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Armenian Parliament Ratifies Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court



YEREVAN -- The Armenian parliament ratified on Tuesday the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), putting the country in the jurisdiction of The Hague-based institution.

A total of 60 lawmakers, mostly representing the ruling Civil Contract party, voted for the ratification of the treaty on October 3, while 22 lawmakers voted against.

The Representative on International Legal Matters Yeghishe Kirakosyan stated that currently 123 countries are members of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

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Armenia signed the Rome Statute on 1 October 1999, after which the ratification process was suspended, as the Constitutional Court considered some of the obligations stipulated in the Statute to be contrary to the Constitution in 2004.

The rapporteur presented the background of the issue, reminding that the debates on the ratification of the Statute started again a year ago, when Azerbaijan carried out a large-scale aggression against the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia,

Ethnic Cleansing Completed: Government to Cover Housing and Utility Costs for 100,520 Artsakh Armenians Forcibly Displaced from Their Homeland



YEREVAN — 100,520 individuals forcibly displaced from Nagorno Karabakh have been relocated to Armenia, as disclosed by Nazeli Bagdasaryan, the Armenian Prime Minister's spokesperson, during a daily press briefing.

"This constitutes a direct act of ethnic cleansing that we had previously warned the international community about," stated PM Nikol Pashinyan during a government meeting on September 28. He called for concrete action from the international community, emphasizing that while statements condemning ethnic cleansing from various international players are crucial, they must be followed by

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Eshoo and Pelosi Call on President Biden to Take Decisive Action in Response to Humanitarian Crisis in Artsakh



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (CA-16) and Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (CA-11) led 75 bipartisan House Members in writing to President Biden in support of strong U.S. action to alleviate the unfolding humanitarian disaster in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and hold Azerbaijan accountable for engaging in ethnic cleansing against Artsakh's Armenian population.

The Members wrote: "In light of the unfolding mass displacement of Artsakh's population, it is clear that our country's response to this crisis has not been commensurate with the scale of the devastation. We believe

the United States must make clear to Azerbaijan that its unprovoked aggression against Artsakh is unacceptable and will be met with an appropriate response."

In the letter, the Members urge the Biden Administration to provide robust humanitarian aid to support Artsakh's displaced population; hold Azerbaijan accountable for violating human rights through targeted sanctions and the suspension of U.S. military aid; send observers to the Lachin Corridor to ensure the safe evacuation of Artsakh's population; and engage with Azerbaijan to secure amnesty for Artsakh's leaders.

A UN Mission Arrives in Artsakh After All Armenians Have Fled



STEPANAKERT — A United Nations mission has arrived in Nagorno-Karabakh following an Azerbaijani takeover of the mountain enclave that resulted in the exodus of the region's Armenian population. An Azerbaijani presidential spokesman said the mission arrived early on October 1 to assess the humanitarian needs in the region.

The mission is meant to "assess the situation on the ground and identify the humanitarian needs for both people remaining and people that are on the move," a UN spokesperson told reporters last week.

Nearly all of Karabakh's estimated 120,000 residents have fled the territory for Armenia in recent days.

"Of course, it looks like a bad joke, and it's very strange to send a mission there now," David Akopyan, the former head of the UN Development Program in Syria, told CivilNet by phone. "It probably mostly will be useless."

"But," Akopyan stressed, "that is not to dismiss the mission overall," pointing out it could be the first step to

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France Ready to Deliver Weapons to Armenia



YEREVAN -- France is ready to deliver weapons to Armenia to help the South Caucasus state counter threats to its territorial integrity, French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said during a visit to Yerevan late on Tuesday.

"France has given its agreement to the conclusion of future contracts with Armenia which will allow the delivery of military equipment to Armenia so that it can ensure its defense," Colonna told a joint news conference with her Armenian counterpart Ararat Mirzoyan.

She declined to shed light on those contracts, saying only "there are things that were already agreed between Armenia and France and that are in progress."

