



# Armenian National Committee of America

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## ANCA CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

**TO:** Members of Congress / Congressional Staff

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**Re: Overview of Trump-Sponsored Tri-Lateral Talks with Azerbaijan and Armenia and Next Steps**

**DATE:** August 8, 2025

Today, President Trump hosted Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the White House as part of a trilateral peace summit.

The ANCA has repeatedly raised its concerns with the terms of the draft peace agreement, which has imposed costly concessions on Armenia while rewarding Azerbaijan's military aggression that resulted in the genocidal ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh's entire Armenian population in 2023.

We believe true and lasting peace must be predicated on justice and accountability – ensuring the release of unlawfully detained Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives, the protection of Armenian Christian heritage and civilian property in Nagorno-Karabakh, the withdrawal of Azerbaijani military forces from Armenia's territory, and the safe and secure return of Armenians to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh as guaranteed under international law.

Unfortunately, the White House summit failed to address any of these unresolved human rights issues, undermining the prospects for real peace in the region.

### **Main Takeaways**

- **President Trump announced the waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act**, paving the way for the reauthorization of military assistance to Azerbaijan.
- **President Trump announced the establishment of the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP)** – where the U.S. will be granted a 99-year lease and exclusive development rights over a transportation corridor connecting Azerbaijan to its exclave Nakhichevan (and onward to Turkey) through sovereign Armenian territory. The route will be managed by third-party contractors.
- Armenia and Azerbaijan initialed the draft peace agreement finalized in March this year. **Note, the final agreement has not been signed or ratified by either country.** The agreement today represents a memorandum of understanding to finalize the deal at a later date.
- **Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to the dissolution of the OSCE Minsk Group**, the multilateral entity mandated to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that is co-chaired by Russia, France, and the United States.
- **No reference was made to the ongoing unlawful detention and abuse of Armenian prisoners of war, civilian captives, and the former political leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh.**

- Despite a question on the subject of **the return of Armenians to Nagorno-Karabakh, there was no discussion about the fate of the 150,000 Armenians forced from their homes** and whether the peace process would provide for their safe and secure return as guaranteed under international law.
- **No reference was made to Azerbaijan's ongoing military occupation of sovereign Armenian territory.** Azerbaijani forces occupy almost 100 square miles of Armenia's internationally recognized territory as a result of consistent military encroachments since May 2021.

### **ANCA Position**

- **Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act:** In the absence of a just, durable, and dignified peace, waiving Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act is a reckless step that risks emboldening Azerbaijan's aggression, particularly amid the ongoing detention of Armenian prisoners, the destruction of Armenian Christian and cultural heritage, and the occupation of sovereign Armenian territory.
  - Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act was enforced during the final year of President Biden's term, in response to significant bipartisan and bicameral Congressional pressure. In December 2023, the U.S. Senate passed S.3000 – introduced by Sen. Peters (D-MI) and then-Senator Rubio (R-FL) – which sought to enforce statutory prohibitions on military assistance to Azerbaijan. Earlier this year, Reps. Lawler (R-NY), Pallone (D-NJ), Bilirakis (R-FL) and Amo (D-RI) led a bipartisan letter to Secretary Rubio signed by 60 U.S. House members urging the continued enforcement of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act.
  - Enforcement of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act is a tool at Washington's disposal to ensure Azerbaijan's good-faith engagement in peace talks. **Waiving these statutory prohibitions on military assistance to Azerbaijan before the final ratification of a peace agreement, in the absence of tangible security guarantees for Armenia, and without a commitment to address ongoing human rights issues, removes a crucial deterrent against the risk of Azerbaijani escalation.**
- **Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP):** The Armenian National Committee of America categorically rejects any initiative that undermines or erodes Armenian sovereignty over its internationally recognized territory. The lease of Syunik's strategic transportation networks and the proposed mineral deal raise serious concerns for Armenia's national security, while failing to lay the foundation of a just, durable, and dignified peace.
  - Ceding long-term control over Armenia's critical infrastructure and transport routes to any foreign entity – particularly as a geopolitical concession to Azerbaijan – would only serve to legitimize Azerbaijan's aggression while failing to establish meaningful guarantees for Armenia's security. Such an arrangement would make Armenia increasingly dependent on external guarantors for its security, while emboldening Azerbaijan to pursue further extraterritorial demands over Armenia's internationally recognized territory.
- **Peace Agreement Terms:** Following the announcement of a draft peace agreement in March, the ANCA outlined its concerns with the asymmetric terms of the deal. Specifically, the draft agreement would require Armenia to forfeit all legal claims against Azerbaijan before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and agreed to the withdrawal of third-party ceasefire monitors – namely, the European Union's Monitoring Mission on the international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Following the announcement of these terms, Azerbaijan has sought to impose additional concessions not previously agreed to – including demanding changes to Armenia's constitution.

