



# ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

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## ARTSAKH

### Brief Historical Overview:

- Nagorno-Karabakh was an Armenian-majority autonomous region during the Soviet Union. In the era of the *perestroika* reforms that permitted popular representation, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh voted for independence. In response, Azerbaijan not only targeted Armenians in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, and deported them, but it also launched a war against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to drive them out of their homes and abolish the region.
- The United States Senate adopted a bipartisan resolution (S.Res.128) in 1991 condemning the violence specifically and noting that "Azerbaijani forces have destroyed Armenian villages and depopulated Armenian areas in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in violation of internationally recognized human rights."
- S.Res.128 also reconfirmed "the commitment of the United States to the success of democracy and self-determination," in support of the aspirations of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.
- Nagorno-Karabakh is a *de facto* independent country, which declared its independence via referendum in 1991 during the era of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It is a representative democracy and has held successive free, fair, and transparent elections for its executive (office of the President) and legislative (unicameral National Assembly) branches of government.
- In 1992, in response to Azerbaijan's continued aggression, Congress adopted Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which states: "United States assistance under this or any other Act (other than assistance under title V of this Act) may not be provided to the Government of Azerbaijan until the President determines, and so reports to the Congress, that the Government of Azerbaijan is taking demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh."
- A cease-fire was reached in 1994 and since that time the OSCE with the U.S., France, and Russia as co-chairs of the Minsk Group have served as mediators trying to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the conflict and the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh.