to resume farming, they are investing in chicken droppings from local women who keep poultry. Farmers are motivated to use natural fertiliser as it enhances the quality of their crops and helps them to earn a larger profit at market. Equally, with the money earned from selling chicken droppings, local women have been able to buy poultry feed for their chickens, which results in better

quality eggs being sold at the market and benefits the local community.

"This grinding machine has removed my shame of having to beg my neighbours for salt or cooking oil. I can now buy my own. I can also buy my daughters new clothes."

– Rose Matthews, the widow of a Pastor who was targeted and killed by Fulani militia

☘ NIGERIA

Before:
A burnt home in Jebbu Miango, Plateau state



During:
Waste is cleared from the village



NOTICEboard

ONE DONATION, TWICE THE IMPACT

We are excited to be a part of the 2022 Big Give Christmas Challenge!



Following last year's success in funding a mobile education unit to reach thousands of out-of-school children in Nigeria, we are now fundraising for the first of several mobile healthcare units to reach isolated communities reeling from intra-communal attacks.

Between **29 November – 6 December** only, all donations received via the following link will be doubled! <https://bit.ly/3Eeq18v> Thank you in advance for your support!

A LASTING LEGACY

By remembering HART in your Will, you can help us to support more people every year.

- **£50** can provide a family of eight with food assistance for one month in Sudan
- **£100** can provide five displaced children in Thailand with school meals for one year
- **£150** can purchase one wheelchair for a person with disabilities in Nagorno Karabakh
- **£500** can support 25 boarding students in South Sudan with food and medicine for one year
- **£1,000** can provide a village in Nigeria with ten irrigation water pumps

You can be sure that a gift in your Will would transform the lives of people suffering from war, terrorism, oppression, and persecution.

To find out more, please get in touch at office@hart-uk.org

HART Christmas Carol Service

Join us for a festive evening of carols, readings, mulled wine, mince pies and Christmas cheer.

Start: 7pm End: 9.30pm

Date: Wednesday 14th December

**Location: St Cyprian's Church,
Glentworth St, Marlyebone**

London, NW1 6AX

Nearest Tube: Baker Street

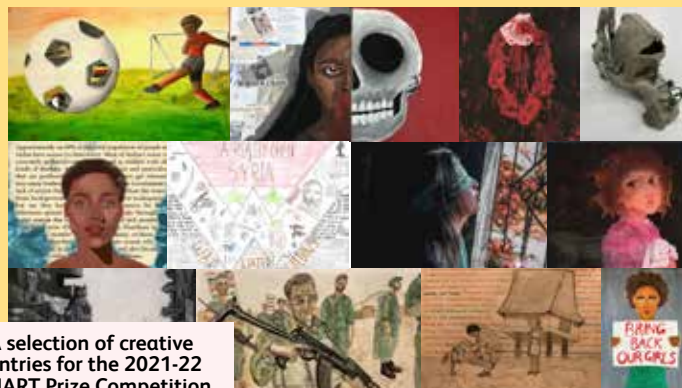
Humanitarian
Aid Relief Trust

No Ticket Required!

HART PRIZE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

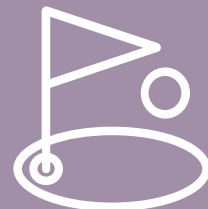
Applications for the HART Prize for Human Rights Competition 2022-23 are now open! The competition raises awareness of global conflict and human rights challenges. It is a fantastic opportunity to encourage young people to engage with crucial humanitarian issues which remain out of sight of the mainstream media. For more information, please visit the HART website.

If you know of any schools that might like to get involved, please contact office@hart-uk.org to arrange for a HART team member to visit or virtually speak at the school.



A selection of creative entries for the 2021-22 HART Prize Competition

GOLF DAY FUNDRAISER FOR DISPLACED CHILDREN



A huge thank you to **Ben Richards** and former HART Trustee **Jo Russell** for organising a fundraising event at Stoneham Golf Club in aid of Loi Tai Leng School and displaced children on the Thai-Burma border. With a very impressive £49,697 raised, HART will be able to provide significant educational support for the students of Loi Tai Leng and many other children who fled to the Thai-Burma border. We are so grateful to everyone who attended the event and all those helping us to safeguard children's education as the crisis continues in Burma.

If you are interested in holding a fundraising event for HART, please get in touch at office@hart-uk.org.

CATCHING UP WITH CAROLINE



ABYEI

Caroline continues to speak up for persecuted communities suffering from armed conflict in the disputed region of Abyei on the Sudan-South Sudan border. Following the escalation of violence in February 2022 and further reports of Ngok Dinka villages being attacked by Misseriya, Twic Dinka or other armed groups, she highlighted the need for international intervention and the immediate transfer of lifesaving aid to Abyei.

Caroline has called on the UK Government to provide emergency food, shelter, and protection to affected local people, as well as to hold the perpetrators of atrocities to account. She also urged the UK to renew its engagement with establishing an internationally recognised status for Abyei, a contentious issue between Sudan and South Sudan which prevents the region from having a police force, standardised education curriculum, and targeted government assistance.



NIGERIA

Caroline has visited Nigeria twice this year to stand alongside HART's courageous local partners and persecuted minorities suffering from violence amounting to genocide. She obtained direct evidence of the horrific escalation of killings, atrocities, and abductions in Nigeria's Middle Belt, where at least 3,000 predominantly Christian civilians have already been murdered this year and millions are displaced.

Throughout the year, she continued to speak out against injustice and the escalation of ethno-religious cleansing in central Nigeria. On 20 October 2022, she launched a 'Break the Silence' petition with Aid to the Church in Need, demanding action to stop the violence against Christians and other persecuted minorities. The petition calls on the UK Government to exert pressure on Nigeria's political leaders to bring to justice those responsible for violent attacks, abductions, and other atrocities.



ARMENIA

Caroline has travelled to Armenia 90 times, most recently to Syunik province in April 2022. She and members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Armenia heard first-hand accounts of ongoing Azerbaijani military intimidation and its impact on Armenian civilians. To date, Azerbaijan has not been held to account for its actions by the international community, despite clear evidence of past, recent, and ongoing atrocities against civilians in Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

In an Oral Question in the House of Lords on 26 October 2022, she urged the UK to make representations to the Government of Azerbaijan regarding recent military offensives inside Armenia, and for the immediate release of Armenian prisoners of war and hostages according to the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh ceasefire agreement. Her question was greeted with support from across the chamber, and received additional supportive supplementary questions.

Baroness Cox launching the 'Break the Silence' petition with John Pontifex from Aid to the Church in Need



Baroness Cox and HART Partner Hassan John at the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief

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