The French government has condemned Azerbaijan's September 19-20 military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh that paved the way for the forest displaced of virtually entire Armenian population. President Emmanuel Macron suggested last week that Baku might now attack Armenia as well.

French Defense Minister Sébastien Lecornu said afterwards that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Armenia are an "absolute objective for us." Lecornu did not rule out arms supplies or other military aid to Arme-

nia, saying that Paris is already examining Yerevan's defense "needs."

Speaking after talks with Mirzoyan and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Colonna noted that Azerbaijan has "continuously armed itself to take action," using its oil revenues and Turkey's military assistance.

She said Paris has also proposed that the European Union expand its monitoring mission along Armenia's border with Azerbaijan and help Yerevan from a special fund designed to boost EU partners' defense capacity.

Armenian parliament speaker Alen Simonian revealed in July that the Armenian government requested "technical assistance" from the European Peace Facility (EPF) but was rebuffed by Brussels.

France will open a consulate in Syunik, becoming the third country after Iran and Russia to establish or announce plans to establish a permanent diplomatic presence in Armenia's strategically vital southernmost region.

"We are strengthening our defense cooperation with Armenia. We will have a military attaché at the French Embassy in Yerevan and soon we will also open a consulate in the border Syunik region," Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said Tuesday.

Three Former Karabakh Presidents Arrested By Azerbaijan



Azerbaijan has reportedly arrested three former presidents of Nagorno-Karabakh republic and the current speaker of the local legislature on Tuesday as they continued their takeover of the depopulated region.

They confirmed Azerbaijani media reports that two of the former presidents, Arkadi Ghukasyan and Bako Sahakyan, as well as speaker Davit Ishkhanyan have already been transported to Baku, while the third ex-

president, Arayik Harutyunyan, is on his way to the Azerbaijani capital. There was no such confirmation from Karabakh or Armenian sources.

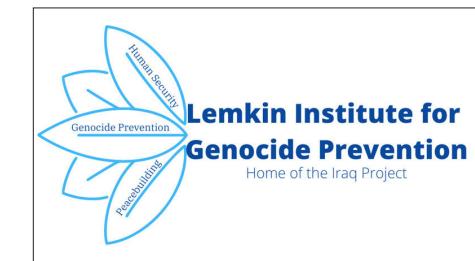
Harutyunyan resigned three weeks before Azerbaijan launched on September 19 a military offensive that forced Karabakh to disband its government and army, paving the way for Azerbaijani control over the territory. His successor, Samvel Shahramanyan, reportedly negotiated with Baku in re-

Lemkin Institute Accuses World Leaders of Complicity in Genocide in Karabakh, Slams US for 'Reckless Bothsidesism'

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention has criticized the United States for 'reckless bothsidesism' and its 'delusional belief' that the genocidal regime of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev can engage in good-faith talks or negotiations.

The Lemkin Institute reacted to US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller's recent statement on Nagorno-Karabakh that the US has done its best "to find a diplomatic solution, but at the end of the day, we must not forget that there are two sides here that simply have differences."

"Demonstrating that it has learned nothing from the genocide currently being committed by Azerbaijan against the Armenians of #Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh, the United States continues to enable the perpetrator with its reckless 'bothsidesism' and its delusional belief that the genocidal regime of



Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev can engage in good-faith talks or negotiations. Genocide is not a matter of "simply [having] differences." Furthermore, suggesting that the US has played no role in enabling Aliyev's impunity to commit genocide is mendacious at best. The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention warns world leaders that they are behaving in ways that leave them open not only to charges of complicity in genocide but also to charges of aiding and abetting the crime," the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention said.

United States Activates Disaster Assistance Response Team to Rereshpond to Humanitarian Needs in the South Caucasus

WASHINGTON, DC — The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in the South Caucasus region to coordinate the U.S. humanitarian response, USAID Administrator Samantha Power said in a statement after traveling to Armenia.

