

Expanding Dialogue with Nagorno Karabagh

Communication: The key to lasting peace

Request to Members of Congress:

Support the establishment of normal diplomatic relations with Nagorno Karabagh by adopting legislative language lifting outdated restrictions on the free exchange of ideas with its democratically elected government:

"The [Appropriations] Committee directs the [State] Department to move in the direction of diplomatic relations with Nagorno-Karabakh. An open dialogue between the United States and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh will serve to alleviate international threats to Nagorno-Karabakh and aid in a peaceful resolution to regional conflicts."

Key Points:

An array of outdated restrictions - first put in place by the State Department more than 15 years ago - stand in the way of U.S.-Nagorno Karabagh dialogue.

These restrictions prevent meetings, block travel, prohibit exchanges, and bar cooperation on public health, environmental, counter-proliferation, anti-narcotics, and other issues, artificially limiting our understanding of the region, hindering our diplomatic efforts, and undermining our promotion of democracy. They even prevent direct oversight of U.S. aid programs in Nagorno Karabagh. The only narrow channel left open is through the OSCE Minsk Group, which is working on the peace process.

Benefits:

Opening up direct lines of communication with Nagorno Karabagh will:

Foster a direct dialogue toward peace and in support of democracy

Ensure hands-on monitoring of U.S. aid programs

Facilitate cooperation on U.S. regional priorities