

Hi Friend,

I'm Susanna, 16 years old from neighboring Armenia. While writing my letter, I became speechless for a moment: emotions strangling my throat, with pain in my heart and sorrow in my soul, but with a sober mind.

I know that you're young like me, with your own dreams, and unwilling to hear the word "enemy." Over the years, our nations have lived together peacefully as neighbors. My grandma tells me that goods were sold mostly by Azerbaijanis in the Ijevan market, and we used to be good neighbors. Each Armenian family had their friend, or "dost" as you call it in your language.

When I hear the word "war," my body shivers. I'm not trying to find the guilty ones, or find out who started it all. Both countries suffered irreversible losses because war breaks people's unfulfilled dreams, devastates countries, leaves children orphaned, takes away the son from the mother, separates loving people, and what's even worse, sows animosity and hatred in people's hearts. War takes away everything from us.

A state must avoid war as a captain avoids a shipwreck; but in both our cases, the states encourage enmity and war. A mother who buries her son, whose heart is broken with pain and suffering, whose soul is stormed, doesn't need a certificate of appreciation or a hero's title. She just needs to see her son again, to hug him and breathe him in, and live for him.

You and I are the future of our nations. We should assure our generations that there is no good in war. We shouldn't allow victims any more. Our children should live in peaceful and safe countries where love, unity, and a bright future reigns. The 21st century should be one of peace and unity.

I'd like our countries to open the borders so that each can visit the tombs of our relatives, as both sides have left the tombs of their relatives in different places.

The April war ripped us from many young people. Many dreams were left unfulfilled and many goals were unrealized. I want to lay my head on the pillow safely, and I want our nations to live without hatred. From today on, let's do our best to spread the idea that we shouldn't fight; that the 21st century is an era of civilization, and we should no longer suffer, mourn and cry.

May God give us sober minds, peace and love, unity, and respect.

Youth is power, and I'm sure that we, young people, can thumb the last page of the book called "War" and write a new one, called "Peace."

Best regards,

Peace supporter – Susanna