



Armenian National Committee of America

1711 N Street NW | Washington DC 20036 | Tel: (202) 775-1918 | Fax: (202) 775-1918 anca@anca.org | www.anca.org

Armenian American Policy Priorities



In the wake of Azerbaijan's genocidal ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) in 2023, and amid fraught peace talks, the ANCA is urging Congress to support measures to promote a just, durable and dignified peace in the South Caucasus predicated on accountability, justice, and respect for the fundamental rights of Nagorno-Karabakh's forcibly displaced Armenian population.

Despite ongoing negotiations, Azerbaijan's aggression against Armenia continues to this day. Azerbaijan continues to occupy close to 100 square miles of Armenian territory – threatening Armenia's security, and destabilizing peace talks. In February 2026, Azerbaijan sentenced 16 Armenian POWs and civilian hostages to life in prison – in violation of international law, and inconsistent with the spirit and intent of regional peace efforts. And in April 2026, it was confirmed that Azerbaijan had destroyed two Armenian cathedrals in Artsakh's capital of Stepanakert – part of a systematic campaign to destroy Armenian cultural heritage and civilian property intended to deny the right of return to Artsakh's 150,000 forcibly displaced Armenians by leaving them with nothing to return to.

Furthermore, amid the growing threat facing Armenian and Christian minorities throughout the region – the ANCA urges the U.S. take tangible steps to protect the rights of vulnerable minority communities across the Middle East.

1. Prohibiting U.S. Military Assistance to Azerbaijan and Supporting Armenia's Security

Under Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, the U.S. is prohibited from providing military aid to Azerbaijan. This measure was adopted by Congress in response to Azerbaijan's assault and blockade against Armenia and Artsakh during the First Nagorno-Karabakh war (1988-1994). In 2002, Congress amended Section 907, providing the President with the authority to waive these prohibitions on an annual basis when determined to be in the U.S. national security interest. Section 907 was waived every year from 2002-2023, until President Biden upheld prohibitions on military aid to Azerbaijan in 2024 – following the ethnic cleansing of Artsakh's Armenians in 2023, and in response to considerable bipartisan and bicameral pressure.

In 2025, 60 U.S. Representatives signed a bipartisan letter urging the Administration to enforce Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act. Despite this, the Trump Administration reauthorized Section 907 in August 2025, following a White House summit with the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. President Trump extended the waiver of Section 907 in August 2026 – despite Azerbaijan's recent sentencing of unlawfully detained Armenian POWs, continued destruction of Armenian heritage, and ongoing occupation of sovereign Armenian territory.

ANCA Request: Sign a bicameral and bipartisan letter led by **Sen. Peters (D-MI)** and **Rep. Bilirakis (R-FL)** raising concern over the decision to waive Section 907 – and urging the Administration to withhold U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan until demonstrable progress has been made toward ensuring the release of all Armenian POWs, the protection of Armenian cultural heritage, and the withdrawal of Azerbaijani forces from Armenian territory. For more information, contact Sari Cureton (sari_cureton@peters.senate.gov) in Sen. Peters' office.

2. Securing the Release of Unjustly Detained Armenian POWs and Political Prisoners

In February 2026, Azerbaijan sentenced 16 unlawfully detained Armenian prisoners of war – including the former political leaders of Artsakh – to extended prison terms ranging from 15 years to life. These sentences followed a year-long sham trial process, during which Armenian detainees were subject to torture and abuse, denied due process, deprived of their fundamental legal rights, and charged on politically and racially motivated grounds.

ANCA Request: The ANCA urges Senators to call on the Administration to use all diplomatic means at its disposal to pressure Azerbaijan to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all unjustly detained Armenian prisoners of war – including the enforcement of Global Magnitsky Sanctions against Azerbaijani officials responsible for their unlawful detention and abuse in custody.

3. Ensuring Accountability for Azerbaijani Human Rights Violations & War Crimes

During and since the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War and 2023 ethnic cleansing of Artsakh, Azerbaijan perpetrated grave human rights violations including the torture of POWs and civilian captives, the extrajudicial killing of civilians, the summary execution of unarmed Armenian service members, the genocidal forced displacement of Artsakh's entire population and other war crimes. Azerbaijan has faced no repercussions for its violations of international law, and continues unabated in its human rights abuses today – including the unlawful detention of Armenian POWs, and the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage and civilian property in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Congress can exercise its oversight authority over U.S. military assistance by requesting a report into Azerbaijan's human rights practices pursuant to Section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act – which prohibits U.S. security assistance to “any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights.”

ANCA Request: The ANCA calls for the introduction of a resolution pursuant to Section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act (1961) requiring the State Department to provide a report on Azerbaijan's human rights practices, and a determination as to whether Azerbaijan's conduct would disqualify it from receiving further U.S. assistance.

4. Guaranteeing the Right of Return for Forcibly Displaced Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) Armenians

Under international law, the 150,000 Armenians forcibly displaced from Artsakh by Azerbaijan during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War and the genocidal ethnic cleansing of the region in September 2023 have the right to return to their homes under safe and secure conditions free from the threat of persecution. Azerbaijan continues to deny and violate this right through its ongoing destruction of Armenian cultural heritage, civilian property, and public infrastructure – intended to leave the region's Armenian population with nothing to return to.

ANCA Request: The ANCA calls on Congressional leaders to urge the Administration promote the right of Armenians to return to Nagorno-Karabakh during ongoing negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan – and to call for the protection of Armenian cultural heritage and civilian property in Nagorno-Karabakh.

5. Promoting Armenian Genocide Education

In 2019, the U.S. House and Senate formally recognized the Armenian Genocide with near unanimous support, overcoming decades of Turkey's efforts to thwart honest remembrance, recognition, and justice of this crime against humanity. This resolution, in addition to recognizing historic truth of genocide, called for the promotion of genocide education – with an understanding that genocide prevention can only begin through education.

ANCA Request: Support the introduction of a Senate companion to the **Armenian Genocide Education Act** – to allocate funding to the Library of Congress to support education on the Armenian Genocide in schools across the U.S., including through teacher training, and development of curricula material.

6. Delivering Robust Humanitarian Assistance to Armenian Refugees

Since 2020, Azerbaijan's genocidal ethnic cleansing of Artsakh displaced over 150,000 Armenians, who are now refugees in the Republic of Armenia. Artsakh Armenians have faced challenges in access to housing, employment, social services, medical and psychological care, and other basic needs. A USAID-funded needs assessment determined the humanitarian response would require up to \$2 billion in assistance. U.S. and other foreign assistance to date has not come close to meeting the needs of Artsakh's refugees.

ANCA Request: The ANCA continues to urge members to prioritize humanitarian aid to Artsakh refugees in its foreign assistance to Armenia, and allocate robust assistance to help meet the basic needs of the 150,000 forcibly displaced Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians who still require urgent humanitarian support.

7. Blocking U.S. Military Sales to Turkey

In light of Turkey's destabilizing conduct in the region, its violation of the security and sovereignty of its neighbors, and its egregious domestic and international human rights record, the ANCA strongly opposes Turkey's readmission to the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program – which would risk emboldening Ankara's belligerent behavior and reward conduct fundamentally inconsistent with its international obligations.

ANCA Request: The ANCA urges members to support bipartisan and bicameral efforts to assert robust Congressional oversight over U.S. military sales to Turkey – including **S.5205** to hold Turkey accountable for systemic political repression, censorship, transnational repression, and violations of international law.

8. Supporting an End to the War in Iran

The ANCA has long called for robust Congressional oversight and scrutiny of U.S. foreign policy, and urges members of the U.S. Congress to uphold their constitutional war powers authority to end the conflict with Iran. This conflict has already resulted in intolerable civilian casualties and reports of grave war crimes. Iran is home to over 100,000 Christian Armenians, a community dating back centuries – the largest Christian community in Iran, and the largest Armenian community remaining in the Middle East. Additionally, the ANCA is deeply wary of how regional spillover will impact the security of the Republic of Armenia, and the well-being of Armenian communities across the region – including Lebanon and Syria.

ANCA Request: The ANCA calls for de-escalation and a return to negotiations, reiterates our longstanding calls for robust legislative oversight over U.S. foreign policymaking, and urges Members of Congress to assert their constitutional war power authority to end the conflict with Iran.

9. Protecting the Armenian Quarter in Jerusalem

The Armenian Quarter is an integral part of the Old City of Jerusalem, with its Armenian presence dating back to the 4th century, when Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity. The Armenian Quarter has long been a place of pilgrimage and refuge, particularly in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.

Since 2024, land developers and settlers have launched armed attacks to seize the Armenian Quarter from its local residents to construct luxury hotels and other buildings that would result in the eviction and displacement of Armenian Christian families that have lived in the Old City for centuries. Municipal authorities have further pressured the Armenian Patriarchate through tax disputes and foreclosure proceedings.

ANCA Request: The ANCA urges the U.S. to protect Jerusalem's Armenian Christian Quarter from mounting legal, political, and physical threats – and to condemn violent attacks targeting Armenian institutions, oppose unilateral actions that disrupt the cultural and religious balance of the Old City, and engage diplomatically to ensure the survival of Jerusalem's historic Christian community.

10. Safeguarding the Rights of Vulnerable Minority Communities in Syria

Following the fall of the Assad regime at the hands of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), it is imperative the U.S. takes measures to safeguard the rights of vulnerable minority groups in Syria. This includes Armenians, Alawites, Druze, Yezidis, Kurds, and historic Christian communities (including Chaldean, Syriac, Assyrian, and Melkite peoples), among others, integral to the cultural lineage of Syria.

ANCA Request: The ANCA urges members to promote efforts to guarantee the rights of Syria's vulnerable communities, particularly during the transition period. The ANCA also calls on members to demand the removal of Turkish forces occupying Northern Syria, and hold Turkey accountable for its assault on Kurdish populations, and harboring of terrorist forces in Syria.