

CSI blasts Olympic Committee apology to Azerbaijan

At close of 2024 Olympics, Christian Solidarity International urges the IOC to "live up to its own values"

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, August 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, following the closing ceremony of the Paris Games, John Eibner, the president of Christian Solidarity International, [criticized](#) the International Olympic Committee for "providing political support for the perpetrators" of the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno Karabakh.



International Olympic Committee headquarters. Gzzz, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

In June, CSI launched a campaign to #BanAzerbaijan from the 2024 Paris Games. The campaign was in response to the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno Karabakh's ancient Armenian Christian population last September, in a military campaign ordered by the president of Azerbaijan's national Olympic committee, who is also the dictator of Azerbaijan – Ilham Aliyev.

Despite the IOC's public commitment to "promoting human rights through sport," and its decision to ban the Russian and Belarusian national teams from participating in the Paris Games over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the IOC did not take any action against Azerbaijan after its ethnic cleansing campaign in Nagorno Karabakh.

On August 2, David MacLeod, the IOC's director of national Olympic committee relations, wrote to Azerbaijan's ministry of sport and its national Olympic committee, apologizing for a presenter from France 2 Television who referred to "the fall of Nagorno Karabakh" during the entry of the Armenian team. MacLeod assured Azerbaijan that "clear indications have been delivered to avoid any future references using similar terms."

"It is clear from this message that the IOC is using its influence to cover up the Aliyev regime's atrocity crimes in Nagorno Karabakh," Eibner said. "It is a shameful indication of the IOC's true priorities."

“CSI will continue to campaign for accountability for the architects of the Karabakh Genocide, for the right of Karabakh Armenians to return to their homeland and live there in freedom, and for the freedom of [Armenian hostages](#) still held by Azerbaijan, such as Vicken Euljekjian, Ruben Vardanyan, and David Babayan,” Eibner pledged.

Eibner concluded by calling on Bach to “live up to your own values of Olympism, to reject the influence of malign, racist, anti-Christian dictatorships within the Olympic system, and to adopt a consistent approach to promoting human rights through sport.”

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