



**Submission by Human Rights Watch to the Committee on the Rights of the Child's review of
Azerbaijan's periodic report for the 88th pre-session
*October 2020***

We write in advance of the 88th pre-session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child relating to Azerbaijan's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This submission focuses on the protection of education from attack.

Protection of Education from Attack (article 28)

Fighting between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh dramatically escalated on September 27, 2020. There are numerous reports of military and civilian casualties. Human Rights Watch is monitoring the ongoing situation and is aware of allegations from both sides about attacks on civilians and civilian objects, including schools. We are currently investigating potential violations of the laws of war, and plan to provide updated information about any grave violations against children in time for the session.

In the meantime, we hope the Committee will call on Azerbaijan to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration and commit to use the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use in Armed Conflict*. As of October 2020, 106 countries have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, including 5 of Azerbaijan's fellow Commonwealth of Independent States members, and 24 fellow Organization of Islamic Cooperation members.

We encourage the Committee to make the following recommendations to the government:

- Urgently endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, and commit, at a minimum, to observe the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use in Armed Conflict*.