"This week, I traveled to Armenia to hear directly from the people fleeing their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh in the wake of Azerbaijan's September 19-20 attacks. The United States is deeply concerned about the safety of vulnerable populations in Nagorno-Karabakh and the more than 50,000 people who have fled to Armenia. We are grateful to the Government of Armenia for welcoming new arrivals and helping them find shelter and to humanitarian organizations working to address acute needs.

"Today, I am announcing that the U.S. Agency for International Development has deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in the South Caucasus region to coordinate the U.S. humanitarian response. The DART will assess the situation, identify priority needs to scale up assistance, and work with partners to provide urgently needed aid.

"Last week's unacceptable military operation has made an already dire humanitarian situation even worse. For nine months, Azerbaijan blocked the Lachin Corridor — shutting down a vital lifeline that connects the residents of Nagorno-Karabakh with food, medicine, fuel, and commercial supplies which is creating dire shortages.

"The Lachin Corridor must remain fully and permanently open so



that civilians can leave and return freely, communities can access food, medicine, and other essential supplies, and humanitarian organizations can see and meet needs on the ground. Azerbaijan must protect civilians, uphold its obligations to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals in its country, and ensure its forces comply with international humanitarian law.

"Given the scale of the needs, the United States announced \$11.5 million in humanitarian assistance earlier this week to support communities across the South Caucasus who are affected by the ongoing crisis. This is in addition to the more than \$23 million the United States has provided in humanitarian assistance since 2020 in response to the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. These funds will be used to provide everything from food to psychosocial support to help address trauma caused by the violence and mass displacement," Power said in the statement.

well as Karabakh's current premier Artur Harutyunyan, interior minister

Shahramanyan's chief of staff as

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15 NGOs Accuse the Russian Federation of Hostile Actions Against Armenia



Since November 9, 2020, when the famous statement was signed, both the so-called peacekeeping forces in Nagorno Karabakh and the Russian Federation, in general, have largely proven that they do not fulfill their contractual and military and political obligations and consistently serve the interests of Azerbaijan at the expense of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

The ethnic cleansing of Nagorno Karabakh through large-scale military operations on September 19, 2023, which were agreed with Russia, reaffirmed that the Kremlin serves the interests of Azerbaijan.

On September 26, 2023, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a statement, in which it placed the responsibility for the dire situation in Nagorno-Karabakh on the authorities of Armenia, under the pretext of Armenia involving the "West" in mediation efforts.

The statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry was a logical sequel to the discourse of changing power in Armenia initiated by Dmitry Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, and the media directly dependent on the Kremlin.

Obviously, the Russian Federation not only fails to fulfill its obligations to guarantee the security of Armenia, does not perform its peace-keeping functions to ensure the rights and security of the population of Nagorno Karabakh, but also tries to directly and publicly interfere in the domestic political processes of the Republic of Armenia and support destabilizing actions against the state.

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations, consider that the official circles of the Russian Federation are trying to carry out a coup d'état in the Republic of Armenia in response to the commitment of our country to democratic development with all the attendant problems and difficulties.

The authorities of the Russian Federation, which systematically and continuously violate the values of human rights at the state level, have a clear goal to undermine the sovereignty and independence of Armenia with the help of their supporters in Armenia and through other means, and establish a dictatorial regime in the country, increasing the level of Armenia's dependence on Russia.

We strongly insist that the government in Armenia should be formed solely through free, transparent and fair elections.

We unequivocally reject any other, even more so, foreign or violent intervention in the formation of gov-

ernment and seizure of state power, and we condemn such attempts by the Russian Federation and Armenian agents calling for a coup.

