**Below is a letter template we encourage you to edit:**

Dear XXX,

**Lead with gratitude:** *This appeal should be diplomatic and fact-based.*

Thank you for your commitment to preserving world heritage. **I’m writing to draw your attention to the imminent danger the Armenian heritage of Nagorno Karabakh, or Artsakh as Armenians call it, is in.** On the heels of the announced cessation of hostilities in Azerbaijan's war on Artsakh, sacred Armenian heritage sites will soon be in the hands of a government committed to erasing Armenian heritage in the region. These sites and monuments are more than tangible bricks and stones, they represent the intangible survival of indigenous Armenian culture and the resilient spirit of genocide survivors. **We call on your organization to preserve and protect these sites before time runs out.**

**Mention the sites by name:**

* Excavated walls of the city of Tigranakert — 1st century BCE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.065278°N 46.905833°E
* Gandzasar Monastery — 13th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.0572862°N 46.5305449°E
* Dadivank Monastery — 9th-13th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.1616°N 46.2882°E
* Gtichavank Monastery — 13th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.593547°N 46.941944°E
* Khunisavank Monastery — 9th-11th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.610556°N 46.125278°E
* Khatravank Monastery — 13th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.119250°N 46.406083°E
* Amaras Monastery — 4th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.684°N 47.057°E
* Tsitsernavank Monastery — 5th-6th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.644°N 46.408511°E
* Yerits Mankants Monastery — 1691 CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.252114°N 46.640669°E
* Handaberd Fortress — 11th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.226957°N 46.137879°E
* Monuments (monasteries, churches and cemeteries) of the village of Tsar in the Karvachar/Kalbajar region — 13th-15th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.006974°N 45.956326°E (surrounding this area)
* Horekavank Monastery – 13th century
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.371470°N 46.695976°E
* Yeritsmankants Monastery – 1691
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.252114°N 46.640669°E
* Mayraberd Fortress — 18th Century CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.9333°N 46.8314°E
* Yeghishe Apostle Monastery (Jrvshtik) (5th)
	+ Geographic Coordinates [40.335775°N 46.693794°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Yeghishe_Arakyal_Monastery&params=40.335775_N_46.693794_E_type:landmark)
* White Cross of Vankasar (5th century)
	+ Geographic Coordinates [40.0721°N 46.8874°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Vankasar_Church&params=40.0721_N_46.8874_E_type:landmark_region:AM)
* Dizapayt Katarovank Monastery
	+ Geographic Coordinates [39.526071°N 46.856119°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Katarovank&params=39.526071_N_46.856119_E_type:landmark)
* White Cross of Vankasar (5th century)
	+ Geographic Coordinates [40.0721°N 46.8874°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Vankasar_Church&params=40.0721_N_46.8874_E_type:landmark_region:AM)
* St. Hakobavank Monastery in Kolatak (9th)
	+ Geographic Coordinates 40.015670°N 46.600499°E
* Spitak Khach Monastery, Vank village, Hadrut (10th century)
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.513665°N 47.022412°E
* Ghazanchetsots Cathedral of the Holy Savior in City of Shushi —1868-1888 CE
	+ Geographic Coordinates 39.758819°N 46.747883°E

**Express WHY we are concerned:** *Use the following examples to explain the urgency.*

* **PATTERN OF ABUSE:** Azerbaijan has waged a campaign of destruction on Armenian heritage in occupied land for decades:
	+ **Azerbaijan’s 1997–2006 erasure in Nakhichevan of its Armenian culture, with more than 89 medieval churches, 5,840 khachkars, and 22,000 historical tombstones is illustrative in this regard.**
		- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/mar/01/monumental-loss-azerbaijan-cultural-genocide-khachkars>
		- <https://hyperallergic.com/482353/a-regime-conceals-its-erasure-of-indigenous-armenian-culture/>
	+ Examples of **destroyed Armenian Monasteries** include:
		- Varagavank: 11th Century (Destroyed after the Armenian Genocide of 1915)
		- Surp Astvatzatsin: 18th Century (Destroyed by Azerbaijan in 1918)
		- Narekavank: 10th Century (Destroyed by Turkey in 1951)
		- Msho Surp Garabed: 4th Century (Destroyed after the Armenian Genocide of 1915)
		- Arakelots: 4th Century (Destroyed by Turkey in the 1960s)
		- Surp Amenapergich: 10th Century (Destroyed by Azerbaijan)
		- Khtzkonk: 7th Century (Destroyed by Turkey in the 1950s)
* **RECENT DESTRUCTION:** The continuous shelling of Artsakh targeted homes, hospitals, and schools.
	+ **H**[**eritage sites**](https://www.globenewswire.com/Tracker?data=WMZCQB-OLBRyycYTEEYTxyafIyGn8da9Z4o6o3zPXuIxbGH4d3SqMGWt2beJkW8u8mLKlTJigVapjgiUrZ_NyIVhtB3qumRVK0BeWv2E1evghZ-B6NA-lPKOVfIP_KikB3oaUsnN0qr--L8Sffvkx53C0dAkHFbfeiXC2AYNhpFQwyqklbViWBPzi9v3kj-Z4A-vHJjbAMkmHRDqDZbCvoUnC1uOUTfsNK_cGq6DgJQ=) **were intentionally targeted**, with the aim to erase the unique cultural contributions of the Armenian people and their history in the region. The Ghazanchetsots Cathedral is one of many sacred heritage sites that was destroyed, only after being rebuilt from the last blast from Azerbaijani forces.
		- <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/monuments-in-line-of-fire-in-nagorno-karabakh-conflict>
		- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPEzLNyz1LM>
	+ **Archaeological sites were intentionally targeted**, damaging evidence for ancient habitation, including fortification and ecclesiastical architecture and precious artifacts:
		- <https://hyperallergic.com/592287/tigranakert-artsakh-nagorno-karabakh-war/>
* **ERASURE:** Azerbaijan erases the indigenous Armenian heritage of these sites.
	+ Azerbaijan’s Deputy Minister of Culture Anar Karimov is now claiming that Dadivank, a 9th century Armenian monastery, is Albanian Christian. (The monastery is too new to be considered Albanian Christian, and nobody outside of Azerbaijan believes the Albanian Christian origin myth of the Azeri people.) Furthermore, he claimed the recent attempts of preservation are illegal.
		- <https://twitter.com/Anar_Karim/status/1326437397270310912>
	+ Google Arts & Culture is calling Dadivank an Albanian Christian monastery because of a submission from the Azeri government.
		- Google Arts & Culture as an Agent of Ethnic Cleansing
		<https://hyperallergic.com/601492/google-arts-culture-as-an-agent-of-ethnic-cleansing/>

[**Destroying History Is Now Being Charged As A War Crime**](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cultural-war-crime_n_57bb2058e4b0b51733a4a34b)

**Demand Action:** *Express the following demands.*

**CALL TO ACTION:**

* **RECOGNIZE** ARMENIAN HERITAGE**:** We call on your institution to recognize the distinctly Armenian heritage of the endangered sites. Before it is too late and history is rewritten to suit the needs of the aggressor.
* **PRESERVE** ARMENIAN HERITAGE: We call on your institution not only to recognize the at-risk Armenian historical and cultural sites in Artsakh, but to act now and preserve and document what is left of these monuments before aggressive forces destroy them.
* **RAISE AWARENESS** AND **EDUCATE**: The current war and cultural genocide did not make major news headlines or television slots. We ask your institution to educate your members on the current attempt of the erasure of Armenian culture from their indigenous land.

**End with gratitude:**

We’re hoping you will help us save these heritage sites before it’s too late because we know that this is not just about Armenian heritage, it's about our collective world history.

UNESCO’s Statement on Khachkars
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/armenian-cross-stones-art-symbolism-and-craftsmanship-of-khachkars-00434>

**Send to:**

**Global Heritage Fund**
info@globalheritagefund.org

**World Monuments Fund**

<https://www.wmf.org/who-we-are#contact>

*Read their* [*11/15 statement*](https://www.wmf.org/blog/wmf-statement-safeguarding-cultural-heritage-nagorno-karabakh) *first…*

**National Trust For Historic Preservation**

info@savingplaces.org

**International Council Of Museums (ICOM)**

membership@icom.museum

**International Council On Monuments And Sites (ICOMOS)**

Submit via website: <https://www.icomos.org/en/contact-us>

**International Centre For The Study Of The Preservation And Restoration Of Cultural Property (ICCROM)**

Submit via website: <https://www.iccrom.org/contact/contact_us_original>

**UNESCO**

wh-info@unesco.org

**European Association Of Archaeologists**

helpdesk@e-a-a.org