

November 14, 2023

DISSEMINATION BY THE LIVINGSTON GROUP, LLC

FARA registration #6344

As you are aware, The Livingston Group represents the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia (NDA), Armenia's largest pro-Western political party.

I wanted to reach out to your office regarding the forthcoming House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee hearing titled 'The Future of Nagorno-Karabakh', to be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 and hosted by the HFAC European Subcommittee.

We believe that Armenia has a historic opportunity to be decoupled from the Russian orbit and reoriented into an alliance with the West--and the United States in particular. However, for this to happen, the U.S. executive branch must provide clarity as to what, if any, strategy they have regarding the pro-Western elements in Armenia, who can play a critical role in Armenia's geo-political realignment.

I want to enclose the following suggested questions for your Member's consideration to ask the witnesses, The Honorable James O'Brien, Department of State, and Dr. Alexander Sokolowski, U.S. Agency for International Development. I believe gaining greater insights into the Biden Administration's viewpoint towards Armenia's pro-Western movement will not only be valuable information for parties such as NDA, but for Members of Congress as well. Please let me know if well-received, and of any questions that you may have. Thank you for your consideration.

Suggested Questions For Hearing Witnesses

1. In recent years, especially in the aftermath of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war and the complete failure of the so-called 'Russian peacekeepers' to protect Nagorno-Karabakh, the popularity of Russia amongst the Armenian population has fallen significantly, as shown in polling from outlets such as the International Republican Institute (IRI). As a result, there has been a significant proliferation of pro-Western political parties in Armenia, the largest being the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia (NDA). Can you clarify what the Administration's official policy is towards pro-Western political opposition parties in Armenia, such as NDA? What role do you see pro-Western political parties playing in helping Armenia move towards the West?
2. There have been several well-publicized incidents of police brutality toward political opposition protestors in Armenia during the tenure of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, including in the aftermath of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh war and subsequent crises. The political situation in Armenia is highly volatile. Most recently, on October 6, 2023, the Armenian government's police force engaged in several instances of police brutality against a peaceful protest led by the National Democratic Alliance of

Armenia (NDA), Armenia's largest pro-Western political party. Members of the Kremlin's official propaganda machine, most notably, Vladimir Solovyov, have repeatedly called on the government of Armenia to imprison NDA's leaders for their "anti-Russian" activities and rhetoric. Will the Administration commit to communicating to Prime Minister Pashinyan and his government that any violence directed towards peaceful protestors, or attempt to imprison the leadership of pro-Western political opposition, such as the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia, will not be tolerated?

3. The United States has had a history of supporting Armenia's claims over Nagorno-Karabakh going back to the President Woodrow Wilson, who accepted the decision by the League of Nations recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh as part of the Armenian Republic as part of his Arbitral Award, both dated 1920. Armenia was then occupied by the Red Army, with subsequent transfer of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan by Joseph Stalin's personal decision in 1921. There is no reason why Washington should accept Stalin's borders. Legally, Washington never fully recognized the Soviet annexation of Armenia. The United States hosted an Armenian embassy in Washington through 1933 and, in 1959, designated Armenia as a "Captive Nation."

Recently, earlier in the year, Azerbaijan used starvation and outright military force to annex Nagorno-Karabakh forcing 120,000 people to leave their centuries-old homeland. Such actions should not be rewarded by the international community and conditions should be set for the refugees to return to their homes under international protection. The alternative will not lead to lasting peace. To have a true and permanent resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, would the Biden Administration agree to call for the matter to be litigated by a well-respected and objective third party arbiter, such as the United Nations International Court of Justice? This is a position endorsed by several prominent voices in Armenia as well, including Armenia's largest pro-Western political party, the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia.

4. One of the leaders of the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia (NDA), Armenia's largest pro-Western political party, attorney Varuzhan Avetisyan, is currently held as a political prisoner in Armenia in connection with the July 2016 anti-Russian rebellion in Yerevan, Armenia. Mr. Avetisyan's situation is analogous to imprisonment of Georgia's Mikheil Saakashvili in that both are viewed as threats by the Kremlin, and both suffer from poor health made worse by the imprisonment. From his attorney's letter we learn that his condition cannot be treated in Armenia and could be lethal if not treated adequately. Yet, his requests to travel abroad to receive treatment have been denied. Can the State Department conduct an inquiry into Mr. Avetisyan's situation and provide a report to my office and/or the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission?

THE LIVINGSTON GROUP, LLC PROVIDES REPRESENTATION FOR THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, A PRO-WESTERN POLITICAL PARTY IN ARMENIA. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, DC.