

WATCH: CSI's UN event about Armenian hostages in Azerbaijan

"In the end, they are all hostages": At UN, CSI side event puts spotlight on Armenians held by Azerbaijan

GENEVA, GE, SWITZERLAND, March 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "These men were sitting at the negotiating table. They were part of an internationally-led diplomatic process. And now they are charged as being terrorists," said Philippe Kalfayan at CSI's side event at the UN Human Rights Council on Tuesday.

"Why? Because they are the symbol of resistance. They wanted to perpetuate the existence of this republic of Nagorno Karabakh."

On March 18, Christian Solidarity International (CSI) organized a side event at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, focusing on the cases of ethnic Armenians arbitrarily detained by Azerbaijan. The recording of the full event, co-sponsored by the European Centre for Law and Justice, is available to [watch online here](#).

The event featured human rights experts calling for immediate and unconditional release of the detainees. The panelists included Siranush Sahakyan, a human rights lawyer who has represented the families of the detainees before the European Court of Human Rights; Philippe Kalfayan, the former secretary general of the International Federation for Human Rights; and Arpi Avetisyan, an international human rights lawyer.

In a message sent by video, Lord David Alton joined the call for the release of the [23 ethnic Armenians](#) held by Azerbaijan.

In September 2023, Azerbaijan drove the entire Armenian Christian population of Nagorno Karabakh out of their homes, capping off a three-year campaign of ethnic cleansing, which



CSI held a panel at the Human Rights Council to discuss the show trials of Armenians kidnapped by Azerbaijan.

included two major military assaults and a nine-month blockade.

Azerbaijan acknowledges that it is holding 23 Armenian men whom it captured during this campaign, including the renowned philanthropist and former minister of state of Nagorno Karabakh, Ruben Vardanyan. Up to 80 more were last seen alive in Azerbaijani hands, and are considered forcibly disappeared.

Sixteen of the 23 detainees are currently on trial in Azerbaijan. Sahakyan noted the many rights violations taking place in these trials, and stated, "Azerbaijan's judicial system is widely recognized as one of the least independent and most corrupt in the world."

"There is no scenario in which an Azerbaijani judge operating in an environment of systemic anti-Armenian sentiment could deliver an impartial ruling," she concluded.

Avetisyan noted that Azerbaijan has tied the release of Armenian prisoners to concessions from the Republic of Armenia in the ongoing negotiations on a final peace treaty between the two countries. "So in the end, they are basically all hostages," she said.

CSI's event came as calls for the release of the hostages are growing. In his remarks to the Human Rights Council on March 3, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk stated, "All those arbitrarily detained in Azerbaijan, including ethnic Armenians, must be released immediately, and fair trial rights must be respected fully."

On Sunday, the U.S. National Security Advisor, Michael Waltz, stated that he had told Hikmet Hajiyev, a senior Azerbaijani official, to "release the prisoners."

Joel Veldkamp
Christian Solidarity International
+41 76 258 15 74
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/795251383>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.