Based on the above, as well as the unconcealed hostile attitude of the Russian Federation towards the Republic of Armenia and our democracy, we demand from the Government of the Republic of Armenia to:

Resolutely thwart all attempts of foreign interference in domestic political processes within the scope of their powers;

-Suspend the Armenian-Russian agreements ensuring the rebroadcasting of Russian TV channels, and compel cable broadcasting operators to disconnect from their networks all those Russian TV channels that spread overt or covert anti-Armenian propaganda, and discredit the statehood and sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia;

-Initiate an official procedure for termination of Armenia's membership in the CSTO, thereby eliminating the major obstacle to the enhancement of military and technical cooperation with the West;

-Transfer all border guarding functions at "Zvartnots" airport, as well as at the Armenian-Iranian and Armenian-Turkish borders to the border troops of the Republic of Armenia, as stipulated by the Armenian-Russian agreement of 1992;

-Initiate an official procedure for termination of all agreements related to the Russian (102nd) military base in Armenia and complete withdrawal of the Russian armed forces from our country.

**Union of Informed Citizens
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly
Vanadzor Office**

Journalists' Club "Asparez"
Community Consolidation and
Support Center NGO
Europe in Law NGO
Free Citizen NGO
Peace Dialogue NGO
"Pink" human rights defender
NGO

Analytical Centre on Globalization
and Regional Cooperation
"Helsinki Association" human
rights defender NGO

"Shogher Union" social-educational
NGO
Restart Gyumri Civil Youth Cen-
ter NGO

Human Rights Research Center
NGO
"Democratic Platform" Founda-
tion

"Educational Center for Equal
Rights" NGO

Pushing Ahead: ProjectKharpert2022



By Ara Sarafian

Last week, I gave a presentation at the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church in Burbank, California. I had a mixed audience of students and professionals, clergymen and peace activists, and many Kharbertsies. I was introduced with the kind words of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, the Primate of the Western Diocese, and a Kharbertsie.

My talk was on the Gomidas Institute's ProjectKharpert2022. I gave a background to the project and how it started as a pro-active initiative to engage Turkish civil society, as well as Turkish authorities, for the integration of the Armenian heritage of Kharpert back into the public memory of the region. The background to the project were current development plans to turn the city of Kharpert into a historical and touristic centre, as well as a UNESCO world heritage site. This was not the first "proactive" project the Gomidas Institute adopted on Armenian issues in Turkey. In the past, it has been involved in organising conferences and seminars (Istanbul, Diyarbakir, Bitlis), exhibitions (Bitlis), commemorative events (Istanbul and Diyarbakir), book publications and releases (Istanbul, Ankara and Van), and several study tours across Turkey.

When ProjectKharpert2022 was initiated a year ago, we received the support of a number of groups and individuals, including the Kharpert Cultural Society. We began the project by opening up our position on a dedicated FaceBook page, ProjectKharpert2022, and wrote to the governor of Elazig and the municipal head of Elazig city. Our communications were treated as private and we allowed them time to consider what

we were offering. While we waited for a response, we continued with our work on the history of Kharpert. Much of our findings were published on our FaceBook page and we have more to offer.

We have now reached the stage of engaging Turkish civil society and many people in the Kharpert region and beyond have been receptive to us. We are currently preparing an online exhibition and presentation regarding Armenians in the Kharpert region before WWI. If we receive a positive response from Turkey, we will have a presentation in Turkey as well.

The Gomidas Institute has always represented a special voice of diaspora Armenians. We have been confident in our work, undaunted by possible obstacles, and believed in the essential goodness of people. That is how we have been able to work in Turkey and strike a chord.

We now have several options ahead of us, and how we proceed will depend on the responses we get in Armenian and non-Armenian circles. Our preferred choice is to continue in good faith and dignified manner that befits the memory of Armenians and their friends in the Kharpert region.

The issue of the Armenian Genocide is not our focus. We do not want it to obscure our understanding of Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire before 1915. We may choose to engage it at a later date, in a dispassionate and informed manner, but that is not our objective for this project. I am sure many people will agree with our approach.

I hope to give you updates of developments in the future and welcome serious participants who wish to join or promote the work we are doing.

Three Former Karabakh Presidents

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and security service chief were allowed to cross into Armenia through an Azerbaijani checkpoint in the Lachin corridor earlier in the day. Harutyunyan told RFE/RL's Armenian Service that when they headed to the Armenian border the ex-presidents were still in Stepanakert. He said nothing about Shahramanyan's whereabouts.

Karabakh's former premier Ruben Vardanyan, former Foreign

Minister Davit Babayan, former army commander Levon Mnatsakanyan and his ex-deputy Davit Manukian were arrested by Azerbaijani security forces while travelling to Armenia through the Lachin corridor last week. They are now facing various "terrorism" charges carrying long prison sentences. Azerbaijan's prosecutor-general said on Sunday that Baku also wants to arrest and prosecute about 300 other current or former political and military leaders of Karabakh

Manoogian Simone Foundation Relieves Financial Burden for AUA Students From Artsakh



**Manoogian
Simone foundation**

YEREVAN -- In these most challenging times in the history of the Armenian people, the Manoogian Simone Foundation has once again reached out to lend critical support to students from Artsakh enrolled at the American University of Armenia (AUA). "My family, my grandfather Alex Manoogian, my mother Louise Simone, and myself have always profoundly respected and known the importance of Artsakh and its people. In this heartbreaking moment, we are taking immediate action to provide tuition support to all the AUA Artsakh students so they need not carry this burden as we understand the profound stress they must be feeling now. This will not be our last step, but our first step. We are committed to finding ways, in other areas outside of AUA, to help those so cruelly and unfairly displaced," says Christine Simone, President of the Manoogian Simone Foundation.

Of the current AUA student population, 50 students from Artsakh are registered in undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The Manoogian Simone Foundation's commitment will bridge the financial gap to fully cover

their tuition obligation. This significant and generous assistance will ensure that these students and their families are relieved of the financial burden of tuition fees and can focus on their studies and other life priorities.

During this most difficult period, AUA stands with its students and the people of Artsakh and shares the pain and suffering of the families displaced from their homes, of those separated from or grieving the loss of loved ones. In earlier newsletters and other AUA news coverage, we have featured many of these students and their goals for the future, including their anticipated return home after graduation to make a positive impact in Artsakh.

As AUA strives to do what it can to help, the support of our donors and the magnanimous efforts by the Manoogian Simone Foundation are helping to mitigate some of the challenges that these students are facing. This financial aid helps cover the full cost of students' tuition and other fees, while providing encouragement and hope that they will be able to continue to pursue their goals and accomplish their academic and professional aspirations.

Armenian Parliament Ratifies Rome Statute

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during which the most serious war crimes were committed in the RA sovereign territory as well. From that moment on, the debates regarding the ratification of the Statute and the issue of retroactively recognizing the jurisdiction started again. As a result, the draft of ratification and recognition of jurisdiction of the Rome Statute adopted in 1990 was approved by the Government on 29 December 2022, after which it was submitted to the Constitutional Court. On March 24, 2023, the Constitutional Court made a decision stating that the obligations provided for by the Statute correspond to the RA Constitution. Drafts for ratification and retroactive recognition of jurisdiction were submitted to the Constitutional Court.

"The International Criminal Court investigates serious international crimes within the scope of its jurisdiction, and the purpose of the Court is to bring to justice those who have committed serious international crimes. We are talking about war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide. There are also new amendments in the Statute, one of which is the amendment imple-

mented at the conference in Kampala, which was made in 2010 and which added the crime of aggression to the list of crimes," Yeghishe Kirakosyan said. According to him, at the moment, the version of the draft without Kampala Amendment has been submitted for ratification. The rapporteur considered it possible to ratify the Kampala Amendment in the future.

The Representative on International Legal Matters expressed an opinion and hope that the ratification of the document can be of significant importance in terms of preventing and excluding the above-mentioned crimes in the RA territory.

The bill now must be endorsed into law by President Vahagn Khachaturyan.