- Removing European and third-party monitors from the border would remove the only deterrent against continued Azerbaijani encroachment into Armenian territory. Azerbaijan's false accusations against Armenia and recent ceasefire violations only underscore the need for international observers.
- Withdrawing international legal claims undermines justice and accountability efforts on critical human rights issues, particularly given the ICJ's rulings ordering Azerbaijan to ensure the release of Armenian POWs, the protection of Armenian cultural heritage and civilian property in Artsakh, and the right of Armenians to return to their homes under safe conditions. In light of the exclusion of these key issues from the draft peace agreement, Congressional action to ensure the release of Armenian POWs, the protection of Armenian heritage and property, and the return of Armenians to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh is critical.
- The draft agreement not only fails to create meaningful security guarantees for Armenia, but erodes the existing accountability and deterrent mechanisms.
- **Dissolution of the OSCE Minsk Group:** While the OSCE Minsk Group has been operationally defunct for several years, its dissolution represents a setback to multilateral diplomatic engagement in ensuring a just, durable, and dignified peace in the region. Given the absence of any meaningful security guarantees for Armenia, multilateral engagement is essential to ensuring Azerbaijan is held accountable to this peace process – and to avert the risk of Azerbaijan imposing increasingly unfair and unreasonable demands on Armenia, as it has throughout the negotiation process.

**Prisoners of War & Civilian Captives:** Azerbaijan continues to unlawfully detain at least 23 known Armenian prisoners of war, civilian captives, and the former political leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh – who have been subject to torture and abuse in custody. Azerbaijan has subjected prisoners to sham trials, where they have been deprived of legal due process and face politicized charges. In recent months, Azerbaijan expelled the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) – the only entity authorized to visit Armenian POWs – putting their safety and well-being at grave risk.

- The release of Armenian prisoners must be a precondition for peace. Azerbaijan's continued detention and abuse of POWs is not consistent with its purported commitment to a peace process.
- The failure to address the release of Armenian prisoners during today's trilateral meeting, particularly given the proposed withdrawal of all legal claims before international courts, necessitates strong Congressional action to pressure Azerbaijan to ensure their immediate and unconditional release. The ANCA urges members to support upcoming legislative efforts to assess the applicability of Global Magnitsky Sanctions against Azerbaijani officials responsible for the unlawful detention, abuse, and extrajudicial killing of Armenian POWs – as a tool to leverage their release.
- **Right of Return for Armenians to Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh):** Following the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh's entire Armenian population in September 2023, the International Court of Justice issued a legally binding order calling for Azerbaijan to facilitate the safe and secure return of Armenians to their homes – consistent with international law – with assurances that they will not be subject to persecution or violence. Under the Biden Administration, several senior U.S. officials affirmed the right of return.
- Despite Azerbaijan's claims that Armenians can return to their homes, given decades of violence and systemic state-sponsored vilification of Armenians throughout all layers of Azerbaijani society, Baku's overtures are little more than lip service. As Azerbaijan engages in the destruction of ancient Armenian cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh and the widespread demolition of civilian property and public infrastructure, it is clear that Azerbaijan seeks to deny Armenians the right of return by leaving them with nothing to return to.

- In June 2025, Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Pallone (D-NJ), Bilirakis (R-FL), Valadao (R-CA) and Sherman (D-CA) circulated a bipartisan letter signed by 87 House members calling for the U.S. to support international efforts to ensure the collective, protected, and dignified return of Armenians to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh.
- Ensuring the return of Armenians to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh is critical to ensuring a truly just, dignified, and durable peace in the region. Failure to ensure the return of Armenians to their indigenous homeland rewards and legitimizes Azerbaijan's ethnic cleansing of the region.
- **Occupation of Sovereign Armenian Territory:** Azerbaijan's occupation of sovereign Armenian territory – including critical transportation networks and roads – represents an ongoing threat to Armenia's security. Today's trilateral agreement not only failed to address Azerbaijan's illegal military presence in Armenia's territory – it eschewed meaningful security guarantees for Armenia while advancing a peace agreement that would erode existing security and accountability structures through the removal of EU border monitors, the withdrawal of international legal cases, and the dissolution of the OSCE Minsk Group.

### **ANCA Perspective in the Press**

Please see the following articles highlighting the ANCA's calls for a true and lasting peace predicated on justice, accountability, and the dignity of the 150,000 Armenians forced from their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh:

- *The New York Times*: [Leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan Sign Peace Pledge at White House](#)
- *Washington Post*: [Before Gaza's Woes, there was Nagorno-Karabakh](#)
- *Washington Post*: [Trump to preside over Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process, upstaging Russia](#)
- *Politico*: [US brokers a deal between long-hostile Armenia and Azerbaijan](#)
- *The Hill*: [White House: Infrastructure, economics at center of Trump Armenia-Azerbaijan peace deal](#)
- *Al Jazeera*: [Azerbaijan and Armenia sign accord brokered by Trump at the White House](#)
- *CBS News*: [Some Armenian-Americans in Massachusetts critical of peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan](#)
- *Breitbart*: [White House to host Azerbaijan-Armenia peace agreement signing](#)

### **ANCA Requests**

In response to today's meeting, the ANCA is urging members to:

1. **Issue statements** calling for the immediate release of unlawfully detained Armenian prisoners, the safe and secure return of Armenians to their Artsakh homes, the withdrawal of Azerbaijani forces from Armenian territory, and the enforcement of prohibitions on U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan pursuant to Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act. Please see Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs [Rep. Pallone's \(D-NJ\)](#) and [Rep. Sherman's \(D-CA\)](#) statements on today's trilateral meeting.
2. **Support upcoming legislative efforts to assess the applicability of Global Magnitsky Sanctions** against Azerbaijani officials responsible for grave human rights abuses, as a tool to leverage the release of Armenian prisoners.
3. **Support legislative efforts to ensure the continued enforcement of prohibitions on U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan**, pursuant to Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, to ensure a deterrent against the risk of Azerbaijani military escalation.