

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Subject: FW: Armenia QTB for briefing [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Monday, 29 June 2020 1:16:00 PM
Attachments: [QB20-000078.docx](#)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 29 June 2020 12:52 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@dfat.gov.au>; s47F(1)
s47F(1)@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: Dougal McInnes <Dougal.McInnes@dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Armenia QTB for briefing [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s47F(1)

See attached our latest lines on Armenia.

Kind regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

A/g Assistant Director | Eastern Europe and Western Balkans Section
Europe and Latin America Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
P: s22(1)(a)(ii) | M: s22(1)(a)(ii)
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ARMENIA, NAGORNO-KARABAKH s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on Nagorno-Karabakh s22(1)(a)(ii)

DISPUTED TERRITORY OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH ('REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Recent meetings between State/Federal parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

- Australia has an open, multicultural society and a federal system of government where community groups – and parliamentarians – are free to express their views, within Australian law.
- Parliamentarians are free to meet with individuals claiming to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh'
 - this does not constitute a change in the Australian Government's position.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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Name: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Position: A/g Assistant Secretary
Branch/Division: ELD - Latin America and Eastern Europe Branch
Phone: s22(1)(a)(ii)

— s22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene in the dispute. Then-Foreign Minister Bishop confirmed the Australian Government's long-standing policy on Nagorno-Karabakh in Parliament in November 2015.

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02 June 2020

On 31 March 2020, 'presidential' and 'parliamentary' elections were held in the disputed territory. In response, HOM Ankara tweeted on 3 April: "Australia supports the territorial integrity of #Azerbaijan and does not recognise the 'elections' which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. It is more important than ever the OSCE Minsk Group continues its role in the peace process to achieve a negotiated settlement."

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

In late September 2019, a delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh region, including federal members John Alexander, Trent Zimmerman and Tim Wilson, and NSW state member Hugh McDermott. The delegation was escorted by Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC), Haig Kaiserian, and Representative of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia, Kaylar Mikaelian. They met Armenia's Prime Minister, ministers, senior officials, politicians, businesspeople, and representatives from the 'Republic of Artsakh'. During this visit, the delegation discussed recognition of the Armenian 'genocide' and expressed support for the 'Republic of Artsakh'.

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Government Ministers. In late August Senator Eric Abetz joined the membership of the 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group'.

On 19 July 2019, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, while visiting Armenia, said that: 'It's already 20 years [since] New South Wales has recognised the Armenian Genocide and is recognising the independence of Artsakh. We hope that Australia will also recognise, if Germany and some countries can recognise, and I always raise this issue among my parliamentary friends.'

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland and Turkey, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations, despite Armenia's efforts to have them participate formally in the talks.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the OSCE Minsk Group presented the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to the Foreign Ministries of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Also known as the Madrid Principles (after the place of drafting), the Basic Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement. They are:

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02 June 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control;
- interim autonomous status for the region with guarantees for security and self-governance;
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh;
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will;
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

Recent Media

Media attention to the parliamentary delegation's visit in September 2019, the NSW Premier's visit in July and the July 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation visit has been limited to ethnic community media in Australia, and coverage in Azerbaijan and Armenia. s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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02 June 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
29 October 2019	ANC media release reporting Australia had recognised the 'Republic of Artsakh' as a party to the conflict (only Armenia and Azerbaijan are recognised as parties to the conflict according to the OSCE Minsk Group process)
24 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: SE: asked about Nagorno-Karabakh and the 'Azerbaijan laundromat's' alleged links to Australian companies
24 October 2019	Sen. Richard Di Natale: SE: submitted twelve questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh and DFAT's travel advice
28 September 2019	ANC press release reporting delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, including federal and NSW state members
19 September 2019	Federal MP John Alexander makes a speech in the House of Representatives criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov
17 September 2019	NSW MP Dr Hugh McDermott makes a speech in the Legislative Council criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov (an Azerbaijani army officer pardoned in 2012 for murdering an Armenian officer) and calling for the right to self-determination for the 'Republic of Artsakh'
27 August 2019	ANC press release announces expansion of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Group to include Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, and Senator the Hon Richard di Natale
1 August 2019	ANC press release advises of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Launch, with 40 Inaugural Signatories including Communications Minister the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Assistant Treasurer the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, and the Shadow Home Affairs and Agriculture & Resources Ministers.
30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra
22 January 2019	ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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Phone: s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); s22(1)(a)(ii) ; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s33(b)
Date: s33(b)
Attachments: s33(b)

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , just for your info at this stage, but on 12 and 13 July there was a flare up in tensions on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Several Azerbaijani troops were killed. As you know, the two countries have been fighting over the Nagorno-Karabakh region for a number of years. There has been some European media on this, and Azerbaijan has issued a statement (attached). s47C , but we will continue to monitor developments. s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 July 2020 12:01 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>;
s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: s33(b)

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii) ,

s33(b) a media article about it:
<https://www.rferl.org/a/azerbaijan-armenia-border-deadly-clashes-second-day-calls-restraint/30724243.html>.

Regards,
s22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 July 2020 9:21 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: s33(b)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: ANC-AU STATEMENT: Azerbaijan Must Be Stopped [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 15 July 2020 4:48:52 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , s33(b)

s47C

Quick summary as follows:

- Fighting broke out on the Azerbaijan-Armenia border on 12 July. Azerbaijan claims that Armenian forces attempted to attack and seize positions in Tovuz district (north east Armenia). This is north of (so not in) the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh
- Armenia said Azerbaijan troops were attempting to infiltrate the border
- Media report the fighting has been continuing: 11 Azerbaijani troops have now been killed (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53402476>) and four Armenians
- US State Department issued a statement Monday condemning “ in the strongest terms the violence along the Armenia-Azerbaijan international border”
- Russia has also expressed concern and has said it is ready to mediate/help negotiations
- Turkey has reiterated Turkey’s support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, calling Armenia’s attack 'unacceptable' and warning Armenia to respect Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity

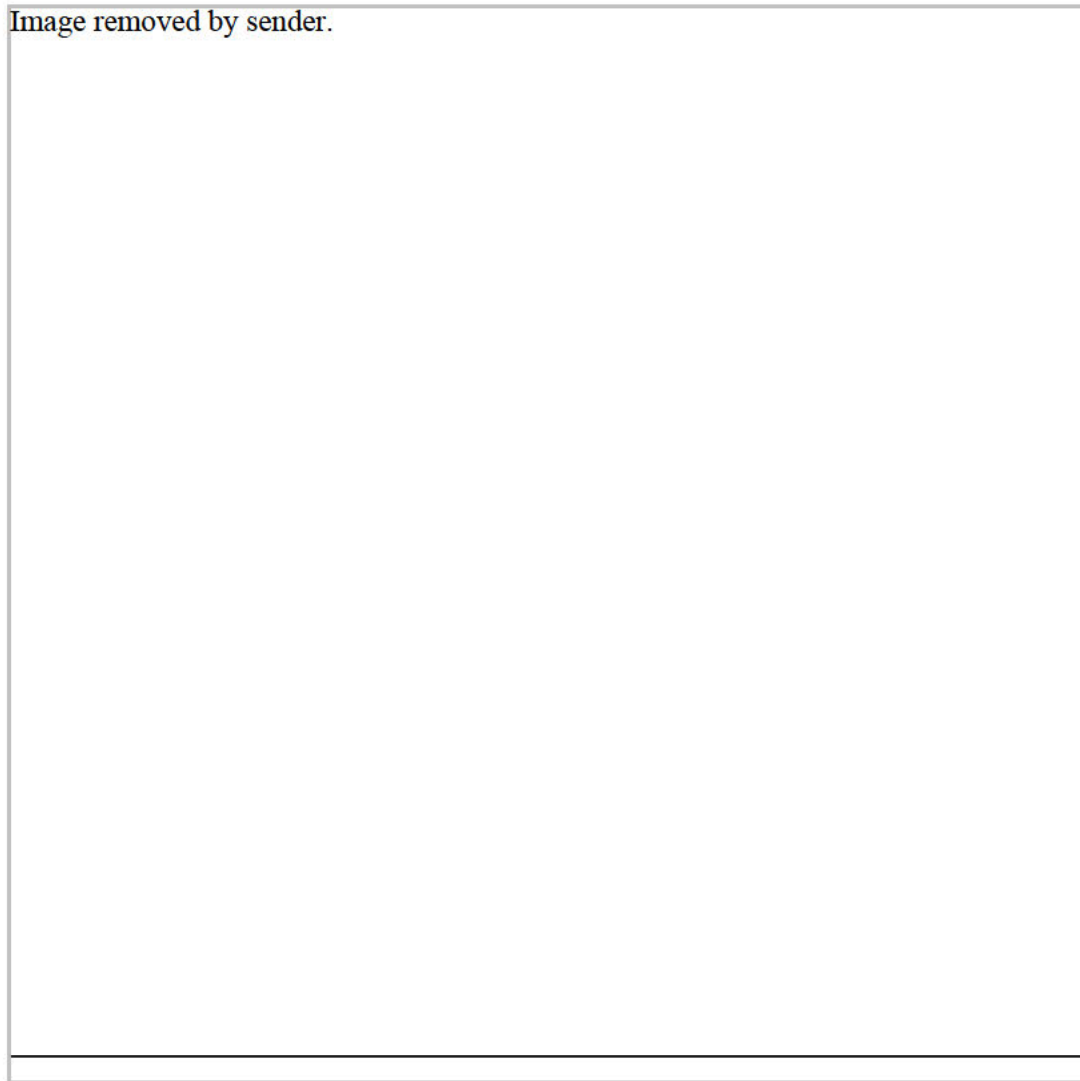
We will continue to watch this. Armenia is covered by Moscow and Azerbaijan by Ankara s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 July 2020 4:10 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: FW: ANC-AU STATEMENT: Azerbaijan Must Be Stopped [SEC=OFFICIAL]
s47C

From: Armenian National Committee of Australia <admin@anc.org.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 July 2020 3:30 PM
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: ANC-AU STATEMENT: Azerbaijan Must Be Stopped

Image removed by sender.



STATEMENT

Azerbaijan Must Be Stopped

Image removed by sender.



Armenia's civilian population is under attack by the brutal oil-dictatorship of Azerbaijan, who have again ignored their ceasefire obligations and international calls to maintain peace during the COVID-19 crisis.

On 12th July, Azerbaijani soldiers in a military jeep attempted to infiltrate the Armenia-Azerbaijan state border in the Republic of Armenia's eastern Tavush region. After warning shots by Armenian forces, the Azerbaijani soldiers abandoned their vehicle and were allowed to return to their positions. Upon return, Azerbaijani forces used artillery fire to attack the border post of the Armenian Armed Forces, who successfully defended their positions.

This skirmish proved to be the beginning of what has so far been over 48 hours of relentless tank and mortar attacks orchestrated by Azerbaijan and countered by Armenia, resulting in deaths on both sides.

In recent hours, Armenia's civilian population has been targeted by Azerbaijan, namely the villages of Chinari, Aygepar, Nerkin Karmiraghbyur, Paravakar and the city of Berd, where one of two factories attacked includes one

manufacturing face masks and PPE equipment to help Armenia combat the major COVID-19 coronavirus crisis gripping the country.

This already constitutes the deadliest escalation since the four-day war of April 2016, being a failed blitzkrieg by Azerbaijan which was not appropriately condemned by the international community.

Adding fuel to Azerbaijan's fire is their big brother, the Republic of Turkey, whose Ministry of Foreign Affairs publicly expressed unconditional support for the attack of the Azerbaijani army against the Republic of Armenia while distorting facts. This continues the years-long collaboration between the Turkish and Azerbaijani regimes to impose geopolitical and economic isolation on Armenia, and block the rights to self-determination of the Armenian Republic of Artsakh.

