

**The Armenian-American Community & U.S. Foreign Assistance Policy  
for Fiscal Year 2027**

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**For the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Committee  
on Appropriations, of the United States Senate:**

Thank you, Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Schatz, for your leadership of this Subcommittee.

Nearly three years after Azerbaijan's September 2023 military assault forcibly displaced the entire indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) – an act of ethnic cleansing that emptied the region of more than 150,000 Armenians – the consequences of that campaign, and of Washington's continued unwillingness to hold Baku accountable, remain acute. We ask this Subcommittee to use the Fiscal Year 2027 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs appropriations bill to enforce real consequences on the Aliyev regime, sustain humanitarian and resettlement assistance for the displaced Armenians of Artsakh, secure the release of Armenian prisoners of war and detained civilians, and bolster the security and sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia.

Despite a series of high-profile diplomatic initiatives over the past year, including a White House summit between the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Baku has continued to act in bad faith. In February 2026, Azerbaijan sentenced sixteen Armenian detainees, including former political and military leaders of Nagorno Karabakh who have been held illegally since the 2023 assault, to terms ranging from fifteen years to life in prison, following trials that international human rights organizations, legal experts, and the European Parliament have widely condemned as a miscarriage of justice. On June 23, 2026, the Armenian hostages held in Azerbaijani custody marked their 1,000th day of unlawful detention. Azerbaijan continues to occupy more than 240 square kilometers of sovereign Armenian territory, even as the two countries have now held more than a dozen rounds of border delimitation talks, progress that has yielded only modest results, including Armenia's 2024 transfer of four enclave villages, while Azerbaijani forces retain a military presence that vastly outsizes any potential Armenia's presence on the other side of the border. This persistent asymmetry continues to undermine the integrity of the negotiations and the prospects for a just and lasting peace.

It is in this context that we view, with deep concern, the Administration's extension last year of the waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act. The waiver of Section 907 has not induced Azerbaijan's good-faith engagement on the release of POWs, the withdrawal of its forces from Armenian territory, or the protection of Armenian cultural and civilian property in Artsakh. To the contrary, Azerbaijan's sentencing of Armenian detainees just months after the waiver was extended demonstrates that the regime interprets the continuation of U.S. assistance as a green light for further intransigence, not as an incentive for peace.

These concerns were reflected in the appropriations process for H.R. 8595, the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027, through two amendments offered by Representative Costa of California, both of which we urge this Subcommittee to retain and strengthen in the Fiscal Year 2027 bill and report.

The first amendment directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, to report to Congress within 180 days on the damage, destruction, and continued threats to Armenian Christian religious, cultural, and historical heritage sites in Nagorno-Karabakh – including an assessment of damage to Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries, monuments, and cultural landmarks; an accounting of Azerbaijan’s actions to alter or obliterate the historical identity of these sites; an evaluation of the implications for regional stability and religious freedom; and recommendations for U.S. policy to preserve and protect this heritage. We ask the Subcommittee to incorporate this reporting requirement directly into the underlying bill.

The second amendment would condition any U.S. military or security assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan on Presidential certification that Azerbaijan has taken demonstrable steps to: unconditionally release all remaining Armenian detainees; immediately withdraw its military forces from sovereign Armenian territory; guarantee the protection of Armenian cultural and civilian property in Nagorno-Karabakh; and recognize the right of forcibly displaced Armenians to return to their homes. This certification requirement reflects precisely the kind of enforceable, results-oriented standard that Section 907 was designed to provide, and which the Administration’s waiver has failed to deliver. We urge the Subcommittee to adopt this certification requirement as binding law in the FY27 bill.

Our specific requests related to the FY27 National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs bill fall into four categories:

### **1) Assistance for the Displaced Armenian Population of Artsakh**

More than 100,000 Armenians forced from Nagorno Karabakh in 2023 remain displaced, joining the tens of thousands displaced by the 2020 Artsakh War. Armenia continues to bear the burden of resettling this population with insufficient international support. We request that the Committee sustain and expand targeted humanitarian, resettlement, and recovery assistance for the displaced Armenian population, with continued attention to housing, healthcare, education, and livelihoods, and that any assistance strategy explicitly affirm and support the right of displaced Armenians to return to their homes in Nagorno Karabakh, with their safety guaranteed through a permanent international monitoring mechanism.

