



BRAD SHERMAN
UNITED STATES CONGRESS

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The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW Washington, DC 20520

RE: Council of Europe – January 26 Vote – Nagorno-Karabakh

Dear Secretary Kerry:

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe intends to vote January 26 on a Resolution entitled “Escalation of violence in Nagorno-Karabakh and the other occupied territories of Azerbaijan.” I urge you to oppose any move by the Council of Europe to declare the Minsk Group a failure and call for the Council of Europe to take over. The Minsk Group is a much better forum to mediate the dispute. This attempt to destroy the Minsk Group is bad for the course of peace in the Caucasus.

Doing away with the Minsk Group is not only bad policy but an insult to the American people and to the hard working and dedicated diplomats at the State Department. For generations, the people of Europe have urged America to be involved in Europe. In the twentieth century, hundreds of thousands of Americans died to bring peace to Europe. Now we are being told that a group chaired by France, Russia, and the United States should be dislodged and **a new group, without any involvement of the U.S., should take over.**

The United States has dedicated diplomats from Colin Powell and Ambassador Carey Cavanaugh, to Hillary Clinton and Ambassador Bill Burns, through you and Ambassador Jim Warlick, to bring peace to the Caucasus. Declaring that the United States State Department cannot be helpful in this effort is also an insult to the diplomats who have been involved in the Caucasus, and all of the diplomats in the United States State Department.

In addition, the Resolution is terrible Caucasus policy. It was basically written by Azerbaijan. It is so far from balanced that it will set back the peace process.

I know the U.S. has stated its opposition to the Resolution being contemplated. I urge you to redouble these efforts over the next few days.

Sincerely,

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

cc: Assistant Secretary Victoria Nuland
Deputy Secretary Antony Blinken
James Warlick, U.S. Co-Chairman of the OSCE Minsk Group