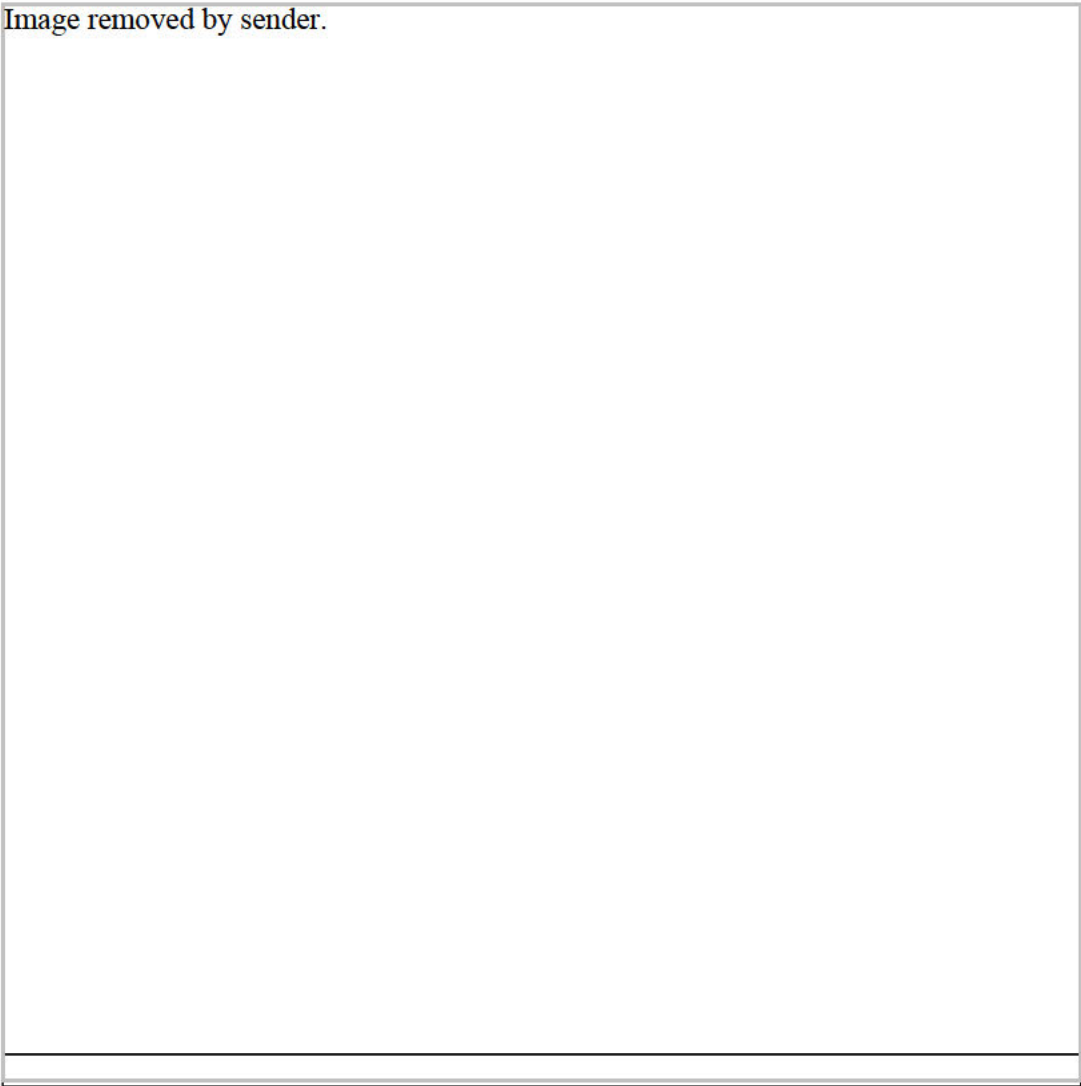
When Azerbaijan attacks the innocent indigenous Armenians of the internationally unrecognised Republic of Artsakh, we have sadly become accustomed to global calls for "restraint from both sides", without calling out and holding accountable the transgressing party.

Such inaction has emboldened Azerbaijan to now attack a sovereign neighbouring state. The Aliyev dictatorship is now attacking the Republic of Armenia proper, not the independent de facto Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh), and the Armenian National Committee of Australia calls on Australian political leaders and the Australian Government to condemn these attacks and stop Azerbaijan's military aggression.

Azerbaijan must be stopped.

Armenian National Committee of Australia
Sydney, 15 July 2020

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Armenian National Committee of Australia · 259 Penshurst St · North Willoughby, NSW 2068 · Australia

I

s47C

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 17 July 2020 11:21 PM
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Fwd: Request to Condemn Azerbaijan's Nuclear Threat [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1), s47E(d)

. Will monitor this over the weekend, s47E(d)

2020/07/17

UNOFFICIAL

From: "Haig Kayserian" <ed@anc.org.au>
Date: Friday, 17 July 2020 at 5:26:06 pm
To: "Steven Barraclough" <Steven.Barraclough@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: "Europe" <europe@dfat.gov.au>, "Cathy Raper" <Cathy.Raper@dfat.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>, s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>, s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>, "Payne, Marise (Senator)" <senator.payne@aph.gov.au>, "Sarine Sghomonian" <admin@anc.org.au>
Subject: Request to Condemn Azerbaijan's Nuclear Threat

Dear Mr. Barraclough:

Please find attached a letter from the Armenian National Committee of Australia, requesting Australia condemns Azerbaijan's threat to attack Armenia's nuclear power plant as part of their ongoing provocations against Armenia.

We look forward to a timely response, especially considering the immediacy of this dangerous situation.

Yours sincerely,
Haig



Haig Kayserian

Executive Director

Armenian National Committee of Australia

p: +61 (02) 9419 8264

a: 259 Penshurst Street, Willoughby NSW 2068

w: www.anc.org.au **e:** ED@anc.org.au

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); John Geering; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: FW: BREAKING: Australian Federal and State Political Leaders Condemn Azerbaijan for Attack on Armenia
Date: Monday, 20 July 2020 2:55:31 PM

[REDACTED]

Hi s47F(1), for FMO awareness, as co-convenors of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), **Trent Zimmerman MP and Joel Fitzgibbon MP have released a statement (below) strongly condemning Azerbaijan** for the recent clashes on the Azerbaijan-Armenia border. The **parliamentary friends of Armenia in NSW Parliament** have also issued a statement.

There was also a protest outside the Embassy of Azerbaijan here in Canberra on Saturday morning.

The actual fighting has continued sporadically over the last week. There have also been protests in Baku in support of Azerbaijan's armed forces, calling for stronger action against Armenia. s47C

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairs (France, Russia, US) have urged both sides to immediately resume talks and return OSCE monitors to the region.

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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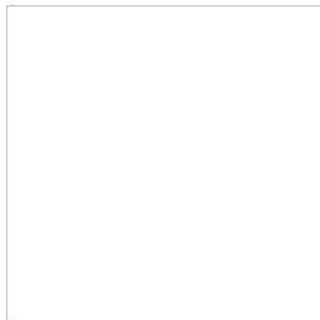
From: Armenian National Committee of Australia <admin@anc.org.au>

Sent: Friday, 17 July 2020 5:25 PM

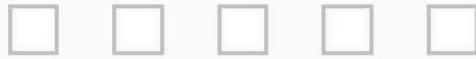
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <@dfat.gov.au>

Subject: BREAKING: Australian Federal and State Political Leaders Condemn Azerbaijan for Attack on Armenia

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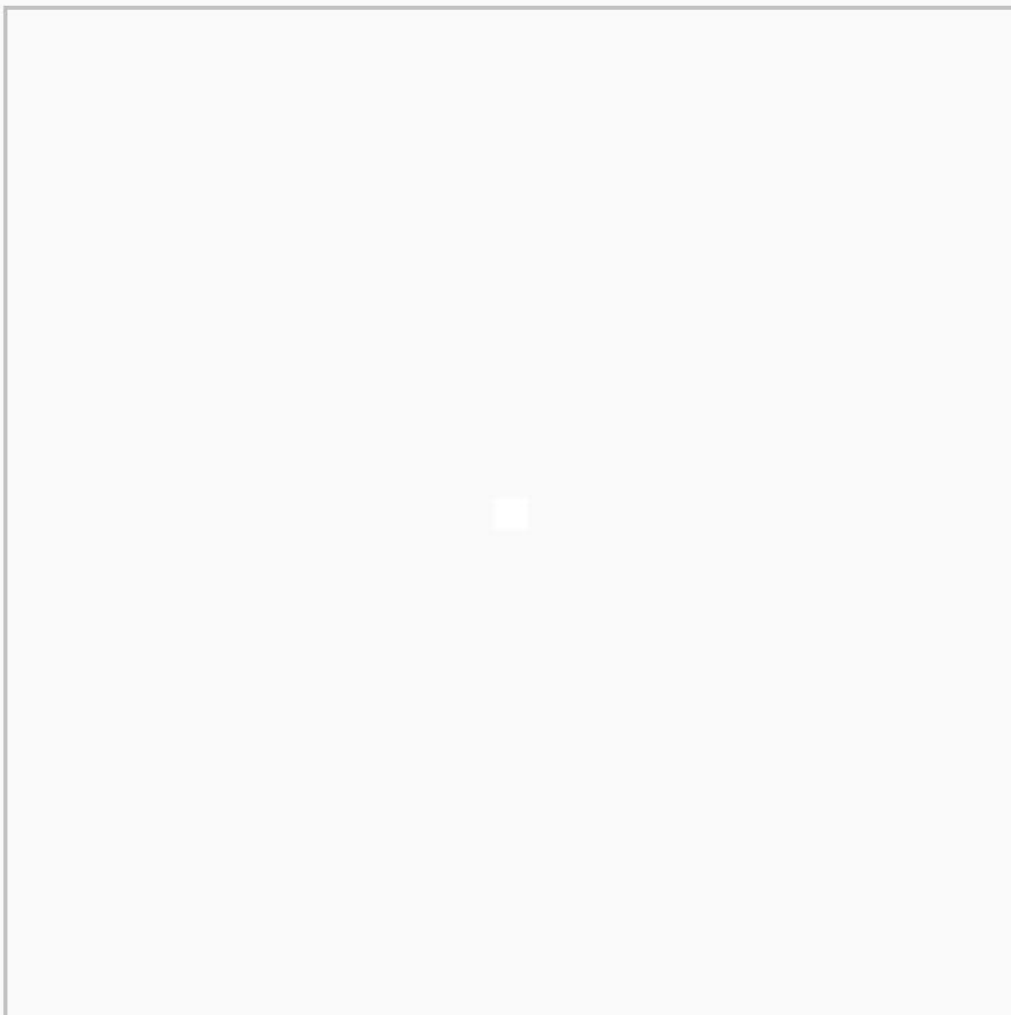
Armenia and Near East Briefings



SPECIAL EDITION

Australian Federal and State Political Leaders Condemn Azerbaijan for Attack on Armenia

MEDIA RELEASE



AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLITICAL LEADERS CONDEMN AZERBAIJAN FOR ATTACK ON ARMENIA

CANBERRA: The co-convenors of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), Trent Zimmerman MP and Joel Fitzgibbon MP have released a statement strongly condemning Azerbaijan's provocative attacks on the Armenian border town of Tavush over recent days, reported the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU).

The leaders of the Armenian Caucus in Australia's Federal Parliament called on "Azerbaijan to remain compliant with their ceasefire obligations and with international calls to maintain peace during the COVID-19 crisis" in their statement, released as Azerbaijan escalated threats of furthering their aggression by targeting Armenia's nuclear power plant.

"As co-convenors of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union, we are deeply disturbed by the outbreak of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan following Azeri aggression in the Armenian border region of Tavush," read the statement from Member for North Sydney Zimmerman and Member for Hunter Fitzgibbon, who is Australia's former Defence Minister.

"We call on Azerbaijan to remain compliant with their ceasefire obligations and with international calls to maintain peace during the COVID-19 crisis. Too many soldiers have already lost their lives and civilians in Armenian border towns are at risk. We are also concerned about reports of Azeri cyber-attacks on Armenian assets."

"Breaches of the ceasefire such as this only serve to destabilise an entire region and make the task of the Minsk Group in brokering a lasting peaceful settlement more difficult."

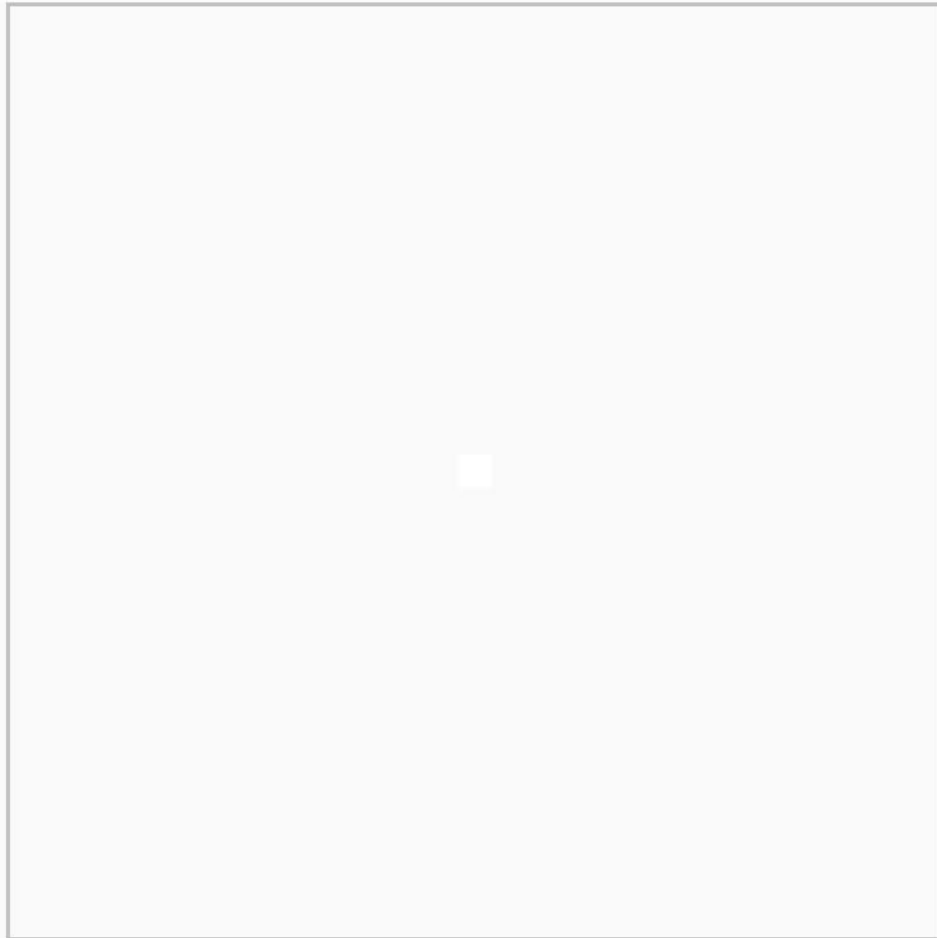
Zimmerman and Fitzgibbon added: "Azerbaijan must cease aggressive military action and work with Armenia to de-escalate the current conflict."

ANC-AU Executive Director Haig Kayserian thanked the co-convenors of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union for their support.

"We are grateful Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Fitzgibbon have delivered an absolute condemnation of the fundamentalist Azerbaijani dictatorship's attacks on Armenia's sovereign borders," said Kayserian.

"The attacks, coupled with the threats of nuclear terrorism by the Aliyev regime, are deeply concerning for Armenian-Australians, and we are fortunate to have the support of some of Australia's most respected political leaders."

MEDIA RELEASE



NEW SOUTH WALES ARMENIA-AUSTRALIA PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS CALL ON AZERBAIJAN TO COMPLY WITH CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

SYDNEY: The parliamentary friends of Armenia in Australia's largest state of New South Wales have also released a statement condemning the provocative actions of Azerbaijan, who continue their attacks on Armenia's border town of Tavush, reported the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU).

Azerbaijan is called on to "respect its internationally brokered ceasefire agreement with Armenia and not attack the Armenian population, including those of Armenian heritage in Artsakh" in the statement co-signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the NSW Armenia-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Jonathan O'Dea MP and Shadow Treasurer Walt Secord MLC, respectively.

"The NSW Armenia-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group in Australia, made up of more than 40 parliamentarians, strongly condemns any provocative actions of Azerbaijan, who apparently continue their offensive against Armenia's Tavush region, attacking villages with civilians," O'Dea and Secord wrote.

"Azerbaijan should respect its internationally brokered ceasefire agreement with Armenia and not attack the Armenian population, including those of Armenian heritage in Artsakh. Such aggressive action should be firmly condemned by governments in Australia and elsewhere, particularly during these times when our world is fighting a global pandemic."

"Our thoughts and prayers are with those affected in Armenia."

ANC-AU Executive Director Haig Kayserian welcomed this public condemnation of Azerbaijan's provocation, which began on 12 July and continues today, with Baku recently threatening missile attacks against Armenia's nuclear power plant.

"Thanks to Mr. O'Dea and Mr. Secord for their principled leadership of the NSW Armenia-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group, who have rightly joined their Federal counterparts in condemning Azerbaijan's unwelcome attack on Armenia," said Kayserian.

"Whether it is on the Armenian Genocide or Artsakh, our NSW Parliamentary friends have always been steadfast in supporting Armenian-Australian issues of priority, and the security and safety of our sisters and brothers in Armenia is of paramount priority to our community right now."

Contact:

Haig Kayserian
Executive Director

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259 Penshurst Street, Willoughby NSW 2068
PO Box 768, Willoughby NSW 2068
T: (02) 9419 8264 | E: admin@anc.org.au | W: www.anc.org.au



The Armenian National Committee of Australia is the peak public affairs body of the Armenian-Australian community. ANC-AU advances the concerns of the Armenian-Australian community.



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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s33(a)(iii)
Date: Friday, 21 August 2020 12:02:56 PM

OFFICIAL

s33(a)(iii)

- We have a bilateral relationship, Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and doesn't recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state

- s22(1)(a)(ii)

s33(a)(iii)

- In the past there have been ministerial/parliamentary delegation visits (in 2017 then-Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, visited Baku)
- Azerbaijan also plays an important role in the Non-Aligned Movement, including in international meetings and organisations like the UN

In terms of interest and diaspora in Australia, as per the 2016 census there are 1,036 residents of Azerbaijani descent (2016 census), s33(a)(iii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 21 August 2020 10:40 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: FW: FMO request for urgent TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Monday, 28 September 2020 10:17:41 AM
Attachments: s33(a)(iii)

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

And on Armenia-Azerbaijan:

Fighting in July and September 2020 on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) that followed fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

On 27 September fighting erupted again along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh with reports of at least 23 people being killed. Both sides claim to have inflicted serious damage on the other – Azerbaijan claims to have seized territory controlled by Armenia. There were reports of shelling by Azerbaijan forces. Armenia launched a general call-up and the first group of volunteers have been sent to Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey's President Erdogan continues to pledge support for Azerbaijan while Russia, traditionally seen as an ally of Armenia, called for an immediate ceasefire and talks to stabilise the situation. US and France have both called for an end of fighting. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric which could inflame the situation. On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers and senior officers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting

s33(a)(iii)

Thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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 Latin America & Eastern Europe Branch | Europe & Latin America Division
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From: s47F(1) t@dfat.gov.au
Sent: Monday, 28 September 2020 9:49 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Cc: Dougal McInnes <Dougal.McInnes@dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: request for urgent TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Grateful for urgent TPs on the Armenia/Azerbaijan Conflict s22(1)(a)(ii)

Kind regards

s47F(1)

s7



ABN: 68 167 361 088
Level 1, 60 Martin Place, Sydney 2000 NSW
www.ata-a.org.au

28.09.2020

Australian-Turkish community wishes to express its concerns about the resumption of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and we call for immediate ceasefire and a lasting peace in the region. Australia should continue to side with the international rule of law on the issue.

The violence is a direct result of the ongoing illegal occupation of Azerbaijan's sovereign territory by Armenia and its proxy irregular forces since 1993. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 62/243, as well as the UNSC resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 call Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijan illegal, and demand immediate withdrawal of occupying forces from the region.

These calls continuously fell onto deaf ears for 17 years, as diaspora lobbyists from Washington to Canberra have been trying to legitimize this illegal situation with motions in local parliaments and funding politician trips to the region.

OSCE's Minsk initiative, which was also supported by Australia, also failed to find a lasting solution to the situation. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan himself in 2019 said that they were not ready to make compromises within OSCE framework, and threatened to mobilise all "Armenian world" against Azerbaijan; following a \$100 million defence loan including fighter jets from Moscow.

Armenia is a strategic Russian military base in the region, armed up to teeth with Russian equipment. Russia's strategic advantage over Europe has begun to fade in recent years with Azerbaijan's energy lines reducing Europe's dependency to Russian oil and gas near completion. One can see direct correlation between the energy issue, Russian interests and Armenia's growing aggression and unwillingness to find a peaceful solution.

Over the weekend, numerous heavy military transport planes delivered cargo to Armenia from Russia via Iranian air space. Iran sees its 20 million or so Turkish population as a threat to Ayatollah's regime, and also has a lot to lose with Azeri energy lines reaching their capacity.

Recent reports about Armenia's collaboration with PKK, a designated terrorist organisation in Australia, and illegal settlement of Armenians from Syria and Lebanon to the occupied lands in Nagorno-Karabakh region which constitutes a breach of Geneva Conventions, should also be taken seriously.

Thousands of Australians with links to both nations are passionate about the issues surrounding the conflict, and a full-scale war between the two countries risks intercommunal tensions on our streets.

The peace can only be achieved within the international rule of law that clearly demands an end to Armenian occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh.

--- ENDS ---

On behalf of the Australian Turkish community,
Executive Secretary, ATAA
Huseyin Atayman
admin@ata-a.org.au

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: FMO request for urgent TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Monday, 28 September 2020 8:20:33 PM

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1)

Here are the consolidated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs:

Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict:

Fighting in July and September 2020 on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) that followed fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
 - Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

Background:

On 27 September fighting erupted again along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh with reports of at least 23 people being killed. Both sides claim to have inflicted serious damage on the other – Azerbaijan claims to have seized territory controlled by Armenia. There were reports of shelling by Azerbaijan forces. Armenia launched a general call-up and the first group of volunteers have been sent to Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey's President Erdogan continues to pledge support for Azerbaijan while Russia, traditionally seen as an ally of Armenia, called for an immediate ceasefire and talks to stabilise the situation. US

and France have both called for an end of fighting. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric which could inflame the situation. On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers and senior officers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting

Commercial flight options to and from Azerbaijan remain limited due to COVID-19 restrictions; but options are available. Azerbaijan's national carrier, AZAL, flies regularly to London, Berlin, Istanbul, Ankara and Antalya. Russian carrier Aeroflot also runs twice-weekly services to Moscow.

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Eastern Europe & Western Balkans Section
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s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barraclough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Re: Updated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Tuesday, 29 September 2020 5:52:16 PM

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1)

We're hearing unconfirmed reports of an Azerbaijani strike on civilians in Armenia (not Nagorno-Karabakh). s47C but we'll continue to monitor the situation closely.

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <@dfat.gov.au>
Date: Tuesday, 29 September 2020 at 2:14:40 pm
To: s47F(1) <@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: "Steven Barraclough" <Steven.Barraclough@dfat.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) <@dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Updated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1)

Here are the updated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs with new additions highlighted:

Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict:

Fighting in July and September 2020 on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzumur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) that followed fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region

- and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- **Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.**
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

Background:

Since 27 September fighting has erupted again along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh. **Authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh (28 September) published the names of 84 killed military personnel. Armenia stated that Azerbaijan was undertaking attacks in both the north and south (near the border with Iran) along the Line-of-Control.** Since the start of fighting, both sides claim to have inflicted serious damage on the other – Azerbaijan claims to have seized Armenian controlled territory. In recent months Azerbaijan had been undertaking exercises in the border region. Both sides accuse the other of launching hostilities. Armenia launched a general call-up and the first group of volunteers have been sent to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's President Erdogan continues to support Azerbaijan. **Turkey denies rumours it has introduced Syrian opposition fighters into the conflict, considering such a step 'unnecessary'. Armenia has stated it will use Russian supplied 'Iskander' missiles if Turkey becomes involved and uses F16 fighters. Russia has also supplied 'Iskander' missiles to Azerbaijan. Armenia PM Pashinyan has said he did not exclude the possibility that the escalation in Nagorno Karabakh could expand beyond the boundaries of the region and threaten international stability. Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia – both are members of the CSTO military alliance - called for an immediate ceasefire and talks. The US, EU, France and NATO, among others, have called for an end of fighting, as has Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with both Azerbaijan President Aliyev and Pashinyan, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations, a position also adopted by the OSCE. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric that could inflame the situation.**

Tensions in the region were heightened following the July 2020 escalation. Skirmishes earlier broke out on 12 July along the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

On 28 September, media reported that a number of commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This

included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

s47E(d)

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

From: s47F(1)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Updated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 30 September 2020 11:52:31 AM

Noted with thanks s22(1)(a)(ii).

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 30 September 2020 11:35 AM
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Updated Armenia-Azerbaijan TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1)

Here is today's update including the TP on the Minsk Group.

Regards

Fighting in July and September 2020 on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) that followed fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
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Background:

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Fighting continued on 29 September with reports of military losses on both sides. There were reports of attacks on civilian areas in both Armenian and Azerbaijan territory. Armenia claims that a Turkish F-16 jet shot down one of its planes – Turkey denies any involvement in the conflict. Both PM Pashinyan and President Aliyev spoke on a Russian current affairs program (29 September). Aliyev said Azerbaijan was responding to Armenia's aggression and that Yerevan was using the conflict to distract the population from internal problems. He said Turkey is providing only 'moral support' and is not a party to the conflict (describing this as 'fake news'). Pashinyan said Armenia was responding to Azerbaijan's aggression and that there was a threat to the existence of the Armenian people (with a reference to the 'genocide'). He said that Turkish participation in the conflict was a 'fact'. Regarding negotiations, Aliyev said that these could not occur due to the unacceptable demands of Armenia. Pashinyan said that an appropriate atmosphere was required and it would be difficult to have talks while hostilities were ongoing.

On 29 September, the UN Security Council called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to immediately halt hostilities and return to talks. Russia's President Putin spoke with PM Pashinyan expressing concern about military action and the need for talks. Georgia, which shares borders with Armenia and Azerbaijan, has closed transport routes to military supplies. In Australia, the Armenian National Committee of Australia has demanded publicly (and written to DFAT) that the federal government condemn Azerbaijan. It has also condemned the alleged role of Turkey in the conflict, in particular the alleged F-16 incident. ^{s33(a)(iii)} The Co-convenors of the Parliamentary Australia-Armenia Friendship Group (Zimmerman/Fitzgibbon) issued a statement about events that, 'The international community must urgently work to reinstate the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia to prevent the further loss of life in Nagorno-Karabakh and to avoid a wider military escalation.'

Turkey's President Erdogan continues to support Azerbaijan. Turkey denies rumours it has

introduced Syrian opposition fighters into the conflict, considering such a step 'unnecessary'. Armenia has stated it will use Russian supplied 'Iskander' missiles if Turkey becomes involved and uses F16 fighters. Russia has also supplied 'Iskander' missiles to Azerbaijan. Armenia PM Pashinyan has said he did not exclude the possibility that the escalation in Nagorno Karabakh could expand beyond the boundaries of the region and threaten international stability. Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia – both are members of the CSTO military alliance - called for an immediate ceasefire and talks. The US, EU, France and NATO, among others, have called for an end of fighting, as has Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with both Azerbaijan President Aliyev and Pashinyan, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations, a position also adopted by the OSCE.

Tensions in the region were heightened following the July 2020 escalation. Skirmishes earlier broke out on 12 July along the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

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s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

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s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s47C

s47C

s47C

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: John Geering; Steven Barracough; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: FW: Nagorno-Karabakh TPs [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Monday, 5 October 2020 7:57:31 PM

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , see below – for ease of reference have built them onto our TPs and added an updated background:

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia-Azerbaijan

Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group efforts and do not seek to intervene.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

If asked:

Does the Foreign Minister's statement that Nagorno-Karabakh is a "disputed territory" mean a change in Australia's policy position?

- No, it is long standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
- The Foreign Minister was referring to the conflict itself.

s47C

Is this an attempt by Azerbaijan at ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh?

- Australia is not aware of any evidence of ethnic cleansing.

Background

Fighting between Azerbaijani and Armenian troops and militants has intensified since late September 2020. Both sides have accused the other of attacking civilian areas, including Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert, and the Azerbaijan city of Ganja. France has supported Armenia's claim on 30 September that Turkey – a long standing ally of Azerbaijan - has deployed Syrian militants to Nagorno-Karabakh. Russia, France, the US and the EU have all called for a ceasefire.

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracrough](#) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Ankara cable re Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 6 October 2020 12:28:03 PM
Attachments: [Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict Zo.doc](#)

[REDACTED]

Hi s47F(1) , s47E(d)

Note also overnight the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (Russia, US and France) released a statement calling for a ceasefire.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Eastern Europe and Western Balkans
Latin America and Eastern Europe Branch | Europe and Latin America Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Telephone: s22(1)(a)(ii)
www.dfat.gov.au

Title: Azerbaijan-Armenia: Conflict Zone Expands - s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Summary

Armenian missile strikes against Azerbaijan's 2nd city Ganja and other targets outside the conflict zone s33(b)

Azerbaijan made its first major territorial gain with the taking of Jabrayil town on 5 October s47C. Aliyev has demanded Armenia withdraw from occupied territories before any ceasefire, s33(b) s47C

s33(b)

This report provides an overview of recent events in the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict, s33(b)

2. In public comments, the Azerbaijan Government has continued s47C in the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh. The taking of Madagiz village on 3 October prompted night time celebrations in Baku. On 4 October, Azerbaijani forces reportedly took the largest population centre to date - Jabrayil town in the south. Also that day, in a significant development, Azerbaijan authorities said Armenian forces had fired rockets at its second city, Ganja, killing one civilian and wounding 32. It was also claimed that missiles had hit the industrial town of Mingechevir and had impacted in Absheron peninsula to the north of Baku. Azerbaijan claimed civilian infrastructure and historical buildings were impacted, and threatened to retaliate against military targets inside Armenia. The expansion of hostilities to Ganja is notable because the city - albeit close to the border - is outside the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.
3. On 5 October in an interview with Turkish state media outlet TRT, President Aliyev said the intent of the Armenian missile strikes was to drag Russia into the war. In a revelation, Aliyev also admitted Azerbaijan owned Turkish armed drones had reduced Azerbaijani losses. He claimed the effectiveness of the drones shows Turkey's strength but also empowers Azerbaijan.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

4. s47C + s47E(d)

In a televised address to the nation, Azerbaijan's President Aliyev said forces would advance in a week-long offensive to retake lands lost to Armenians in the 1990s. "Azerbaijan has one condition, and that is the liberation of its territories...Let [Armenia] withdraw their troops, and the confrontation will be stopped."

5. Turkish representatives from across the political spectrum have reacted strongly to the Ganja and other missile attacks. On 5 October Foreign Minister Cavusoglu said Armenia was deliberately targeting civilians and said "This is a war crime." A Foreign Ministry [statement](#) said "the attacks of Armenia targeting civilians in Ganja...are a new manifestation of Armenia's disregard of law. We condemn these attacks." Earlier, a hospital opening ceremony on 2 October, President Erdogan reiterated Turkey's support and said that the fight would continue until Karabakh was freed. Speaking at a joint press conference with Italian Foreign Minister in Rome, Foreign Minister Cavusoglu said Azerbaijan had the capacity to free its territory, and had not yet requested support from Turkey yet. Cavusoglu and his Russian counterpart Lavrov had a phone call on Friday. The Turkish readout of the call claimed that "Armenia's aggression" had been the focus.

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Declassified - LEX2940 - Released under FOI

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Declassified - LEX2940 - Released under FOI

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Declassified - LEX2940 - Released under FOI

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Declassified - LEX2940 - Released under FOI

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: Thursday, 8 October 2020 12:40 PM

To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>; Suzanne Mccourt <Suzanne.McCourt@dfat.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Azerbaijan - cargo aircraft connection to Australia [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi, we don't have a sanctions regime on Azerbaijan s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47C

s47C

From: [Steven Barracough](#)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [John Geering](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Ankara cable and ICRC statement [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, 9 October 2020 10:57:44 AM
Attachments: [Azerbaijan-Armenia Diplomacy S.doc](#)

[REDACTED]

Hello s47F(1)
s47E(d)

It also cites a ICRC statement on shelling of civilian zones in the conflict. s47C
See below.

Steven

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/nagorno-karabakh-conflict-icrc-condemns-attacks-causing-civilian-deaths-and-injuries>

From: s47F(1)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); [Steven Barraclough](#); [John Geering](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Recent cables on Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict [REDACTED]
Date: Monday, 12 October 2020 2:41:21 PM

Thanks s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 12 October 2020 12:11 PM
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; Steven Barraclough <Steven.Barraclough@dfat.gov.au>; John Geering <John.Geering@dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Recent cables on Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Hi s47F(1)

Attached are two informative cables from Moscow and Ankara s47E(d)

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director | Eastern Europe & Western Balkans Section
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The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to their elders past, present and emerging.

Title: Armenia: Nagorno-Karabakh - s47C
s22(1)(a)(ii)

Summary

The current conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh marks the largest outbreak of violence since the initial conflict in the 90s. On 9 October, Azerbaijani and Armenian FMs have travelled to Moscow for mediation following President Putin's invitation - the first meeting both sides have consented to since hostilities started on 27 September. s47C + s47E(d)

The recent escalation in the long conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which started on 27 September (s22(1)(a)(ii)), remains ongoing as of 9 October.

s33(a)(iii) + s47E(d)

4. s33(a)(iii) + s47E(d)

Armenian response

5. In response to developments, Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has used rhetoric, stating that Armenia and Artsakh were fighting for 'global security' on a 'civilisational frontline' and 'against international terrorism'. Pashinyan has described Turkey's involvement as 'an existential threat' to Armenia, after referring to 'the first genocide ... [that] too place at the beginning of the 20th century ... [and] happened in the Ottoman Empire'. On 8 October, he tweeted that 'Nagorno-Karabakh cannot and will never be a part of Azerbaijan', following an earlier tweet on 6 October that stated that if Azerbaijan were to succeed, it would 'mean a genocide for the Armenians' of Nagorno-Karabakh.

6. At the same time, Armenia has affirmed its willingness to resume negotiations, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stating that it 'stood ready to engage with the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries to re-establish a ceasefire regime based on the 1994–1995 agreements' on 2 October. Pashinyan affirmed this, adding Armenia was committed to the peaceful settlement of this dispute during a meeting of the heads of government of member states of the Eurasia Economic Union on 9 October. In an earlier interview, Pashinyan reiterated Armenia's preference for the OSCE Minsk Group but added that Azerbaijan needed to 'accept the formula that there is no military solution' and that any solution 'must be acceptable not only for Azerbaijan, but also for Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh' and would involve compromise.

7. While Pashinyan earlier said Armenia was considering recognising the independence of Artsakh, so far this has not happened. 'Authorities' in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh on 3 October called on the international community to recognise its independence and described this as 'the only effective mechanism for restoring peace and security in the region'.

8. Within Armenia, the National Security Service head was dismissed amid claims of attempts to spread misinformation amongst Armenian soldiers. The government has introduced restrictions on media reporting as part of its response to the fighting and has increased its defence spending by AMD 40 billion (approximately AUD 116 million), in addition to the AMD 301 billion (approximately AUD 872 million) originally planned. Pashinyan's son, Ashot, has also reportedly joined the Armenian army as a volunteer.

Russia s47C + s47E(d)

9. Late on 8 October, the Kremlin published a statement by President Vladimir Putin, in which he noted he had been in touch with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and Pashinyan, called for an end to hostilities and invited the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia to Moscow on 9 October for consultations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey

Lavrov mediating. Exchanging prisoners and the bodies of dead soldiers would be part of the discussions. At the time of writing, attendees were en route to Moscow for this meeting and Post will report on further developments following the meeting.

10. On 7 October (Putin's birthday), Putin commented in an interview with *Rossiya 1* that Russia had certain obligations under the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) to Armenia and, as it always had done, it was currently fulfilling and would continue to fulfil these obligations. However, the hostilities were not taking place on Armenia's territory. The CSTO's Secretary-General Stanislav Zas had earlier said that the CSTO would only intervene if Armenia (not Nagorno-Karabakh) was attacked or its sovereignty was threatened, adding that this possibility was unlikely.

Minsk Group

11. The OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs have put out two further statements on Nagorno-Karabakh. The second statement of 5 October was by the Russian, French and American Foreign Ministers and it condemned 'in the strongest terms the unprecedented and dangerous escalation of violence in and outside of the Nagorno-Karabakh zone'. The Co-Chairs continued to call for an unconditional ceasefire and urged parties to 'commit now to resuming the settlement process on the basis of existing core principles and relevant international documents'.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s33(a)(iii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); [Steven Barraclough](#); [John Geering](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Cable on Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 14 October 2020 11:23:11 AM
Attachments: s47E(d)



Hi s47F(1)

Attached is a cable sent overnight s47E(d)

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Armenia/Azerbaijan [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Monday, 19 October 2020 9:57:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[QB20-000078_201014_Armenia.docx](#)

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Apologies for the delay. Please find attached the latest QTB for Armenia (+ conflict with Azerbaijan). s47C . Another ceasefire was announced over the weekend. s47C

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @abf.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 October 2020 12:22 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Armenia/Azerbaijan [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

I hope you are well. ABF is again preparing for a WCO meeting – this time the Permanent Technical Committee (SES Band 1) – and I am after a background brief on Armenia/Azerbaijan on an if needed basis.

s47C

I couldn't find an FM statement on the topic so would appreciate any assistance in tracking down a short of the shelf brief we could use.

Thanks and regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)
Assistant Director WCO and Customs Partnerships
Customs and Trade Policy Branch
Customs Group
Australian Border Force
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Acknowledgement of Country - signature block graphic 2020

OFFICIAL

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ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUES

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Australia's position on current fighting between Armenia-Azerbaijan (and an alleged threat [July] by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamor Atomic Energy Station)

- Australia is concerned by the escalation in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
- Welcome the ceasefire of 10 October
 - which hopefully will provide an opportunity for substantive negotiations to find a permanent settlement to this longstanding conflict.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Australia's position on reports of shelling civilian areas and using cluster munitions

- Australia shares international concern at reported indiscriminate shelling by all sides of civilians and the reported use of illegal cluster munitions, explosive weaponry and airborne missile attacks on populated areas.
- Australia supports the International Committee of the Red Cross' call (4 October) that all feasible measures be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

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14 October 2020

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

Does the Foreign Minister's statement of 1 October describing Nagorno-Karabakh as "disputed territory" mean a change in Australia's position (or recognition of the 'Republic of Artsakh')?

- The Foreign Minister's mention of 'disputed territory' in her statement of 1 October referred to the conflict itself and does not constitute a change in Australia's position.
- It is long-standing policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's role in supporting Azerbaijan

- Turkey is a long-standing ally of Azerbaijan, and Australia continues to call on all parties to show restraint.

Claims of (likely) ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh

- Australia is not aware of any evidence of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Background

Fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, September-October 2020

Fighting over the self-proclaimed (Armenian controlled) 'Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh' and seven surrounding districts in Azerbaijan erupted on 27 September. Fighting involves Azerbaijan and forces of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia provides military support to Nagorno-Karabakh and the two militaries are closely integrated.

In Moscow on 9-10 October, in talks chaired by Russian foreign minister Lavrov, the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a ceasefire from midday Moscow time, 10 October. This entailed the 'humanitarian aims' of the exchange of prisoners, detained persons and collection of the dead. Both sides agreed to return to OSCE Minsk Group talks.

On 11 October, the Turkish and Russian foreign ministers (the key external powers in the Southern Caucasus) agreed on the necessity of implementing the agreement. The warring sides have since accused each other of violating the ceasefire: Azerbaijan accused Armenia (11 October) of shelling its second-largest city, Ganja, with the loss of civilian life, and other targets. Azerbaijan claims to have taken some territory around Nagorno-Karabakh. Since fighting began both have accused the other of attacking civilian areas, including Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert. There were reports of cluster munitions being used. Foreign journalists have been injured in shelling.

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14 October 2020

When fighting commenced, Moscow called for an immediate ceasefire and talks, as did the US, EU, France, NATO, and Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with the Azerbaijan and Armenian leaders, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations. The US also called on the two countries to refrain from provocative rhetoric. On 5 October, the Co-Chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (Russia, France and the US) released a statement calling for a ceasefire. On 13 October, the Co-Chairs noted 'with alarm the continuing violence' and called on the two leaders to execute in full the obligations agreed on 10 October 'in order to prevent catastrophic consequences for the region'.

A new factor in the fighting has been Turkey's increased political and military support (e.g. drones) for Azerbaijan. Satellite imagery showed some Turkish F-16s in Azerbaijan, left after joint exercises in July-August. Armenia has accused Turkey of funneling Islamist fighters from Syria to the conflict zone. France said it had evidence that supported this claim. Armenia and Russia are members of the CSTO military alliance, and Russia has a military base in Armenia. s47C

Australian reactions to the current fighting

On 1 October, the Foreign Minister issued a statement expressing concern over the renewed fighting, urging all parties to show restraint, and supporting the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to negotiate a peaceful solution. The Executive Director (Kayserian) of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC) criticized the statement for 'failing to call out the attack...instigated [by]...Azerbaijan' which was 'backed by Turkey'. On 6 October, several hundred Armenian youth held a protest outside the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. The ANC called on the Government to condemn Azerbaijan (and Turkey) as the aggressors and avoid 'fence-sitting'. s33(b)

On 8 October, the co-convenor of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), Trent Zimmerman MP (North Sydney) called for international action. He claimed 'ethnic cleansing' would occur and that Azerbaijan's aim was to allegedly 'see every person of Armenian heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh...forced from their homes...traditional lands [and]...out of that country.' John Alexander MP (Bennelong) on 6 October called on all parties to de-escalate the conflict while calling on Turkey to "stop egging on" Baku.

On 11 October, following the announcement of a ceasefire, DFAT tweeted:

We welcome this important step of a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which must be fully implemented and observed to help end the longstanding conflict between the parties.

Australian reactions to the July 2020 fighting

Following July 2020 skirmishes on the Armenian-Azerbaijan border, Trent Zimmerman (24 August) spoke in Parliament about the fighting. He highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting [Armenia's] Metzamur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.' Mr Zimmerman said such behavior was 'not acceptable.' ANC Executive Director early wrote to DFAT (17 July) about 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

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14 October 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Statement of the International Committee of the Red Cross about attacks on civilians

Following reports of shelling during the current conflict of civilian areas (in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh) and claims both sides had used cluster munitions and explosive weaponry, the International Committee of the Red Cross (4 October) issued a statement:

"The ICRC strongly condemns the reported indiscriminate shelling and other alleged unlawful attacks using explosive weaponry in cities, towns and other populated areas, in which civilians are losing their lives and suffering terrible injuries, including life-changing ones".

"All feasible measures must be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructures like hospitals, schools, and markets. Water supply for civilians must also be protected. These are obligations under international humanitarian law".

Australians in Azerbaijan (*information provided when fighting started*)

On 28 September, media reported that several commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

s47E(d)

Nagorno-Karabakh

The long-standing policy of successive governments is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state (Armenia refers to the region as the [so-called] 'Republic of Artsakh'). No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. The Government supports the efforts of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to regulate the conflict and does not seek to intervene. During the current fighting, Armenia raised the possibility of recognising the 'independence' of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The conflict has its origins in the early years of the Soviet Union when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan (1923). The region's population was overwhelmingly Armenian, but more Azerbaijanis settled there during the late Soviet period. In February 1988, local representatives sought Moscow's permission to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia, which it declined. This led to protests, violence and ethnic Azerbaijanis leaving the region. Nagorno-Karabakh declaring independence in September 1991 led to war that continued until the Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. Armenia gained control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions on the conflict. Despite skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

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The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh') is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. A settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the *Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict* (Madrid Principles):

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

On 8 December 2016 the Minsk Group reiterated there was 'no military solution to this conflict', called on parties to adhere to the 1994/95 ceasefire agreements, and the settlement 'must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Under the current (2018-) government, s47C

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Recent Media

The current outbreak of fighting has generated local media coverage.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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14 October 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

24 August 2020	Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, Member for North Sydney spoke in the Federation Chamber about the fighting (July) on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the alleged threat from Azerbaijan to attack the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station in Armenia.
12 June 2020	Mr Scott Morrison MP – representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, answered the question of Mr Josh Burns MP (below).
23 March 2020	Mr Josh Burns MP, Member for Macnamara, submitted a Question in Writing regarding the Prime Minister's previous (May 2011) comments on recognition of the 'Armenian Genocide'.
30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
29 October 2019	ANC media release reporting Australia had recognised the 'Republic of Artsakh' as a party to the conflict (only Armenia and Azerbaijan are recognised as parties to the conflict according to the OSCE Minsk Group process)
24 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: SE: asked about Nagorno-Karabakh and the 'Azerbaijan laundromat's' alleged links to Australian companies
24 October 2019	Sen. Richard Di Natale: SE: submitted twelve questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh and DFAT's travel advice
28 September 2019	ANC press release reporting delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, including federal and NSW state members
19 September 2019	Federal MP John Alexander makes a speech in the House of Representatives criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov
17 September 2019	NSW MP Dr Hugh McDermott makes a speech in the Legislative Council criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov (an Azerbaijani army officer pardoned in 2012 for murdering an Armenian officer) and calling for the right to self-determination for the 'Republic of Artsakh'
27 August 2019	ANC press release announces expansion of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Group to include Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, and Senator the Hon Richard di Natale
1 August 2019	ANC press release advises of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Launch, with 40 Inaugural Signatories including Communications Minister the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Assistant Treasurer the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, and the Shadow Home Affairs and Agriculture & Resources Ministers.
30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh'

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delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra

22 January 2019

ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) ; [Steven Barraclough](#)
Subject: Armenia (conflict): s47E(d) [REDACTED]
Date: Monday, 19 October 2020 11:43:55 AM
Attachments: [201017 Cable Armenia Nagorno-Karabakh humanitarian.doc](#)
[201016 Cable Armenia – Nagorno-Karabakh An .doc](#)

[REDACTED]

Good afternoon s47F(1)

s47E(d)

The humanitarian situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia is coming more difficult with IDPs heading to Armenia. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: Steven Barracough; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Nagorno Karabakh attacks: update and advice for reply to ANC [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Tuesday, 20 October 2020 1:52:22 PM

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47E(d) the

current situation is as follows:

- **Both sides are accusing the other** of violating both the initial ceasefire (which commenced 10 October) **and a subsequent truce that was supposed to start at midnight on 17 October**
- Both sides are accusing the other of drawing on **foreign fighters**
- **ICRC** sees signs of significant military losses, especially in comparison to civilian losses, and the mass movement of people away from the conflict zone
- **The OSCE Minsk Group** released a statement on 13 October calling on Azerbaijan and Armenia “to take immediate steps to execute in full the obligations of the sides according to the October 10 Moscow statement” and that the Co-Chairs were “working with the sides on the substantive issues of the Nagorno-Karabakh political settlement process in order to reach a negotiated solution” <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/466998>
- **Canada and the UK** released a joint statement on 6 October calling on the parties to the conflict to stop the violence and respect the ceasefire
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nagorno-karabakh-uk-and-canada-joint-statement-in-response-to-continued-military-clashes>
- On 9 October **Canada’s Foreign Affairs Minister** Francois-Philippe Champagne said he told his Turkish counterpart that Ankara should “stay out” of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Canada has also suspended military export permits to Turkey. Trudeau and Erdogan spoke on 17 October - **Canada’s Prime Minister** “stressed the importance of all parties seeking a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy, noting that there could be no military solution to this conflict. The Prime Minister expressed his deep concern about rising casualties, the loss of civilian lives and violations of the ceasefire. The Prime Minister urged Turkey to use its influence to bring the parties to the table to resolve the conflict peacefully.” <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/readouts/2020/10/16/prime-minister-justin-trudeau-speaks-president-turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan>
- **US Secretary of State Pompeo** has said the US “has asked every international player to stay out of the region” and on 15 October criticised Turkey’s involvement and called for a diplomatic resolution <https://www.state.gov/secretary-michael-r-pompeo-with-erick-erickson-of-the-erick-erickson-show-on-wsb-atlanta>
- **France** had previously criticised Turkey’s backing of Azerbaijan (30 September) and accused Turkey of sending Syrian fighters <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-armenia-azerbaijan-putin-macron-idUSKBN26L3SB>
- **THE UN Secretary General’s spokesperson** issued a statement 18 October condemning all attacks on populated areas impacted by the conflict and calling for both parties to fully abide by the truce and resume substantive negotiations

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-10-18/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-the-situation-between-armenia-and-azerbaijan>

- **EU High Representative Borrell** issued a statement on 18 October saying he had spoken with Armenia and Azerbaijan to impress upon them that the ceasefire should be unconditional and strictly respected by the two sides and that attacks on civilians should stop immediately https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/87158/nagorno-karabakh-statement-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell_en

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au
Date: Sunday, 18 October 2020 at 8:27:39 pm
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au
Cc: "John Geering" <John.Geering@dfat.gov.au>, "Steven Barracrough" <Steven.Barracrough@dfat.gov.au>
Subject: Fwd: Nagorno Karabakh attacks [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s47C

OFFICIAL

From: "Haig Kayserian" <ed@anc.org.au>
Date: Friday, 16 October 2020 at 11:21:35 pm
To: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au
Subject: Nagorno Karabakh attacks
Dear s47F(1)
You would have likely seen our community's disappointment at Australia's refusal to

characterise the war in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) as attacks by Azerbaijan. Several allies have already done this, including France and Canada, while U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo affirmed that Armenians are on the defensive in recent hours ([click for our latest briefing](#)).