Moscow was quick to react to the vote through Yury Vorobyov, the deputy speaker of Russia's upper house of parliament. Vorobyov described it as an "unfriendly step" directed at Putin.

Peskov criticized the "incorrect decision" later in the day. The ratification raised "additional questions" that were "passed on to the Armenia side in advance," he told reporters in Moscow.

"The Power of One Dram" and the "Hayordi" Camp - for Nagorno-Karabakh

YEREVAN -- IDBank and Idram sum up the results of the September program "The Power of One Dram" and announce the name of the next month's beneficiary.

The beneficiary of the "Power of One Dram" initiative in September was the educational program "Hayq to the world", to which companies donated AMD 3,397,784. The goal of the project was to create an opportunity for the youth of Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) to receive appropriate digital education, and then, while living in Nagorno-Karabakh, to work remotely in international organizations.

However, considering the forced displacement of the Armenians of NK and the impossibility of their residence in NK, the program will be implemented with some changes, considering the needs of the beneficiaries of the program. According to the head of the "Hayq to the World" project, Marina Malkhasyan, the project's working group is in constant contact with the youth of NK and has already met with a group of young people coordinating the project in NK. "Our goal at this time is to conduct a needs assessment and ensure that the basic life-sustaining needs of our beneficiaries are met. After the successful completion of this stage, when young people do not need any humanitarian support, we will return to the implementation of the educational program, because the most important thing for all of us at the moment is to provide them with work,



and thanks to our educational program they will have the opportunity to find jobs more easily, to work both in Armenia and remotely - in international companies. We will provide support in this matter," added Marina Malkhasyan.

The entire amount of "The Power of One Dram" for October will be donated to the "Hayordi" camp, which sheltered under its roof the families of victims of the Nagorno-Karabakh wars.

According to the coordinator of the "Hayordi" camp, Vache Vardanyan, more than 100 people forcibly displaced from NK were accommodated in the camp. The beneficiaries are family members of deceased servicemen: mothers, wives and children. Families will be provided with comprehensive services: a separate room with all amenities, three meals a day, a full needs assessment, psychological support, entertainment for children, advanced training and knowledge courses, employment support.

Ethnic Cleansing Completed

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explained Nazeli Bagdasaryan.

She further reported that 59,059 people in various provinces of Armenia have benefited from state support. This entails either providing them with a place of residence or, for those who already have a place of residence, offering them food, hygiene items, and financial assistance.

PM Pashinyan has announced that the Armenian government will cover the accommodation and utility expenses for those forcibly displaced from Nagorno Karabakh. According to the Prime Minister, each family will receive 40,000 drams per person per month for accommodation, in addition to an extra 10,000 drams per person to

cover all utility costs. This program is scheduled to commence on October 1 and will run for at least six months, benefiting all forcibly displaced individuals, regardless of age.

It should be noted that individuals who already own an apartment in the Republic of Armenia and those residing in special care centers who cannot rent an apartment will not be eligible for this program. Furthermore, each forcibly displaced person will receive a one-time payment of 100,000 AMD, as previously announced.

"The problems of our brothers and sisters forcibly displaced from Nagorno Karabakh will continue to be in the center of our continuous attention," PM Pashinyan pledged.

A UN Mission Arrives in Artsakh

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setting up a longer-term, more permanent UN presence on the ground.

UN officials may also have the chance to document possible evidence of alleged violence against civilians committed by Azerbaijani forces during their lightning offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh last month, Akopyan added.

Karabakh officials dismissed the visit as a formality. Hunan Tadevosyan, spokesperson for Nagorno-Karabakh's emergency services, said the U.N. rep-

resentatives had come too late and the number of civilians left in the regional capital of Stepanakert could be "counted on one hand."

"I did volunteer work. The people who were left sheltering in the basements, even people who were mentally unwell and did not understand what was happening, I put them on buses with my own hands and we took them out of Stepanakert," Tadevosyan told News.am.

"We walked around the whole city but found no one. There is no general population left," he said.

