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Armenian National Committee of America  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

To: Armenian Caucus - Legislative Aide  
From: Raffi Karakashian, Legislative Affairs Director  
Date: January 28, 2008

**RE: Letter challenging Azerbaijani threats**

I wanted to share with you an important letter addressed to the Secretary of State that the Co-Chairmen of the Armenian Caucus - Frank Pallone and Joe Knollenberg - are currently circulating to members of the Armenian Caucus.

In this letter, the signatories will draw the attention of Secretary Rice to the threats being made against Armenians by Azerbaijan's most senior leaders - including its President Ilham Aliyev - and urge her to challenge the Azerbaijani government to retract these dangerous and destabilizing statements.

To take part in this effort, or to learn more about this matter, please contact Lindsay Lee in Congressman Knollenberg's office at (202) 225-5802 or Tiffany Guarascio in Congressman Pallone's office at (202) 225-4671.

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January XX, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington D.C., 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

We write to encourage you to hold the government of Azerbaijan accountable for the recent vitriolic comments made by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev in regard to the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. It is important the United States condemn these comments that go directly against the United States stated policy in the South Caucasus region.

It was reported that during a meeting with his cabinet ministers President Ilham Aliyev stated, "In 2008 we will see, if the conflict could be solved by peaceful means, or not and after that we will make decisions" in regard to the ongoing conflict with Armenia over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. President Aliyev went on to take pride in the fact that his government has completely isolated Armenia from regional projects and will continue to isolate them until "they voluntarily leave our territories." Furthermore, President Aliyev was quoted at the opening of a sports facility that "The war has not ended yet, it is just its first stage that has finished."

These fear tactics and threats of war go directly against the United States' goal of peace and stability in the South Caucasus region. Azerbaijan has been threatening war with Armenia for years. However, these recent public comments made by high-ranking government officials prove that their rhetoric has turned into a very real and dangerous threat.

Armenia continues to be a strong ally of the United States. They have supported our efforts in Iraq by sending Armenian troops to the country, they have expressed interest in sending troops to Afghanistan, and they continue to strive for peace with their neighbors. Furthermore, Armenia continues to advocate for a peaceful resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We implore you to challenge the Azeri government on their comments and ask that you advocate for a retraction of the comments made by President Aliyev.

Sincerely,

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Joe Knollenberg  
Member of Congress

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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress