

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

We urge you to immediately condemn the actions of the Government of Azerbaijan in Nagorno Karabakh and announce that United States will not extend of its waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act.

On September 19, the Government of Azerbaijan resumed hostilities against Nagorno Karabakh, with reports of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. This comes after nine months of blockading the Lachin Corridor, isolating the ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. During this time, Azerbaijan has denied the people of Nagorno Karabakh freedom of movement and access to essential goods, food, and medicine. With the Aliyev regime's resumption of military operations, it now appears that Azerbaijan is intent on removing ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh from the region by any means necessary.

As you know, Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992 prohibits United States assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan until the President determines and notifies Congress that "the Government of Azerbaijan is taking demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh." In 2002, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan, Congress gave the President the authority to waive Section 907 and issue annual extensions for the provision of assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan if the President determines and certifies that certain criteria are met.

For years, this extension has been granted by Presidents of both parties in support of United States national security and foreign policy priorities and pursuant to federal law. Given renewed Azeri aggression and the blockade of the Lachin Corridor, we no longer believe an extension of the waiver of Section 907 can be justified, and we urge you to declare this publicly.

We also urge you to strongly condemn Azerbaijan's military actions and work to ensure humanitarian aid is able to enter the region. Thank you for your attention to this request and we look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator