

## Ethnic Cleansing by Azeris in Artsakh: URGENT APPEAL

### MeaningfulWorld's Humanitarian Mission for Trauma Healing

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I am reporting from the other ethnic cleansing, the one addressed with world silence; I am reporting from Syunik, Armenia, at the border of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan blockaded Artsakh, for over 10 months, (Dec 2022 – Sept 2023), where 120,000 innocent, indigenous Christian Armenians were living for over 2,500 years. After starving them, and preventing any humanitarian aid entering Artsakh, on 18 Sept, Azerbaijan began bombing Artsakh with the assistance of Turkey, killing thousands including 300 children, then they threw the rest of 110,000 Armenians out of their ancestral homes. 1,119 are still missing, 500 confirmed dead, more so injured. During exodus close to 100 people died, as the roads were narrow, and heavy traffic, with no food and fuel; some told us it took them 4 days to cross the border.

The situation is dire, with the entire Armenian population forced to leave their enclave after Azerbaijan's military offensive, backed by Turkey. Families are leaving with only the essentials, seeking refuge in Armenia to escape the impending rule of Azerbaijan and the fear of persecution.

There is so much pain, fear of another war, as Azerbaijan keeps threatening and wanting more of Armenian lands. People are frozen in fear, as well as in cold weather! Azeri soldiers carry on their uniforms “death to Armenians, don't run in vain, you're going to be dead anyway,” surrounding the photo of Enver Pasha, who was one of the 4 Young Turks who ordered the Ottoman Turkish Genocide of the Armenians in 1915, where more than 2 million Armenians were slaughtered, and the rest thrown out of their homes to die in the Arabian desert.

We are at the southern border region of Armenia, Tatev province with 8 villages. Our MeaningfulWorld humanitarian mission for trauma healing is addressing the survivors' trauma, as well as assessing their basic needs. It is so challenging to help people heal from trauma when one could see the enemy, the Azeri soldiers chanting hatred towards Armenians and their goal is to “wipe you (Armenians) off the map.”

It's also hard for me, our team, and volunteers, as after each visit to families we seclude ourselves in our car to hide and cry, write, pray, and meditate for humanity to awaken.

Our first ten days were spent in the capital city of Yerevan, where we worked and trained psychologists, students, staff, and administrators in 7 departments of 6 universities: American University of Armenia, Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Pedagogical University, University of Goris, and Urartu University. We trained in up-to-date new integrative modalities, such as tapping, 7-step Integrative Healing, Model, energy healing, Reiki, flower essences, essential oils, mindfulness meditation, and physical release. We also collaborated with several NGO's and the Minister of Emergency Situation's Academy.

The next part of our mission was to travel to the south to assist those who are still in the border provinces. We met with the Mayor of Tatev-Syunik region, Mr. Samvel Lalayan, as well as many Artsakh families forcibly thrown out of their homes with only a shirt on their back, some could not even pick up their phones, as they were picking up their kids and running away from Azeri shelling, and bombing! There are over 100 families in Syunik-Tatev region; many

families frozen in fear and in cold, with no blankets, no winter clothing, they have homes thank God & Armenian government; but stone cold, bear walls with no refrigeration, no gas, no wood to burn and heat up! They were in tears & we were too; too sad to cope!

Case 1: Nune, whose son was still missing, the last call was responded by a 'Turk.' Nune was crying as she told us her story of being forced to leave. They did not know that they had left for good, they thought it was temporary, and did not even have a chance to pick up her phone, as she was carrying her grandchildren.

Case 2: Lucy: A 22-year-old young girl who was just married a year ago, her husband was sent to military, and she never saw him, until he was burned 80% of his body, from Azeri explosion and he died a few weeks after. She was able to find a place to live near Yerevan, with extended family, 16 people in 2 rooms. She cannot continue her university education, until she updates her paperwork and her passport. During the Azeri aggression her passport expired.

Children were frozen too, they were crying asking for their schools, their homes in Artsakh, their friends, and their teachers. An entire city with several villages were distributed in many provinces, in Armenia, so no one was living in close proximity.

Parents felt responsible and guilty to let their children witness these horrors and brutality at their doorsteps. Children were asking why is the world so violent? Why can't people love one another?

It was hard to respond as well as to protect children from the brutality of the world and feeling the need to prepare them for a dangerous life. Kids could see on social media beheaded bodies, broken arms, and limbs and shattered homes and windows. I did not see that when Israel was shelling my home in Aleppo, Syria when I was a child. I could only hear the bombs, yes, our windows shattered, and we had to run to subbasements in fear. We were protected from social media, but unfortunately, our children are no longer protected.

Most survivors expressed fear, frustration, embarrassment, victimized, fooled, extremely sad, depressed, yearning for their homes and community, schools, parks, gardens, and backyards. The men especially felt useless, and helpless and they could not protect their families, they don't have jobs, and they lack will to live and carry on.

Less than a month after Azeri brutality, post terrorism by Hamas, Gaza was targeted for ethnic cleansing, the entire world began talking about it, U.S. President is supporting this genocide, and it is televised, and covered on all social media. Armenians from Artsakh have repeatedly expressed frustration and anger, "aren't we human?? Why haven't they covered our trauma? Our losing homes, and losing an entire city of Artsakh? Why is so much indifference and silence?"

It is almost impossible to put into words the unfathomable tragedy that we witnessed; I don't wish it to any human being. It seems the darkest side of humanity has unleashed itself, and it's out of control. Governments are promoting violence under the name of justice and punishing terrorists. Who are the biggest terrorists??

We collaborated with United Sikhs to bring heaters to over 30 homes. MeaningfulWorld distributed over 40 backpacks, clothing for children, coats, blankets, food, and clothing for adults, hygiene items, as well as healing flower remedies donated by Flower Essence Society.

Gratitude to our volunteers Natalia Tomassini, Margo Sargsyan, Aro Kablanyan, and Grigor Mikayelyan. Gratitude to all of our donors, you made a great difference and brought a smile on their faces.

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