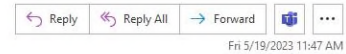


Update on South Caucasus Peace Negotiations

Tavlarides, Mark
To: Tavlarides, Mark

Fri 5/19/2023 11:47 AM

Good morning,

BGR Group represents the Republic of Azerbaijan. As you may be aware, Azerbaijan and Armenia have been in the midst of deep negotiations to reach a lasting peace in the region. The Embassy has asked me to pass on the following update stemming from recent Azerbaijan-Armenia Negotiations hosted by Secretary of State Antony Blinken in early May.

Supporting Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Advances United States' National Interests

Armenia and Azerbaijan resumed their negotiations on the peace agreement in the United States on May 1-4, 2023. The negotiations hosted by Secretary Blinken took place after a 6 month break and produced, as Secretary Blinken stated, "tangible progress on a durable peace agreement".

The framework for the peace agreement is mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both countries, agreed upon by both countries in the margins of the first European Political Community in Prague on October 6, 2023.

Following the breakthrough in Prague, Secretary Blinken hosted the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Washington DC on November 8, 2022 and stated that "the United States strongly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the 1991 restoration of independence was a vitally important moment in guaranteeing the rights of both countries, rights that we strongly support." By this statement, the United States emphasized the breakthrough achieved in Prague.

Following the May negotiations in Washington DC, President Charles Michel of the European Council hosted a trilateral meeting with the President of Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of Armenia in Brussels on May 14, 2023. The meeting, dubbed as "result-oriented," focused on progress on the path towards a lasting Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization.

The leaders confirmed their unequivocal commitment to the respective territorial integrity of Armenia and Azerbaijan with the ultimate delimitation of the border between them to be agreed through negotiations. The sides also made clear progress on connectivity, in particular "on the reopening of the railway connections to and via Nakhchivan."

Both Armenia and Azerbaijan made a historic decision to build their bilateral relations on the mutual respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both nations. By this act, the era of territorial claims and separatism that plagued the relations between the two countries for more than 30 years came to an end. This opens up the prospect of regional peace and developments to strongly embed the South Caucasus with the West. It will advance the United States' national interests in the broader region, including the South Caucasus, Central Asia and Middle East.

The U.S. must remain ready to help the region achieve an enduring peace. U.S. assistance should build on this momentum to achieve a peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan by continuing to support this agreement based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both countries.

As Azerbaijan and Armenia undertake this important, but delicate, work, we hope that the U.S. Congress acts with strategy and purpose, to incentivize a lasting peace and a safer region.

If you have any questions about Azerbaijan's commitment to the peace process, or questions about Azerbaijan's support for Ukraine and European energy security, I would be happy to connect you with the appropriate Embassy staffer.

Best,
Mark

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