SILENT GLOBAL PROTESTS FOR RELEASE OF AZERBAIJAN-HELD ARMENIAN POWS

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Category: Opinions

Hayren Partners for Humanity

Human rights advocates held silent demonstrations on April 15 in over a dozen major cities from Toronto and Montreal to Berlin, Hamburg, Paris, Geneva, Moscow, Yerevan, Los Angeles, New York, Rome and more. The participants called upon governments, the UN and Human Rights bodies to pressure Azerbaijan to release more than 300 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and for Baku to fulfill its obligations under international law.

Several months after the November 10, 2020 trilateral ceasefire agreement among Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, the latter has not fulfilled its obligations. While the agreement stated, "the Parties shall exchange prisoners of war, hostages and other detained persons, and dead bodies," Azerbaijan refuses to return Armenian POWs. Azerbaijan is also not cooperating with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the formal mediator. ICRC has repeatedly stressed the importance and urgency of the situation demanding compliance with international law.



In Toronto, the human rights advocates walked from Queen's Park to the United Nations Office – Toronto branch, calling upon UN to enforce Azerbaijan to respect International Law and release all Armenian POWs. The demonstrators carried signs protesting Azerbaijan's breach of the ceasefire agreement and the inhumane treatment of Armenian POWs and hostages.

In Montreal the protest took place in front of the riding office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Marc Garneau. The same call was made to pressure Azerbaijan to immediately and unconditionally release the Armenian POWs.

In most cities limited number of people were assigned to protest in accordance to local COVID-19 restrictions.



Silent protests in Hamburg, Paris, Berlin, Yerevan & Toronto

The Below statement was read and presented at all major cities where the protests took place:

«Armenians around the world are calling for the immediate release of the Armenian Prisoners of War who are still held captive after the 2020 war ended.

Azerbaijan is currently violating the Geneva Conventions regarding the treatment of Prisoners of War. Additionally, Azerbaijan is breaching the tripartite ceasefire agreement signed on November 9, 2020 between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia.

Today, at this moment, human rights advocates and fellow citizens are gathered in Berlin, Geneva, Hamburg, Houston, Los Angeles, Marseille, Montreal, Moscow, New York, Paris, Rome, Sacramento,

Toronto, Warsaw and Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, to demand the immediate and unconditional release of more than 200 Armenian civil and war prisoners. They are being illegally held captive in inhumane conditions in the prisons of Azerbaijan since the end of the war on November 9, 2020.

It must be noted that all Azerbaijani Prisoners of War held by the Armenians were released and the wounded were treated beforehand.

International organizations, including the Human Rights Watch, have confirmed Azerbaijan's violation of international humanitarian laws. Also, on March 9, 2021, the European Court of Human Rights addressed the Committee of Ministers of the European Council stating that Azerbaijan did not comply with the conditions set by the Court regarding the return of Armenian prisoners.

We call upon:
- our national governments,
- our fellow citizens,
- the United Nations,
- the Human Rights organizations and advocates-

To URGE Azerbaijan to immediately and unconditionally release all Armenian Prisoners of War.

DECLARATION OF NON-AFFILIATION:
This event is organized by a non-state, non-religious, non-partisan network of human rights advocates, originated in the Armenian diaspora. »

15 April 2021

*This report and the pictures were provided by **Hayren Partners for Humanity***



Silent Protesters in Rome



Silent protests in Montreal, Rome, Geneva, Los Angeles, New York & Moscow

Update: Protests also continued to be held in Madrid, Spain; Marseille, France; and Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Comments



Tavit – 2021-04-15 23:19:35
This sort of barbarism by Azerbaijan (similar to that of Turkey) tells us - as if we did not already know - what "autonomy" for Artsakh would have looked like had Armenians signed a "peace agreement" with Azerbaijan anytime in the past 30 years. We can also thank Mr. Putin for having deliberately allowed the 44 day war to happen when he could have stopped it months before it began, just as he stopped it on Nov. 9, 2020. And what is Putin doing about the Armenian POWs? Nothing, of course. With allies like Russia, who needs enemies?