

Hi my neighbor,

I say “neighbor” as I live just 2km away from the Armenian–Azerbaijani border. My name is Tatul. I’m 32 years old and I’m a geographer by profession. I’ve served in the army.

Although I was a small kid at the time, I remember the war, the dark and cold years. Staying in the basement of our house for days, escaping the village on foot at night. In a word, I’ve spent my whole life in war, in an active one till 1994 and then neither war, nor peace, which is no less dangerous. Yurdash jan, I’m telling you this, so you know who I am. Now I’ll tell you what I think.

Despite all this, I don’t consider you an enemy, but a like-minded person, and from now on, without any preconditions, without seeking the guilty ones, will only seek peace. I offer you a hand of peace, and suggest taking small steps for a brighter and peaceful future. Let’s start with our families, and talk to them about friendship instead of hatred. Let’s talk about peace instead of war with our friends; let’s talk about the necessity of exchanging a weapon with a pen. My friend, have you noticed that we have a common goal? It’s peace, and we have common viewpoints to help achieve it.

You know, I often go to Marneuli where I have Azerbaijani “dosts”. We communicate with ease and do trade. My “dosts” treat me with tea and I treat them with Armenian cigarettes, and we have long conversations about our similarities: music, cuisine, appearance.

Yurdash jan, I have an offer: let’s meet in Georgia, look into each other’s eyes, shake hands, and talk about peace.

Your neighbor,

Tatul