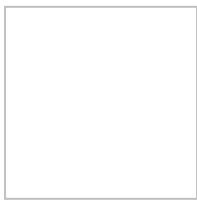
There are far more countries who have called out Turkey for their destructive role in the attacks—some fault them for providing resources to Azerbaijan (their F-16s are attacking civilians and they are known to be commanding Azerbaijan's air force), while all have criticised Ankara for deploying Islamist Jihadist mercenaries—in the thousands—to join the Baku's attacks on the indigenous Armenians of Artsakh.

We ask that the Foreign Minister catches up on this positioning, as not calling out the aggressors are emboldening Aliyev and Erdogan's genocidal policies, which have included official statements on behalf of both dictatorships that a ceasefire will only hold if Armenians leave Nagorno Karabakh—this open threat at ethnic cleansing needs to be called out and stopped before more lives are lost, more are injured and more are displaced. This has caused nearly three weeks of sleepless nights for our community, and their frustrations are now squared at Australia, who we feel is fence-sitting during a humanitarian disaster. Amnesty International has proven the use of cluster bombs in Artsakh's capital Stepanakert, which is a 50,000 populated civilian town with no military targets.

I look forward to your reply.

Kind regards,

Haig



Haig Kayserian

Executive Director

Armenian National Committee of Australia

p: +61 (02) 9419 8264

a: 259 Penshurst Street, Willoughby NSW 2068

w: www.anc.org.au **e:** ED@anc.org.au

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) ; [Steven Barraclough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: 201020 Cable: Ankara Post: Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 October 2020 11:29:38 AM
Attachments: [201020 CABLE Ankara Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict Fi.doc](#)

[REDACTED]

Good afternoon s47F(1)

Please find attached a cable from Ankara (Turkey) Post about the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict. It was sent on Tuesday 20/10.

Key points include that the second ceasefire has been broken. Overall Azerbaijan has made military gains and the public mood in Azerbaijan continues to support military operations.

s47C + s47E(d)

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Eastern Europe and Western Balkans Section
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s22(1)(a)(ii)

@dfat.gov.au

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Title: **Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict: Fighting Continues**
s22(1)(a)(ii)

Summary

The second ceasefire attempt in the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict failed immediately. Aliyev continues to announce villages retaken. s33(b)

A second ceasefire that came into force at midnight local time on Saturday 17 October was reportedly immediately violated by both sides. Earlier that day, President Aliyev announced that Azerbaijan had retaken Fuzuli town and 7 villages in that district. Azerbaijan also claimed that Armenia had deliberately attacked Ganja city for the second time resulting in the deaths of 13 citizens. In response to the latter incident, Aliyev said that "Azerbaijan will give its response, and it will do so exclusively on the battlefield." Later on 19 October Aliyev announced via twitter that Azerbaijan had taken 14 villages in Jabrayil district, while bemoaning Armenia's violation of the ceasefire. s47C + s47E(d)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

DFAT Declassified - LEX2940 - Released under FOI

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barraclough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s7
Date: Wednesday, 21 October 2020 1:08:22 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)



Hi, s47C

The initial comment on the Washington talks came from Azerbaijan, but there is nothing I can see as yet on the Department of State website or Sec of State Pompeo's twitter feed providing any more details.

<https://thehill.com/policy/international/521895-pompeo-to-meet-separately-with-azerbaijan-armenias-top-diplomats>

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/19/mike-pompeo-azerbaijan-armenia-430151>

In recent comments:

- US Secretary of State Pompeo has said the US "has asked every international player to stay out of the region" and on 15 October criticised Turkey's involvement and called for a diplomatic resolution <https://www.state.gov/secretary-michael-r-pompeo-with-erick-erickson-of-the-erick-erickson-show-on-wsb-atlanta>. Azerbaijan's foreign ministry said Pompeo's remarks were not in line with official U.S. government statements on the conflict: "These remarks also do not correspond to the status of the United States as one of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group." <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-armenia-azerbaijan/new-clashes-in-nagorno-karabakh-pompeo-says-turkey-makes-situation-worse-idUKKBN2711BL>
- The OSCE Minsk Group released a statement on 13 October calling on Azerbaijan and Armenia "to take immediate steps to execute in full the obligations of the sides according to the October 10 Moscow statement" and that the Co-Chairs were "working with the sides on the substantive issues of the Nagorno-Karabakh political settlement process in order to reach a negotiated solution" <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/466998>
- The US also joined a joint statement (with the other Minsk Co-Chairs) on 5 October calling for a ceasefire <https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-calling-for-a-ceasefire-in-nagorno-karabakh>

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s47F(1) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 21 October 2020 12:48 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: s7

s47C

s7

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s7

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Nagorno Karabakh attacks: update and advice for reply to ANC [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 21 October 2020 3:09:20 PM

OFFICIAL

s47C

Pompeo's latest interview doesn't specifically mention the Minsk Group, but he does say the resolution of the conflict ought to be done through negotiation and peaceful discussions.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47C

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Nagorno-Karabakh: updated estimates brief [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Friday, 23 October 2020 2:05:15 PM
Attachments: [201021 Draft update ESTIMATES Armenia 23 oct-.docx](#)

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , following on from your discussion with Steven, please see attached the updated Senate Estimates brief on Nagorno-Karabakh. s22(1)(a)(ii)

We will also continue to revise as things develop.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Eastern Europe and Western Balkans
Latin America and Eastern Europe Branch | Europe and Latin America Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Telephone: s22(1)(a)(ii)
www.dfat.gov.au

9. ARMENIA: CONFLICT WITH AZERBAIJAN, NAGORNO-KARABAKH, s22(1)(a)(ii)

Handling Note: ELD leads on these issues.

Strategic Messages

- Australia is concerned by fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan and urges all parties to show restraint and return to negotiations.
- Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
- We support the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs efforts to lead negotiations and do not seek to intervene.
- s22(1)(a)(ii)

What is Australia's position on fighting between Armenia-Azerbaijan?

- Australia is concerned at the escalation in fighting over the last four weeks.
- We welcome the ceasefire announced on 10 October but are concerned over reports of violations by both sides.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- The conflict should be resolved by negotiations between the parties, and not by military means.
- We support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairs and do not seek to intervene.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

s47C

Supplementary Budget estimates: 28 October 2020

- We do not seek to intervene
- Consistent with the European Union and other international partners, our approach is based on the following principles:
 - we support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group
 - we recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan
 - we call on all parties to show restraint and to engage in substantive negotiations
- The conflict should be resolved by negotiations between the parties and not by military means.
- Turkey is a strong supporter of Azerbaijan and a member of the Minsk Group, and we continue to call on all parties to show restraint and support the efforts of the Minsk Group Co-chairs.

s47C

- Like our international partners, Australia has urged the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- The conflict should be resolved by negotiations between the parties, and not by military means.
- Australia and its international partners support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group.

Why did Australia not condemn Azerbaijan for its 'nuclear threat' against Armenia in July 2020?
(alleged threat that Azerbaijani missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamur Atomic Energy Station)

- We continue to urge both parties to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

Does the Foreign Minister's statement of 1 October describing Nagorno-Karabakh as "disputed territory" mean a change in Australia's position (or recognition of the 'Republic of Artsakh')?

- The Foreign Minister's mention of 'disputed territory' in her statement of 1 October referred to the conflict itself and does not constitute a change in Australia's position.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

s47C

- Australia supports the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group.

What is Australia's position on reports of shelling civilian areas and using cluster munitions?

- Australia shares international concern at reported indiscriminate shelling by all sides of civilians and the reported use of illegal cluster munitions, explosive weaponry and airborne missile attacks on populated areas.
- Australia supports the International Committee of the Red Cross' call (4 October) that all feasible measures be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructure.

What is Australia's position on claims of (possible) ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh?

- Australia is not aware of any evidence of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh.

What additional support is available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan who wish to leave?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.

Supplementary Budget estimates: 28 October 2020

- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the Australian Embassy in Ankara (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need assistance.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Supplementary Budget estimates: 28 October 2020

- s22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

TABLE 1: Australia: Statements, correspondence

s33(b)	
29 Sep	Haig Kayserian, Executive Director Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC) wrote to DFAT (Barraclough) with follow-up emails demanding that the Government condemn the 'Turkey-backed Azerbaijan attack'
30 Sep	The Co-Convenors of the Parliamentary Australia-Armenia Friendship Group (Zimmerman/Fitzgibbon) issued a statement that: 'The international community must urgently work to reinstate the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia to prevent the further loss of life in Nagorno-Karabakh and to avoid a wider military escalation.'
1 October	<p>Foreign Minister publishes a Statement about fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (see below)</p> <p>Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh.</p> <p>We urge parties to the conflict and all other sides to show restraint and support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to help negotiate a peaceful resolution.</p>
2 October	DFAT (Geering) wrote to Haig Kayserian, Executive Director Armenian National Committee of Australia, outlining Australia's position on the conflict (see Attachment B).

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

TABLE 2: International statements – resolution efforts

When fighting commenced, Moscow called for an immediate ceasefire and talks, as did the US, EU, France, NATO, and Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with the Azerbaijan and Armenian leaders. The US also called on the two countries to refrain from provocative rhetoric. As the fighting continued, several countries made statements (**See table below**).

Russia continues to lead in seeking a resolution to the conflict through the OSCE Minsk Group and a staged withdraw of armed forces. President Putin has been in regular contact with Armenia's PM (Pashinyan) and has spoken with the Presidents of Azerbaijan (Aliyev) and Turkey. Foreign Minister Lavrov (14 October) saw a necessity for a verification mechanism and peacekeepers, which could be Russian (although Baku and Yerevan would decide). Moscow disagrees with Azerbaijan and Turkey that a military solution to the conflict is possible. **s47C**

30 September	French President Macron criticised Turkey's backing of Azerbaijan and then on 1 October accused Turkey of sending Syrian fighters to the conflict zone.
1 October	Presidents of the three Co-Chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (Russia, France and the US) made a statement calling on both sides to enact a ceasefire and return to negotiations
1 October	Australia's Foreign Minister Payne issued a statement: 'Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. We urge parties to the conflict and all other sides to show restraint and support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to help negotiate a peaceful resolution'.
4 October	International Committee of the Red Cross issued a statement reports of shelling civilian areas (in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh) and claims both sides had used cluster munitions and explosive weaponry:

	<p>"The ICRC strongly condemns the reported indiscriminate shelling and other alleged unlawful attacks using explosive weaponry in cities, towns and other populated areas, in which civilians are losing their lives and suffering terrible injuries, including life-changing ones".</p> <p>"All feasible measures must be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructures like hospitals, schools, and markets. Water supply for civilians must also be protected. These are obligations under international humanitarian law".</p>
5 October	OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries released a statement calling for a ceasefire.
6 October	Canada and the UK released a joint statement on 6 October calling on the parties to the conflict to stop the violence and respect the ceasefire.
9 October	Canadian FM told his Turkish counterpart that Ankara should "stay out" of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Canada also suspended military export permits to Turkey.
11 October	<p>Following the announcement of the Russian mediated ceasefire, DFAT tweeted:</p> <p>We welcome this important step of a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which must be fully implemented and observed to help end the longstanding conflict between the parties.</p>
13 October	OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs noted 'with alarm the continuing violence' and called on the two leaders to execute in full the obligations agreed on 10 October and would continue working with both sides to reach a negotiated solution.
14 October	US Secretary of State Pompeo said that US had asked every international player to stay out of the region.
15 October	US Secretary of State Pompeo said the conflict should be resolved through negotiation and peaceful discussions and 'certainly not with third party countries coming in to lend their firepower to what is already a powder keg of a situation'.
16 October	Canadian PM (Trudeau) and Turkey's President Erdogan spoke on 16 October Trudeau stressed the importance of all parties seeking a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy, noting that there could be no military solution to this conflict. He expressed his deep concern about rising casualties and violations of the ceasefire. Trudeau urged Turkey 'to use its influence to bring the parties to the table to resolve the conflict peacefully.'
18 October	EU High Representative Borrell issued a statement that he had told both Armenia and Azerbaijan that the ceasefire should be unconditional and strictly respected by the two sides and that attacks on civilians should stop immediately.

18 October	UN Secretary General's spokesperson issued a statement 18 October condemning all attacks on populated areas impacted by the conflict and calling for both parties to fully abide by the truce and resume substantive negotiations
23 October	Azerbaijan and Armenia foreign ministers are scheduled to separately meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Washington.

Update: September-October 2020

Fighting over the self-proclaimed (Armenian controlled/populated) 'Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh' (so-called 'Republic of Artsakh') and seven surrounding districts in Azerbaijan erupted on 27 September (fighting had earlier broken out in July 2020 along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, not Nagorno-Karabakh). The conflict involves Azerbaijan and forces of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia provides military support to Nagorno-Karabakh and the two militaries are closely integrated. As fighting has taken place in the mostly unpopulated occupied territories, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reports military losses have been higher than civilian.

In Moscow on 9-10 October, in talks chaired by Russian foreign minister Lavrov, the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a ceasefire from midday Moscow time, 10 October. This entailed the 'humanitarian aims' of the exchange of prisoners, detained persons and collection of the dead. Both sides agreed to return to OSCE Minsk Group talks. On 11 October, the Turkish and Russian foreign ministers (the key external powers in the Southern Caucasus) agreed on the necessity of implementing the agreement.

The warring sides then accused each other of violating the ceasefire: Azerbaijan accused Armenia (11 October) of shelling Ganja, with the loss of civilian life, and other targets. Azerbaijan's forces took some territory in the north and south of Nagorno-Karabakh. Since fighting began both sides have accused the other of attacking civilian areas, with Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert under regular bombardment. There were reports of cluster munitions being used. Foreign journalists have been injured in shelling. There have been strikes on both sides' territory outside the conflict zone –an Azerbaijani strike on Armenia on 14 October saw the Armenian MFA accused Azerbaijan of trying to 'expand the geography of the Karabakh conflict'. Armenia (and Russia) oppose Turkey's inclusion in talks.

Armenia and Azerbaijan enacted a new humanitarian inspired ceasefire from midnight, 18 October. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov spoke on 17 October with Armenian Foreign Minister, Mnatsakanyan, and Azerbaijani foreign minister, Bairamov, noting the relevance of the 1 October announcement by the Presidents of the three OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries

(see below). Each soon accused the other of breaking the ceasefire. Baku also accused Armenia of (again) attacking civilians in Ganja, Azerbaijan's second-largest city.

A new factor in the fighting has been Turkey's increased political and military support (particularly supplied drones) for Azerbaijan. Satellite imagery showed some Turkish F-16s in Azerbaijan, left after joint exercises in July-August, which increased Azerbaijan's battle readiness along the Line-of-Contact. Armenia has accused Turkey of funneling jihadists from Syria to the conflict zone, although it is more likely they are mercenaries. France has accused Turkey of sending Syrian fighters, and there have been widespread media reports on the engagement of Syrian fighters.

Azerbaijan has claimed Kurdish fighters are involved on the Armenian side. Armenia and Russia are members of the CSTO military alliance, and Russia has a military base in Armenia. Russia has indicated an attack on Armenia proper would activate its military treaty obligations to Armenia. Azerbaijan has sought not to provoke Russia to an armed response.

Australian reactions: parliamentarians and Armenian-Australian community

On 8 October, the co-convenor of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), Trent Zimmerman MP (North Sydney) called for international action. He claimed 'ethnic cleansing' would occur and that Azerbaijan's aim was to allegedly 'see every person of Armenian heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh...forced from their homes...traditional lands [and]...out of that country.' John Alexander MP (Bennelong) on 6 October called on all parties to de-escalate the conflict while calling on Turkey to "stop egging on" Baku. Senator Kristine Keneally (1 October), a public supporter of Armenia, tweeted 'I stand with our Armenian friends', and called for an end to the violence. Senator Penny Wong tweeted the Labor was deeply concerned by the escalating violence in Nagorno-Karabakh and joined calls for a ceasefire and negotiations. On 2 October the Greens said they were concerned at reports of military aggression from Azerbaijan and disturbed at reports of Turkey providing military support to Azerbaijan.

The Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC) has criticised the government for not condemning Azerbaijan and Turkey and not supporting self-determination for Nagorno-Karabakh. Executive Director Kayserian criticized the Foreign Minister's 1 October statement for 'failing to call out the attack...instigated [by]...Azerbaijan' which was 'backed by Turkey'. On 6 October, several hundred Armenian youth held a protest outside the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. The ANC called on the Government to condemn Azerbaijan (and Turkey) as the aggressors and avoid 'fence-sitting'. Other ethnic communities (Greek, Pontian, Assyrian, Kurdish) have expressed support for Armenia.

The ANC continues to attract publicity: on 18 October a car convoy/protest of Armenian-Australians took place in Sydney (it is/was planning another demonstration in Sydney on 24

October). It has highlighted the views of lawyer Geoffrey Robertson QC that Australia should express 'grave concern' at the 'invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh' and its right to self-determination. The ANC is also planning to submit a petition to the Prime Minister to 'condemn Azerbaijan's continued attacks on the indigenous Armenians of the Republics of Artsakh and Armenia.'

s33(a)(iii)

July 2020 fighting – 'nuclear threats'

Following July 2020 skirmishes on the Armenian-Azerbaijan border, Trent Zimmerman (24 August) spoke in Parliament. He highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting [Armenia's] Metzamur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.' Mr Zimmerman said such behavior was 'not acceptable.' ANC Executive Director Kayserian earlier wrote to DFAT (17 July) about 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh') is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. A settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (Madrid Principles):

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and

- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

On 8 December 2016 the Minsk Group reiterated there was ‘no military solution to this conflict’, called on parties to adhere to the 1994/95 ceasefire agreements, and the settlement ‘must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Under the current (2018-) government, **s47C**

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. During the current fighting, Armenia raised the possibility of recognising the ‘independence’ of Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict has its origins in the early years of the Soviet Union when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan (1923). The region’s population was overwhelmingly Armenian, but more Azerbaijanis settled there during the late Soviet period. In February 1988, local representatives sought Moscow’s permission to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia, which it declined. This led to protests, violence and ethnic Azerbaijanis leaving the region. Nagorno-Karabakh declaring independence in September 1991 led to war that continued until the Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. Armenia gained control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions seeking a resolution of the conflict. Despite ongoing skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

In July 2019, a delegation from the ‘Republic of Artsakh’ visited Australia on Armenian passports and met federal and NSW politicians. Azerbaijan objected to the granting of visas to the group and high-level meetings. **s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)**

On 1 August 2019, the ANC announced an ‘Australian Friends of Artsakh Group’, which included two Federal Ministers and later Senator Abetz. In August 2020, Joe Hockey, ex-Ambassador to the US, joined.

Commercial flight options to and from Azerbaijan

Commercial flight options to and from Azerbaijan remain limited due to COVID-19 restrictions; but options are available. Azerbaijan’s national carrier, AZAL, flies regularly to London, Berlin, Istanbul, Ankara and Antalya. Russian carrier Aeroflot also runs twice-weekly services to Moscow.

PREVIOUS SENATE ESTIMATES – VISIT OF SENATOR FIERRAVANTI WELLS TO BAKU

Senate Estimates (March, May 2018) saw questions asked about apparent tensions in the core-principles of the Helsinki Final Act, in particular between the core principles of territorial integrity versus the equal rights and self-determination of people. See **Attachment C** for full text of questions/replies. s22(1)(a)(ii)

Visit of the then- Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator the Hon Fierravanti-Wells to Azerbaijan

The then-Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator the Hon Fierravanti-Wells, said in a speech in Baku in June 2017 during a visit to mark the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan:

“...Australia is a forthright supporter of Azerbaijan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, and strongly supports Azerbaijan’s position on Nagorno-Karabakh. We support the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to resolve that issue, and we urge all sides to continue to respect the ceasefire, show restraint, and prevent any new escalation.”

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Supplementary Budget estimates: 28 October 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Recent Media

1 October. ABC contacted DFAT with questions about the conflict.

Division: ELD	
PDR No: 20/28236#12	
Prepared by: s22(1)(a)(ii)	Cleared by Branch/Division Head: Steven Barraclough, AS ELB
Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)	s22(1)(a)(ii)
Date: 23 October 2020	Date: 23 October 2020
Cleared by CFO / FAS CMD: N/A	Date: N/A

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia, 2019-2020

8 October	Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, Member for North Sydney, spoke in the Federation Chamber about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.
6 October	Mr John Alexander MP, Member for Bennelong, spoke in the House of Representatives about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.
24 August 2020	Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, Member for North Sydney spoke in the Federation Chamber about the fighting (July) on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the alleged threat from Azerbaijan to attack the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station in Armenia.
12 June 2020	Hon Scott Morrison PM, MP – representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, answered the question of Mr Josh Burns MP (below).
23 March 2020	Mr Josh Burns MP, Member for Macnamara, submitted a Question in Writing regarding the Prime Minister's previous (May 2011) comments on recognition of the 'Armenian Genocide'.
30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
29 October 2019	ANC media release reporting Australia had recognised the 'Republic of Artsakh' as a party to the conflict (only Armenia and Azerbaijan are recognised as parties to the conflict according to the OSCE Minsk Group process)
24 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: SE: asked about Nagorno-Karabakh and the 'Azerbaijan laundromat's' alleged links to Australian companies
24 October 2019	Sen. Richard Di Natale: SE: submitted twelve questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh and DFAT's travel advice
28 September 2019	ANC press release reporting delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, including federal and NSW state members
19 September 2019	Federal MP John Alexander makes a speech in the House of Representatives criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov
17 September 2019	NSW MP Dr Hugh McDermott makes a speech in the Legislative Council criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov (an

	Azerbaijani army officer pardoned in 2012 for murdering an Armenian officer) and calling for the right to self-determination for the 'Republic of Artsakh'
27 August 2019	ANC press release announces expansion of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Group to include Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, and Senator the Hon Richard di Natale
1 August 2019	ANC press release advises of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Launch, with 40 Inaugural Signatories including Communications Minister the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Assistant Treasurer the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, and the Shadow Home Affairs and Agriculture & Resources Ministers.
30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra
22 January 2019	ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

ATTACHMENT B

FAS ELD to Haig Kayserian, Executive Director, Armenian National Committee (Australia)

2 October 2020

Dear Mr Kayserian

Thank you for your letter of 29 September 2020 and follow-up emails to Steven Barraclough regarding the conflict in the Caucasus.

Australia is concerned by the current fighting. We regret the injuries and loss of life and extend our sympathy to the families and communities caught up in the violence.

Australia urges parties to the conflict and all other sides to show restraint and support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to help negotiate a peaceful resolution. We do not seek to intervene. Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

We appreciate you bringing the concerns of the Armenian-Australia community to our attention.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

John Geering

First Assistant Secretary

Europe and Latin America Division

ATTACHMENT C

SENATE ESTIMATES 2018 – questions/answers

Additional Estimates – March 2018

Portfolio Question Number 162

Question asked: 1 March 2018

1. In June 2017, Minister Fierravanti-Wells, while on a trade visit to Baku Azerbaijan marking 25 years of diplomatic relations between Australia and Azerbaijan, was reported as saying '...and [Australia] strongly supports Azerbaijan's position on Nagorno-Karabakh'. Is this position consistent with the OSCE Minsk Group's statement from early December 2016?

2. Azerbaijan has not signed up to the recommendations of the OSCE Minsk Group to remove snipers from the Line of Contact to allow for additional monitors and to implement gunfire locator systems along the Line of Contact. What is the reason for Australia supporting the position of Azerbaijan when Azerbaijan has not signed up to the recommendations of the OSCE, to which Australia is a partner nation?

3. Is the Department aware of the reporting from The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) (<https://www.occrp.org/en/azerbaijanlaundromat/>) on what has come to be known as the 'Azerbaijan Laundromat'?

- a. What is the Department's position on this?
- b. Did Minister Fierravanti-Wells raise this matter in her visit to Azerbaijan? If not, why not?

- Answer: 13 April 2018

1. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene in the dispute.

2. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene in the dispute.

3. a) The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is aware of this case.

b) No.

Senate Estimates Hearing Date, May 2018

- Status Answered
 - Hearing Date 31/05/2018
 - Asked Of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
 - Proof Hansard Page/Written Written
 - Portfolio Question Number 194
-
- Question 1. DFAT acknowledged it supports the OSCE Minsk Process in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Armenians of the Republic of Artsakh.

The OSCE Minsk Group process has outlined three core principles upon which the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be based; "the non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights to self-determination of peoples".

a. Does the Australian government acknowledge these measures as fundamental to the conflict resolution process outlined by the OSCE?

2. During Senate Estimates on the 31st of May 2018 DFAT stated "The government's longstanding policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. As you note, we're supporters of the OSCE Minsk Group. We do not seek to intervene in the dispute".

