



SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF (SOAR)
Buenos Aires Chapter

September 18, 2026

Commissioner Sabina Aliyeva
Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Azerbaijan

Distinguished Commissioner Aliyeva,

RE: Urgent Appeal for Immediate Action on Serious Violations of Prisoner Rights at Umbaki Penitentiary Complex

We write to you on behalf of the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Buenos Aires chapter, to express our grave concern regarding the documented violations of fundamental human rights and violations of Azerbaijan's own Code on the Execution of Sentences, as raised in the public appeal made by Ruben Vardanyan on September 16, 2026.

We note with appreciation your stated readiness to assist in matters concerning the rights of convicted Armenian citizens. We respectfully urge you to act with urgency on this matter, as the violations documented represent serious breaches of both domestic Azerbaijani law and international human rights standards.

The following violations have been documented among the nineteen Armenian citizens held at the Umbaki penitentiary complex:

- The denial of weekly telephone calls for certain detainees and the complete unavailability of video calls, resulting in some prisoners being unable to see their own children for nearly three years;
- The systematic refusal to permit medical testing, even when prisoners offer to pay for such tests at their own expense;
- The refusal to permit the execution of powers of attorney through notarial services, thereby preventing detainees from managing essential family and legal affairs;
- The severe restriction of physical exercise to merely 20-40 minutes once per week, in clear violation of the standard provision of one hour per day;
- The systematic failure to provide written responses to formal applications and complaints submitted by detainees.

These violations are particularly troubling as they appear to contradict the very rights outlined in the booklet on prisoners' rights that your office distributed to detainees in April 2026. As Mr. Vardanyan correctly emphasized, such rights must be observed regardless of the charges brought against a person, their ethnicity, religion, or citizenship. This principle is fundamental not only to human dignity but also to Azerbaijan's own legal framework.

We respectfully call upon you to:

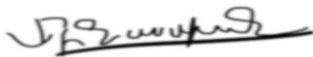
1. Conduct an immediate and thorough investigation into all documented violations at the Umbaki penitentiary complex;
2. Issue binding directives to prison authorities to immediately ensure full compliance with Azerbaijan's Code on the Execution of Sentences;
3. Restore all communication rights, including weekly telephone calls and video calls with family members;
4. Permit access to medical testing and notarial services;
5. Restore the standard provision for one hour of daily physical exercise;
6. Establish a formal mechanism for providing written responses to all prisoner complaints and applications.

SOAR has worked for decades to support the most vulnerable members of the Armenian community. We continue to believe in the possibility of meaningful dialogue and the importance of upholding the rule of law and human rights standards. We trust that your office will take this urgent appeal seriously and act swiftly to remedy these grave violations.

We remain available to discuss this matter further and welcome your response.

Respectfully,

9/18/2026



Luciana Minassian
President, SOAR Buenos Aires Chapter

Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief
Buenos Aires, Argentina