

On April 24th, the 109th anniversary of the first genocide of the 20th century, Armenians worldwide will bow their heads in remembrance. Over a century ago, Armenians were cast to the four corners of the earth as part of a systematic ethnic cleansing at the hands of the Ottoman Turks.

Each year, we commemorate the 1.5 million Armenian lives lost between 1915 and 1923, with the hope that such atrocities will never happen again.

But sadly, we find ourselves repeating the past with the mass expulsion of 120,000 ethnic Armenians by Azerbaijan from Nagorno-Karabakh last September. During that exodus, the Azeris also arrested eight former political leaders from the region who remain imprisoned in Baku with no hope of a fair trial. One, Ruben Vardanyan, is on a hunger strike demanding the unconditional release of all the Armenian political prisoners.

Ironically, Baku will host thousands of international leaders in November for COP29 — a forum designed to align environmental and human rights.

We know that unchecked, history will repeat itself. The time is now for leaders around the world to unite in support of those Armenians still being persecuted by Azerbaijan.

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