Humanitarian
Aid Relief Trust

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Stephen Doughty MP
Minister of State for Europe
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Stephen,

International law is clear. Hostage-taking is prohibited. All those deprived of liberty must be treated humanely.

We remain deeply concerned over the fate of at least 23 ethnic Armenians, who are currently detained by the Government of Azerbaijan in defiance of the Geneva Conventions and the Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

Hostages held in Baku include:

- Members of the elected Government of Nagorno Karabakh;
- Armenian civilians and soldiers who were captured during the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh War;
- Civilians and soldiers who were detained or kidnapped during Azerbaijan's 2022-23 blockade of Nagorno Karabakh and the military campaign that followed.

Their continued detention causes immense suffering for the hostages and their families. It also deepens Azerbaijani-Armenian tensions and undermines efforts towards peace and stability in the region.

We urge you to detail the specific pressure the UK Government is putting on the Government of Azerbaijan to uphold its obligations under international law. The International Committee of the Red Cross, who have reportedly been ordered to leave the country, must be allowed to fulfil their mandate as a neutral and impartial humanitarian actor. Armenian hostages must be released and repatriated without delay.

Yours sincerely,

Lord Alton of Liverpool	**Sir Geoffrey Nice KC**	**Sam Mason**
Patron	Patron	CEO