



As Nelson Mandela rightly stated, “education is the most powerful weapon to change the world.” We need education to reduce inequalities and improve health, to fight hate speech, and intolerance and other negative impacts that may impugn democracy and the commitment to transformation to a better life.

I totally agree with the UN’s recent statement that every child has the right to grow up free from violence and fear. Children must be protected – always. Unfortunately, the current humanitarian situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the inappropriate stance of the international community does not definitely fit with the above-mentioned statement which brings forward the existing mass violation of the children’s right to education. The world cannot afford a generation of children and young people who lack the skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy, nor can we afford to leave them behind. Because every the right of every child matters, wherever and whoever they are.

Counting upon your commitment and determination to protect the rights of all children, based on the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, I am sending you this letter with reference to the Ombudsman’s ad-hoc reports on the humanitarian consequences of blocking Artsakh by Azerbaijan and the deliberate disruption of its critical infrastructure which have led to the current humanitarian situation and violations of fundamental human rights of the children of Artsakh. I call on all the respective international organizations and actors to properly investigate the recorded violations and to go beyond the limits of calls and condemnations towards taking concrete targeted actions.

Sincerely,

Gegham Stepanyan

Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Artsakh