

## **Armenians! Lead the world to a truly peaceful COP29!**

Armenians,

You, reborn from the ashes of the 1915 genocide, stand as a testament to resilience and the enduring human spirit. Today, you have the unique power to advocate for justice and truth on a global stage. You can expose all the abuses of President Ilham Aliyev, who has targeted his citizens in Azerbaijan and committed atrocities against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh/Artsakh, all while hypocritically positioning his country as a leader in the global climate conversation.

The 29th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP29), set to take place in Azerbaijan this November, presents an unparalleled opportunity to shine a light on these grave injustices. Despite Azerbaijan's branding of the event as a "COP of Peace," Armenians will reveal the truth about Aliyev's regime and its actions.

You, dispersed across the globe, are uniquely positioned to protect not only your own people and your land but also the broader interests of justice and environmental integrity. Your ancestors taught you resilience – 'we lose the day we stop fighting'. You have the ability to spearhead a global movement and engage other concerned communities addressing two of the most pressing issues of our time: climate change and genocide.

To me, the link between climate change and genocide is stark and undeniable. Both are governed by international conventions that, unfortunately, have seen inadequate enforcement. Since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 and the Genocide Convention in 1948, the world has witnessed rising global temperatures and persistent threats of genocide. In 2023 alone, the UN Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide identified ongoing risks in six instances, including Nagorno-Karabakh.

The UN Climate Convention aims to curb greenhouse gas emissions, primarily driven by fossil fuels. With over 75% of these emissions linked to fossil energy, the industry's influence over climate policy is a critical concern. Azerbaijan, where fossil energy comprises about 90% of its export revenues, epitomizes this conflict as it prepares to host COP29. This juxtaposition underscores the urgency and the relevance of your mission.

The genocide committed by Azerbaijan against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh/Artsakh in 2023 exemplifies the ongoing threat. Through starvation, bombing, and instilling fear, Azerbaijan has pursued a genocidal campaign. President Aliyev's chilling statement— "If the ethnic Armenians do not leave our lands of their own free will, we will chase them away like dogs, and we are doing that"—reflects this brutal reality. The continuous incarceration of 23 Nagorno-Karabakh people in Baku jails serves as a stark warning to those who might attempt to return.

Azerbaijan's proposal for a truce during COP29 rings hollow unless Armenian hostages and other political prisoners are released unconditionally. The 2023 U.S. State Department Human Rights Report on Azerbaijan states that there are "arbitrary detentions and serious problems with the independence of the judiciary," making an unconditional return of Armenian hostages and release of political prisoners the only viable path to justice.

It is not enough to simply discuss the principles of international law; they must be actively enforced. Armenian community leaders and civil activists must rally global citizens—from journalists to climate activists—to implement the principles. By leveraging modern

technologies, you can amplify your voices and ensure that the Conventions on Climate Change and Genocide are upheld.

I am supporting the idea of the civic movement defying hypocrisy and demanding a truly peaceful COP29. Our first step is to unite global Armenian community and launch a media campaign using the hashtags: **#COP29** and **#GreenwashGenocide** and you can add **#FreeArmenianHostages** or **#FreePoliticalPrisoners**. Daily social media posts using these hashtags will build momentum, engage other communities, and attract mainstream media attention. This coordinated effort will compel journalists, delegates, and NGOs attending COP29 to seek answers from Azerbaijan regarding its Armenian hostages and political prisoners.

The goal is clear: a COP29 that truly stands for peace, marked by the release of Armenian hostages and political prisoners from Baku. Prepare yourselves, the Armenian communities, the truly peaceful COP29 will launch on July 23.

You have the commitment, reach, and determination to lead this transformative movement. By rallying global communities, you can ensure that COP29 addresses not only climate change but also champions human rights and justice.

Armenians, it is time to lead the charge. Post, comment, and use your voice. I and many others will follow you.

Luis Moreno Ocampo  
The First Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC)