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Armenians have had the terrible experience of genocide twice over. Behind the smokescreen of the First World War, the Ottoman Empire killed one and a half of its two and a half million Armenian citizens through massacres, death marches and forced labor. For the Polish-Jewish jurist and main author of the UN Genocide Convention, Rafael Lemkin, the genocide of the so-called Young Turks, together with the Shoah, formed the empirical basis for his definition of genocide.

Based on this definition, human rights organizations and academics have been warning of a significant genocide risk for the Armenians living in the South Caucasus since August 2022. The greatest danger for Armenians was in the de facto Republic of Artsakh or Nagorno-Karabakh. After the Second Karabakh War of 2020, their number was estimated at 120,000, including 30,000 children and 18,000 people over the age of 65. Under the pretext of ecological protests, Azerbaijan blocked the only road connecting the territory of the Republic of Artsakh, which remained under Armenian control after the war, with the Republic of Armenia in December 2022. The blockade turned into a starvation blockade. Only very small quantities of food and medicines reached the sealed-off region, and from July 2023 none at all. Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, Azerbaijan attacked the Republic of Artsakh on September 19 in violation of international law, and its leadership capitulated after a day and a half. This was followed by the expulsion of the population within a few days.

The Republic of Armenia registered 100,800 expellees, Russia received 6,400 expellees, the number of those taken in by Georgia is unknown to me. Armenia was and is overwhelmed with the reception of displaced persons. There is a lack of housing and jobs. Only about 10,000 - i.e. 30 percent of the expellees of working age - have found work so far.

Over the course of a century, Armenians have not only been exposed to the repeated experience of genocide, but also to the traumatizing experience of the so-called international community standing idly by. The German government also largely stood idly by in both the First World War and 2023. As a signatory to the UN Convention and the Rome Statute, Germany has failed in its obligation to prevent genocide and has contributed to the fact that the wounds inflicted by every genocide do not close. The right of the displaced persons to return to their homeland has been and continues to be ignored. The consequences of these actions must now be dealt with under criminal law in order to avert further and future damage.

The population of the Republic of Armenia continues to be at risk. Despite all the efforts of its government to reach a peace settlement, there are continued provocations and shelling of Armenian settlements on the borders with Azerbaijan. The Armenian cultural heritage in the areas no longer inhabited by Armenians is also at risk. Following the withdrawal of the Russian peacekeeping contingent from Nagorno-Karabakh, a similar "de-Armenianization" threatens to occur there as in the once Armenian-inhabited region of Nakhichevan. Between 1997 and March 2006, the Azerbaijani army destroyed a total of 28,000 mostly sacred Armenian monuments with bulldozers. The 1500-year-old historic Armenian cemetery in Jura, which now serves as a military training ground for the Azerbaijani army, was particularly affected.