

CLIMATE ACTIVIST AYVAZYAN SEEKS PM JOHNSON'S HELP

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Category: [Opinions](#)



August 22, 2020

Hon. Boris Johnson
Prime Minister's Office
London, United Kingdom

Dear Mr. Johnson, warmest greetings from Armenia.

I want to raise my serious concerns about the continuous improper actions of the UK Foreign Office and the embassy of the UK to Armenia related to the disastrous Amulsar gold mining project in the Vayots Dzor region of Armenia.

While it is welcome to develop bilateral business ties between the United Kingdom and Armenia and to invest, it's also of utmost importance to thoroughly assess the environmental, social and legal procedures, the impact of investment projects, and to consult the locals and respect their public opinion before moving forward with a project.

Unfortunately, Lydian International, a British-Canadian company that leads the Amulsar gold mining project, has ignored local people's concerns re the environmental and health impact on Gndevaz, Kechout and Jermuk communities. The company also did not consult the residents of Jermuk spa town. These are a breach of law. Moreover, harassing the locals and hindering people from exercising their constitutional right to peaceful protest and participation in the decision-making processes in their communities has been rampant in the provocative and repellent actions of Lydian.

The mine is already affecting local life. A vast majority of people in Gndevaz, Kechout and Jermuk have reported illnesses, such as an increase in asthmatic attacks, lung problems, and dry skin. As a result of construction operations and explosions, locals say they have had nervous breakdowns, headaches and insomnia.

I am saddened to see UK's Foreign Office and the British Embassy in Yerevan side with Lydian thus thumbing their noses at the aforementioned life-threatening environmental hazards that the people face now. I am surprised to see the UK—a champion of democratic values—act against the Armenian people and sustainable environment. Instead of promoting environmentally friendly projects and sustainable jobs in Armenia, the embassy of the UK in Yerevan has been closely working with the Lydian and pressuring the government. This is unacceptable and harms the reputation of the UK in Armenia.

Hon. Prime Minister, I am counting on you to investigate the actions of the Foreign Office and the British Embassy in Armenia and reconsider the British government's policy vis-a-vis the controversial and unpopular Amulsar gold mining project. Please reassure us that the UK stands by the Armenian people.

I want to share three important media links on Amulsar gold mining project and Lydian

1. [UK Foreign Office criticized for supporting controversial gold mine in Armenia](#)
2. [Major bank investment in disputed Armenian gold mine to end:](#)
3. [Armenia: Mining Out the Leopard](#) video by Al Jazeera

I would also like to mention that I have sent letters to Amnesty International and to former US vice president and Nobel Peace Prize Winner Al Gore requesting them to raise awareness about Amulsar and the #SaveAmulsar campaign.

I was trained by Mr. Gore as a Climate Reality leader in 2015 and since then have campaigned against climate change.

Hon. Prime Minister, I am looking forward to hearing from you and I am ready to answer questions your team may have.

Please accept assurances of my deepest regards.

Sincerely

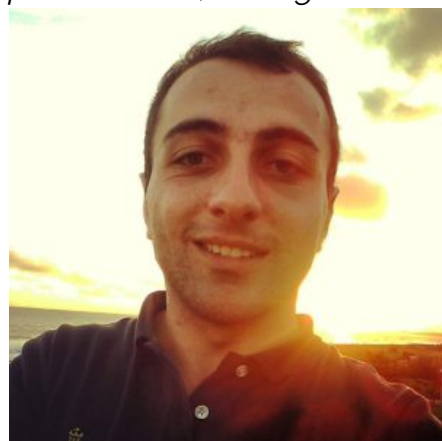
Vahram Ayvazyan

[Climate Reality Leader](#)

Founder & CEO, [I-Fourth](#)

Vahram Ayvazyan is an entrepreneur, human rights activist and globetrotter focusing on social innovation at the global level, disruptive technologies, and climate change.

Vahram cofounded an idea-stage startup I-Fourth to bring into life the HyperGenerator, an original design combining three technologies into one unit, which are clean water generation, air purification, and data collection.



He is a Climate Reality Leader and was trained by former US Vice President, Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore. Since then he has campaigned for action against climate change and researches climate justice and diplomacy.

Vahram has eleven years of experience in the nonprofit sector. Previously, he participated in the Youth

Peace Ambassadors project at the Council of Europe, where he focused on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in local communities affected by conflict in the South Caucasus and the Balkans. Furthermore, he has volunteered as a human rights activist with several international foundations and government agencies working on projects ranging from Indigenous Peoples' rights to peace deal implementations.

He has also worked as an educator and teaching fellow to advance education and promote bilingualism in conflict-affected and underprivileged areas of Colombia and Ecuador.

Vahram has participated in hundreds of conferences across three dozen countries, published vast number of articles on pressing international issues in renowned journals and magazines, and has won numerous awards for his research and publications.

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Comments



Marineh Hovannessian – 2020-08-26 23:42:20

Thank you Mr. Ayvazyan #SaveAmulsar



Vanik Badalyan – 2020-08-25 14:29:49

Good lead, Mr. Ayvazyan. I hope that Amulsar gold mining project will fail thanks to people like you. God bless you.