

## Azerbaijan/Armenia: Sides must reach “humanitarian consensus” to ease suffering



**Despite persistent efforts, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is not currently able to bring humanitarian assistance to the civilian population through the Lachin corridor or through any other routes, including Aghdam. The organisation is calling on the relevant decision makers to allow the ICRC to resume its essential humanitarian operations in the area.**

Tens of thousands of people rely on humanitarian aid reaching them through these routes. The civilian population is now facing a lack of life-saving medication and essentials like hygiene products and baby formula. Fruits, vegetables, and bread are increasingly scarce and costly, while some other food items such as dairy products, sunflower oil, cereal, fish, and chicken are not available. The last time the ICRC was allowed to bring medical items and essential food items into the area was several weeks ago.

“Our humanitarian aid convoys are a lifeline for the population in this area. With these<sup>RE-0032</sup> convoys blocked, our concern is that the humanitarian situation will further deteriorate. We are most worried about those who cannot help themselves. The sick and people with chronic diseases are particularly at risk, as are the elderly, infirm and children. For us to operate here, we need the sides to reach a humanitarian consensus. This is life-saving work, and it must be allowed to continue,” said ICRC’s regional director for Eurasia, Ariane Bauer.

**Under international humanitarian law, sides must allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need. This includes medical supplies and essential food.**

The ICRC’s work is strictly humanitarian. We are encouraged by the fact that the ICRC was able to evacuate 24 sick patients across the Lachin Corridor over the last few days, ensuring that they receive the medical treatment they need. Overall, the organisation has evacuated more than 600 people in urgent need of medical care since December 2022.

The ICRC is continuing its bilateral dialogue with the sides and stands ready to continue its humanitarian work once such a consensus is found.

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