We request the following language be included in the body of the Act:

*Of the funds appropriated under this heading, not less than \$100,000,000 shall be made available for assistance for the displaced Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh), including humanitarian relief, resettlement support, and recovery assistance for the Armenian victims of Azerbaijan’s 2023 ethnic cleansing campaign and prior aggression, and to support the right of return of displaced Armenians to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh.*

### **2) Azerbaijan**

We remain troubled that the Administration has chosen to extend the waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act notwithstanding Azerbaijan’s sentencing of Armenian detainees, its continued occupation of Armenian sovereign territory, and its failure to meaningfully advance the release of remaining POWs and captured civilians. U.S. military aid to Baku, including Section 333 Capacity Building assistance, Foreign Military Financing, and International Military Education and Training, should not materially add to Azerbaijan’s offensive capabilities or be interpreted by Baku as a signal that its continued intransigence will carry no consequences.

We request the following language be included in the body of the Act, consistent with the certification standard proposed in the Costa Amendment to H.R. 8595:

*None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be provided to the Government of Azerbaijan through United States military or security assistance programs until the President certifies to Congress that Azerbaijan has taken demonstrable steps to ensure the unconditional release of all remaining Armenian detainees, the immediate withdrawal of Azerbaijani military forces from sovereign Armenian territory, guarantee the protection of Armenian cultural and civilian property in Nagorno-Karabakh, and recognize the fundamental right of forcibly displaced Armenians to return to their homes.*

We further urge Congress to rescind the President's unilateral authority to waive Section 907, restoring the statutory prohibition on U.S. military and security assistance to Azerbaijan absent the certification above.

### **3) Armenia**

Armenia – a NATO Partnership for Peace member and historically one of the highest per capita contributors of peacekeepers to U.S.-led deployments – continues to face an acute security threat from Azerbaijan's ongoing occupation of its sovereign territory and Baku's continued military buildup along the border, even amid border delimitation talks. As Armenia pursues a more diversified set of security partnerships, including with the United States and our NATO allies, the security and sovereignty of Armenia must remain a central priority of U.S. assistance to the region.

We request the following language be included in the body of the Act:

*Of the funds appropriated by this Act, not less than \$50,000,000 shall be made available for assistance for Armenia to support Armenia's security and sovereignty in the face of regional threats from Azerbaijan, including support for the withdrawal of Azerbaijani forces from sovereign Armenian territory.*

### **4) Armenian Prisoners of War and Captured Civilians**

As of June 23, 2026, Armenian hostages held in Azerbaijan's custody have endured 1,000 days of unlawful detention. Azerbaijan's February 2026 sentencing of sixteen Armenian detainees – condemned internationally as a miscarriage of justice – demonstrates Baku's continued bad faith. We request that the following language, and the report directed by the Costa Amendment to H.R. 8595 on the protection of Armenian cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh, be included in the final FY27 bill and accompanying report:

*The Committee remains concerned by Azerbaijan's continued, unlawful detention and sentencing of Armenian prisoners of war and captured civilians and urges the Secretary of State to engage at all levels with Azerbaijani authorities to make clear the importance of adhering to their obligations, under the November 9, 2020 statement and international law, to immediately and unconditionally release all remaining prisoners of war and captured civilians.*

*The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, shall submit a report to Congress within 180 days assessing the damage, destruction, and continued threats to Armenian Christian religious, cultural, and historical heritage sites in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh), including an assessment of documented damage, destruction,*

*desecration, or alteration of Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries, monuments, and cultural landmarks; identification of actions taken by Azerbaijan to alter and obliterate the historical identity of such sites; an evaluation of the implications for regional stability and religious freedom; and recommendations for United States policy to support the preservation, monitoring, and protection of Armenian Christian cultural and religious heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh.*

In closing, we underscore our urgent calls for robust, sustained assistance to the displaced Armenian population of Artsakh, a binding certification requirement on any U.S. military or security assistance to Azerbaijan, and the immediate, unconditional release of all remaining Armenian prisoners of war and captured civilians.

The ANCA, as always, thanks you for your leadership and looks forward to working with the Subcommittee to support the displaced Armenian population of Artsakh, defend Armenia's sovereignty, and strengthen the U.S.-Armenia alliance, in furtherance of American interests and our shared democratic values.

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