

PROGRAMME TITLE: Situation update on Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

PROGRAMME LOCATION (if applicable): Armenia

DATES COVERED: As of October 4, 2023

SITREP NUMBER: 03

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1. SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Afternoon September 19, 2023 Azerbaijani Armed Forces launched a wide-scale military offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) heavily shelling the entire Line of Contact, the capital Stepanakert, targeting residential buildings and using heavy artillery, UAVs, aviation, cluster munitions. Casualties made 200 deaths and more than 400 wounded persons. The number of injured people among the civilian population exceeds 40 persons, among whom 13 were children.
- Through the mediation of the command of the Russian peacekeeping contingent stationed in NK, Artsakh and Azerbaijan reached an agreement on a complete cessation of hostilities starting afternoon on September 20, 2023. According to the points agreed the Republic of Artsakh (NK) will be formally dissolved by January 1, 2024. All government agencies were ordered to be disbanded, according to a decree issued by Artsakh President Samvel Shahramanyan.
- The Azerbaijani government informed it had a plan to "reintegrate" the Armenians into the Azerbaijani state following its one-day offensive and the surrender of the NK leadership.
- On September 24, a mass exodus of Armenians from NK started, people trying to find refuge in Armenia after 9 months-long blockade of the Lachin corridor. People arriving at the borders were exhausted and traumatized, in need of emergency relief, shelter and psychosocial care, etc.



Figure 1 Inhabitants of NK massively fleeing to Armenia



Figure 2 People waiting for hours to pass the Lachin Corridor

- Armenian government set up humanitarian reception stations in Syunik and Vayk Regions of Armenia. The stations were aimed at organization of the reception, registration, initial needs assessment, first aid and referral for placement of the displaced population.



Figure 3 Displaced people at Kornidzor Humanitarian Service Point, Syunik Region



Figure 4 Inhabitants of NK at Goris Registration Point, Syunik Region

- As of October 04, 2023 **100.625** displaced people from NK sought refuge in Armenia, and according to UNICEF an estimated 30,000 of them are children.



2. CARITAS RESPONSE

- Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Europa made a joint statement¹ calling on all concerned parties to respect international humanitarian law and to ensure the safety and rights of displaced persons during their journey and to provide them with the necessary assistance upon arrival.
- Armenian Caritas, working closely with the coordinating body of the Government, is present in the southern border region - Syunik where people being evacuated were entering Armenia as well as in four other regions of the country and in the capital - Yerevan. AC has provided hot meal (3000 lunch boxes), shelter (150 persons, 33HHs) at Toros summer camp in Shirak Region, food and hygiene kits (100), warm blankets and bed linen (more than 500). AC social workers are involved in the needs assessment of the displaced population and has open doors of its social and health centres to forcibly displaced children and elderly people in all the regions of its presence.

¹ <https://www.caritas.org/2023/09/nagorno-karabakh-caritas-urges-the-eu-and-un-to-increase-their-humanitarian-response/>



Figure 5 Caritas Staff providing aid at Humanitarian Station in Vayk Region



Figure 6 Accommodation provided to displaced HHs at Toros summer camp

- As an immediate response to the growing Armenian refugee crisis, Christian Solidarity International, CRS, Caritas Canada have allocated more than \$80,000 to Caritas Armenia to help it serve the immediate needs of thousands of displaced people.

- Armenian Caritas has circulated a Rapid Response Appeal (EA28/2023 ARMENIA)² through Caritas Internationalis with the initial budget of 250.000EUR to raise funds for the essential needs (food and NFI) of 454 displaced households, as well as, provision of post-traumatic psycho-social services to 250 displaced persons. Caritas Austria, Caritas Denmark and CAFOD have pledged around 85.000 Euro.
- Caritas Spain and Caritas Germany are intended to re-direct the earlier-allotted funds from the recovery response to the immediate humanitarian actions.
- CNEWA has launched an emergency appeal through CNEWA's partners to raise an initial amount of at least \$100,000 emergency funds for Armenia.

3. HUMAN STORY

Elvina Mirzoyan - We are six members in our family, me and our four children. When we had to leave Artsakh, we didn't take anything with us- no bags, no food, no clothes. Our village was attacked and we were forced to leave while the men stayed to defend it. Fortunately, there is no victim from our village, but we know that there are many victims from our neighboring village. We have had to move three or four times already, but this will be our final one. We are homeless people forever. Our children are in a safe place now. We are currently in Toros village, located in the Shirak region. Here, we have the opportunity to engage in husbandry and farming, which can help us to focus on something positive and not think, at least for a little while, about the disaster that we experienced. Additionally, we have registered our children in school in Toros village.



Figure 7 The Mirzoyans family accommodated at Toros Summer Camp, provided by Caritas Armenia

² <https://community.caritas.org/intranet/documents/#list/16360>

4. MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Links to resources

U.S. Mission to the OSCE on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh	https://osce.usmission.gov/on-the-situation-in-nagorno-karabakh-2/
EU External Action Statement on the displacement of people from Nagorno-Karabakh	https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-displacement-people-nagorno-karabakh-0_en
Pope Francis' appeal to the international community	https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-10/pope-appeal-azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-kharabakh-stepanakert.html
UN Expert Statement	https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/azerbaijan-must-respect-and-protect-lives-ethnic-armenians-nagorno-karabakh
ABC News	https://abcnews.go.com/International/93000-armenians-now-fled-disputed-enclave-nagorno-karabakh/story?id=103596275
DW Article	https://www.dw.com/en/over-half-of-nagorno-karabakhs-ethnic-armenian-population-has-fled/a-66954465

5. KEY CONTACTS

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