



Armenian National Committee of America

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REPLACING MADRID: REACHING A DURABLE AND DEMOCRATIC NAGORNO KARABAKH (ARTSAKH) PEACE

The U.S. government - as one of three Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) member states mediating Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) related issues - is powerfully positioned to create conditions for a durable and democratic negotiated peace by pressing Azerbaijan to cease its cross-border attacks, end its threats of renewed war, and commit to a non-violent resolution.

America Should Seek Democracy-Based Solutions:

The free citizens of the independent Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Artsakh), having built a thriving pro-Western democracy despite decades of Azerbaijani aggression, deserve the same democratic freedoms and human rights that we cherish as Americans.

Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) is a very American story, representing the victory of a free people over foreign rule. Artsakh, as a democratic, Christian, pro-Western society standing strong against the forces of intolerance, deserves robust American support.

The OSCE: A Constructive Platform for Talks; a Flawed Plan for Lasting Peace

Armenian Americans endorse the OSCE Minsk Group negotiations as a constructive platform for continued talks, but reject its current proposal (known as the “Madrid Principles”) as a deeply flawed and ultimately counter-productive plan that actually sets back the cause of peace in the following ways:

- The Madrid Principles are profoundly asymmetrical, demanding upfront, strategic, and irrevocable concessions of land and security from Nagorno Karabakh in return for only vague, deferred and reversible promises regarding status from Azerbaijan.
- The phasing of the Madrid Principles front-load all the risk on Nagorno Karabakh, while rewarding Azerbaijan, the aggressor state. This flawed formula sets the stage for continued conflict and increased regional instability.
- The Madrid Principles would force a Nagorno Karabakh, a predominantly Christian nation, under a violent Azerbaijani regime that has recruited extremists (including Afghanistani Mujahideen and ISIS militants from Syria) to fight its anti-Armenian wars.
- Azerbaijan has, over the past 22-years, consistently violated its obligations under its 1994 cease-fire agreement with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, calling into serious question whether its current or future leaders would, in practice, respect Baku's commitments under a Madrid Principles-based peace plan.

-- The Madrid Principles run counter to our core American belief in democratic self-determination. A democratic and durable settlement should be based on the right of free citizens to live under a government of their own choosing.

ANCA Policy Proposals for a Durable Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) Peace:

The following U.S. policy proposals will help create the conditions for a durable and democratic peace:

-- **Replace the Madrid Principles:** The Administration should replace this flawed approach with a durable and democratic plan based upon the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh's right to security and self-determination.

-- **Return of Azerbaijani-Occupied Artsakh Territory:** The Administration should affirm that any discussion of territory should take place after Azerbaijan's international recognition of the independence of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, and constructively address the need for a comprehensive package settlement that includes the return of Artsakh territory currently occupied by Azerbaijani forces.

-- **Save Lives and Avert Renewed War:** The Administration should openly pressure Azerbaijan to accept the Royce-Engel peace proposals (which have already been agreed to by both Armenia and Artsakh), to 1) withdraw all snipers and heavy arms, 2) add international observers, and 3) deploy gunfire locators along the line of contact.

-- **Challenge Azerbaijan's Aggression:** The United States and the OSCE should openly challenge Azerbaijan's aggression, ending a pattern of silence in the face of aggression that has only emboldened Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

-- **Return Karabakh to the Peace Talks:** The Nagorno Karabakh Republic should be restored to the negotiating table as a full participant in all OSCE talks regarding its future security and status. The exclusion of Artsakh from talks about its own future is both highly immoral and ultimately counterproductive.

-- **Continue Aid to Nagorno Karabakh:** The United States should increase direct aid to Nagorno Karabakh, providing at least \$5 million annually for a humanitarian assistance program (including rehabilitation programs for children and adults with disabilities) that has been in place since 1998.

-- **Cut Military Aid to Azerbaijan:** The U.S. should cut off military aid to Azerbaijan until it ceases all threats and acts of aggression and commits to a peaceful resolution. The Administration should cease issuing waivers of the Section 907 restriction on direct aid to the Azerbaijani government.