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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Affirms the International Call by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and others for the Reopening of the Lachin Corridor for Humanitarian Aid**

August 31, 2023  
Washington, D.C.

In December 2022, UNICEF issued a [statement](#) highlighting the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh as a result of the closure of the Lachin Corridor, a passage linking the Artsakh region populated by nearly 120,000 residents, primarily Armenian, from Armenia and the rest of the world. Two weeks ago, the United Nations held an emergency meeting to address the situation burgeoning into an even more devastating humanitarian catastrophe.

On August 16, 2023, the [United Nations Security Council](#) (UNSC) urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to normalize relations while calling for the Lachin Corridor to be reopened. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) stands with UNICEF, the UNSC, and other international bodies and calls for the reopening of the Lachin Corridor for transportation aid and humanitarian access.

CMEP supports international humanitarian efforts and calls on the United States government to support policies that will contribute toward the negotiated settlement of the disputed territories while ensuring the essential humanitarian needs of civilians living in the region are met. CMEP affirms the U.S. [comments](#) at the United Nations, voicing concern that “the closure of the Lachin Corridor” and “access to food, medicine, and baby formula should never be held hostage.”

CMEP's Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, traveled to Armenia in September 2022, she says this of the situation: "There is little doubt that the Christian history and the remaining population of Armenian Christians and heritage sites in Nagorno-Karabakh remain under severe threat. I witnessed firsthand the destruction of churches and holy sites dating back centuries. Today, the long closures of the Lachin Corridor and the limiting of economic and humanitarian access have devastating impacts on the people remaining in the region. We stand in solidarity with the Christian community in Armenia and call for unfettered humanitarian access."

CMEP calls for the deescalation of the situation and stands with other international actors in the call for "all parties to respect the commitments made under the 2020 trilateral agreement between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the Russian Federation to normalize relations to lay the foundation for a future peace treaty and ensure that humanitarian aid and food be allowed to reach the population of Nagorno-Karabakh."

If you want to learn more about Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, join CMEP on September 20, 27, and October 4 for a mini-course called "Armenia at War: The Survival of the Church in the Oldest Christian State." [Learn More and Register Here.](#)

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*Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.*

## Contact Us

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