

November 5, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We write to express concerns regarding U.S. participation in the 2024 United Nations Climate Conference (COP29) in Azerbaijan. The conference represents a significant platform for multilateral diplomacy, but we must not overlook the regional context—specifically peace negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. U.S. participation at COP29 presents a timely opportunity to advance the historic goal of a lasting and durable peace in the South Caucasus, and we urge you to prioritize this goal when weighing the merits of high-level U.S. involvement in the conference.

Since late last year, Azerbaijan and Armenia have engaged in negotiations to bring an end to decades of hostilities stemming from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Both sides have taken commendable steps toward peace, including border delimitation and ongoing engagement at the highest levels. Unfortunately, discussions appear to have stalled. Azerbaijan insists that Armenia amend its constitution as a precondition for any peace agreement. Armenia may choose to amend its constitution in time, but such an amendment process would be arduous. This demand threatens to delay a peace agreement and risks losing the progress that has already been made. Azerbaijan's growing relationship with Vladimir Putin, a war criminal bent on undermining world peace, also calls into question its commitment to regional stability.

By hosting COP29, Azerbaijan intends to show that it is a responsible member of the global community. Hosting an international forum may be seen as a good gesture of diplomacy, but Azerbaijan has the opportunity to do more. If Azerbaijan truly wishes to advance international cooperation, it should demonstrate that by making peace with Armenia.

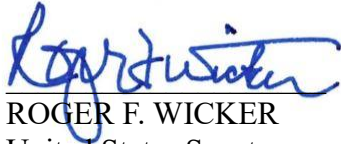
At a time of increasing global conflict, it is crucial that the U.S. work urgently to consolidate and build on the fragile stability in this critical region. To that end, we respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. What actions will the U.S. delegation to COP29 take to support ongoing peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia?
2. How can the Department of State best support negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia before COP29 begins?
3. How will U.S. participation in COP29 change if Azerbaijan does not take meaningful steps to conclude a peace agreement with Armenia before the conference begins?

A lasting peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia can help bring unprecedented prosperity to both countries and the wider Caucasus region. We look forward to your timely response on this

matter and urge you to take the necessary steps to ensure that U.S. participation at COP29 prioritizes peace in the South Caucasus.

Sincerely,



ROGER F. WICKER
United States Senator



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



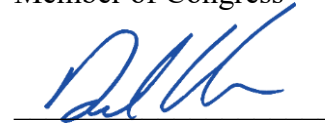
THOM TILLIS
United States Senator



JOE WILSON
Member of Congress



BRYAN STEIL
Member of Congress



DAVID G. VALADAO
Member of Congress



GUS M. BILIRAKIS
Member of Congress