Given the OSCE Minsk Group supports on equal terms the core principles of "self-determination", "territorial integrity" and "non-use of force" in the process of conflict resolution please advise:

a. How can Australia support "Azerbaijan's territorial integrity" without giving equal weight to the other SCE Minsk Group's other core principals of "self-determination" and "non-use of force" in relation to the other parties in the Nagomo-Karabakh dispute?

b. How does DFAT address the contradiction of supporting just one of the core principals in relation without mention of the other core principals as mentioned above in relation to the other parties in the dispute?

c. Does DFAT recognise that by supporting only one side of the dispute Australia can be seen to actually intervening in the dispute despite statements that "we do not seek to intervene in the dispute"?

d. Will DFAT consider dropping its mention of any single side of the conflict? If not, why not?

3. Is the government aware that Azerbaijan forced the closure of the Baku OSCE office in 2015, and the Yerevan office in 2017?

4. Is the government aware that Azerbaijan has refused to comply with the OSCE's proposed conflict resolution measures such as its refusal to increase the OSCE monitoring presence, to remove snipers from the border, and to implement gunfire locator systems to determine culpability for ceasefire breaches?

a. Does DFAT consider these examples of non-compliance consistent with the OSCE's efforts to resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh?

b. Did Minister Fierravanti Wells raise these issues during her state visit to Azerbaijan in 2017? IF not, why not?

- Answer 1.a) Australia is aware of the OSCE Minsk Group's call to all sides that a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be based on the core-principles outlined in the question as well as additional elements ('the Madrid Principles'). Australia encourages all parties to work constructively and in good faith with the OSCE Minsk Group to seek a negotiated resolution based on these principles and additional elements.

2. a) Australia recognised the territorial integrity of the successor states to the Soviet Union within their existing boundaries, along with most other countries.

The Government supports the OSCE Minsk Process in its role in seeking a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict based on the above principles and additional elements.

2 b) The Government supports the principles and additional elements the OSCE Minsk Process has identified as necessary to seek a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

2 c) Australia does not support any sides of the dispute. It does not seek to intervene in the details of the dispute and encourages all parties to work constructively and in good faith with the OSCE Minsk Group.

2 d) Australia does not support any side in the dispute.

3) The government is aware that the OSCE offices in Armenia and Azerbaijan have closed. Australia supports the OSCE in its work in the Caucasus. Australia notes the OSCE's intention to continue engagement with Armenia in line with existing commitments following the closure last year of its office in Yerevan.

4. The Government monitors the military activities of all sides along the 'line-of-contact' in Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as the efforts of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to provide an appropriate framework for conflict resolution.

4 a) Australia does not seek to intervene in the dispute and encourages all parties to

work constructively and in good faith with the OSCE Minsk Group. Australia maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict.

4 b) No. The focus of the ministerial visit was on commemorating the 25th anniversary of bilateral relations.

Supplementary Budget estimates: 28 October 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47C



s47C

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b) + s47C

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b) + s47C

s47C

s47C

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: [Steven Barracrough](#); s22(1)(a)(ii) ; [John Geering](#)
Subject: updated points for FMO re Nagorno Karabakh [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Tuesday, 27 October 2020 10:10:02 AM
Attachments: [parliamentary and DFAT comments on current fighting Nagorno-Karabakh 27 October.docx](#)

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F(1) , see below updates to the TPs. s47C

. I have included a table that sets out all
MPs statements on this to date since late September.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s47F(1) [@dfat.gov.au](#)
Sent: Monday, 26 October 2020 6:50 PM
To: Steven Barracrough <Steven.Barracrough@dfat.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)
s22(1)(a)(ii) [@dfat.gov.au](#); John Geering <John.Geering@dfat.gov.au>; Christopher
Langman <Christopher.Langman@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) [@dfat.gov.au](#)
Subject: s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s47C

Key Points:

- . Australia is concerned by the escalation in fighting over the last ~~four~~ **three** weeks.
- . We welcome **the recent** ceasefire **announcements** announced on 10 October, but Australia shares international concern over **violations, including the** reported shelling by all sides of civilians and the reported use of cluster munitions, explosive weaponry and airborne missile attacks on populated areas.

The conflict should be resolved by negotiations between the parties, and not by military means.
- . We support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group to negotiate a peaceful resolution.
- . And we support the ICRC call of 4 October that all feasible measures be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Why doesn't the Federal Government condemn these attacks?

- . I have issued a statement about the concerning escalation of conflict, urging restraint, and retweeted the Department in relation to the violation of the ceasefire.
- There are reports of violations by both sides.

Why doesn't the Federal Government advocate their support for the safety and security of the Republics of Armenia and Artsakh

- . Australia supports the ICRC's call of 4 October that all feasible measures be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructure.
- and while we welcome the **recent ceasefire announcements** Australia shares international concern over reported shelling by all sides of civilians and the reported use of cluster munitions, explosive weaponry and airborne missile attacks on populated areas.
- Australia urges all parties to exercise restraint, avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

Why doesn't the Federal Government recognise the right to self-determination of all peoples including those of the Republic of Artsakh?

. We have long recognised Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, and we support the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.

Why not recognise the Republic of Artsakh as the permanent solution to the conflict?

- . As we have said, we welcome the important step of a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but this must be fully implemented and observed to help end the longstanding conflict between the parties. **The conflict should be resolved by negotiations between the parties, and not by military means.**

The Current Situation

- **Both sides are accusing the other** of violating both the initial ceasefire (which commenced 10 October) ~~and~~ a subsequent truce that was supposed to start at midnight on 17 October, **and a US brokered ceasefire that was supposed to commence at 8 am on 26 October**
- Both sides are accusing the other of drawing on **foreign fighters**
- **ICRC** sees signs of significant military losses, especially in comparison to civilian losses, and the mass movement of people away from the conflict zone
- **The OSCE Minsk Group** released a statement on 13 October calling on Azerbaijan and Armenia "to take immediate steps to execute in full the obligations of the sides according to the October 10 Moscow statement" and that the Co-Chairs were "working with the sides on the substantive issues of the Nagorno-Karabakh political settlement process in order to reach a negotiated solution" <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/466998>
- **The US, Armenia and Azerbaijan** issued a joint statement on 25 October announcing a humanitarian ceasefire will take effect at 08:00 a.m. local time (12:00 a.m. EDT) on October 26 <https://www.state.gov/u-s-armenia-azerbaijan-joint-statement>
- **The OSCE Co-Chairs** released a press statement on 25 October urging the sides to take

immediate steps to implement all aspects of the October 10 Moscow Joint Statement in accordance with their commitments. The Co-Chairs and Foreign Ministers agreed to meet again in Geneva on October 29 <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/468204>

- **Joint statement of United States President Donald J. Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron, and Russian President Vladimir Putin on 1 October**, calling on the sides to cease hostilities immediately and to resume substantive negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/64133>
- **US, Russian and France Foreign Ministers** issued a joint statement on 6 October condemning the escalation in violence and calling for the conflicting parties to accept an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. <https://ru.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-calling-for-a-ceasefire-in-nagorno-karabakh/>
- **Canada** and the **UK** released a joint statement on 6 October calling on the parties to the conflict to stop the violence and respect the ceasefire
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nagorno-karabakh-uk-and-canada-joint-statement-in-response-to-continued-military-clashes>
- On 9 October **Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister** Francois-Philippe Champagne said he told his Turkish counterpart that Ankara should "stay out" of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Canada has also suspended military export permits to Turkey. Trudeau and Erdogan spoke on 17 October - **Canada's Prime Minister** "stressed the importance of all parties seeking a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy, noting that there could be no military solution to this conflict and expressed deep concern about rising casualties, the loss of civilian lives and violations of the ceasefire. The Prime Minister urged Turkey to use its influence to bring the parties to the table to resolve the conflict peacefully." <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/readouts/2020/10/16/prime-minister-justin-trudeau-speaks-president-turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan>
- **US Secretary of State** Pompeo has said the US "has asked every international player to stay out of the region" and on 15 October criticised Turkey's involvement and called for a diplomatic resolution <https://www.state.gov/secretary-michael-r-pompeo-with-erick-erickson-of-the-erick-erickson-show-on-wsb-atlanta>
- **France** had previously criticised Turkey's backing of Azerbaijan (30 September) and accused Turkey of sending Syrian fighters <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-armenia-azerbaijan-putin-macron-idUSKBN26L3SB>
- **THE UN Secretary General's spokesperson** issued a statement 18 October condemning all attacks on populated areas impacted by the conflict and calling for both parties to fully abide by the truce and resume substantive negotiations
<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-10-18/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-the-situation-between-armenia-and-azerbaijan>
- **EU High Representative** Borrell issued a statement on 18 October saying he had spoken with Armenia and Azerbaijan to impress upon them that the ceasefire should be unconditional and strictly respected by the two sides and that attacks on civilians should stop immediately <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/87158/nagorno-karabakh-statement-high-representativevice-president->

[josep-borrell_en](#)

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate

Statements by Australian Government, DFAT, and Australian Federal Members of Parliament on current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh as at 27 October 2020

Date	Statement and Author
30 Sep	<p>The Co-Convenors of the Parliamentary Australia-Armenia Friendship Group (Zimmerman/Fitzgibbon) issued a statement that:</p> <p><i>“The international community must urgently work to reinstate the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia to prevent the further loss of life in Nagorno-Karabakh and to avoid a wider military escalation.”</i></p>
30 Sep	<p>The Hon Jason Falinski MP retweeted the message from the Co-Convenors of the Parliamentary Australia- Armenia Friendship Group</p>
1 October	<p>Foreign Minister Senator the Hon Marise Payne issued a statement:</p> <p><i>“Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. We urge parties to the conflict and all other sides to show restraint and support the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to help negotiate a peaceful resolution.”</i></p>
1 October	<p>Senator the Hon Kristine Keneally tweeted <i>“I stand with our Armenian friends. This violence must come to an end.”</i></p>
1 October	<p>Senator the Hon Peng Wong tweeted <i>“Labor is deeply concerned by escalating violence in Nagorno-Karabakh. We join the UN Secretary-General in calling for a ceasefire and urging parties to return to negotiations.”</i></p>
1 October	<p>The Hon Tim Wilson MP tweeted <i>“It is disturbing to see the aggression against Armenia by Azerbaijan under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic and and fire directed at Armenian jet fighters, the existing ceasefire should be honoured to promote peace and stability ...”</i></p>
2 October	<p>The Hon Josh Burns MP tweeted <i>“the escalating violence in Nagorno-Karabakh must stop. My thoughts are with our Armenian friends. I urge that all parties return to the negotiating table and for third parties to stop encouraging and supporting conflict.”</i></p>
2 October	<p>According to the Armenian National Committee, Greens Senator the Hon Janet Rice made a statement:</p> <p><i>“While it is yet to be determined what exactly sparked this recent outbreak of violence, the Greens are concerned at reports of military aggression from Azerbaijan. The Greens are disturbed at reports that the Turkish Government</i></p>

	<i>is providing military support to Azerbaijan. respect international law and ensure the protection of civilians, as well as preventing damage to essential civilian infrastructure.”</i>
6 October	The Hon John Alexander MP spoke in the House of Representatives: <i>“2020 has been a horrific year for many around the globe but, on top of the horsemen of pestilence and death, war has now raised its ugly head between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in the republic of Artsakh. The territory has been in a state of cold war for decades, and any peace has been fragile since the ceasefire in the early 1990s Last year I had the honour of visiting Artsakh and saw the daily struggles that people in this area go through. The people of Artsakh are resilient and determined, but just like any peace-loving nation, they should not be fearing for their lives from cluster bombs over their cities. I have spoken many times in this House of the aggression against Armenia. It is devastating that this has now turned into overt conflict. We must de-escalate this conflict now—not just the two countries on the ground, but more importantly, the other states on the periphery of this conflict who are encouraging it. Turkey must stop egging on Azerbaijan and escalating this conflict. Ongoing support from outside nations will only lead to more lives being lost. I applaud the statements of the Armenian Prime Minister calling for peace, and I would urge the Azeris to join Armenia around the negotiating table. While we must first stop this dreadful war, we must look towards a sustainable future where the people of Artsakh can live in peace and self-determination. “</i>
8 October	The Hon Trent Zimmerman MP spoke in the Federation Chamber (see full speech below).
11 October	Following the announcement of the Russian mediated ceasefire, DFAT tweeted <i>“We welcome this important step of a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which must be fully implemented and observed to help end the longstanding conflict between the parties.”</i>
22 October	The Hon Paul Fletcher MP , Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts spoke in the Federation Chamber (see full text below).

The Hon Trent Zimmerman MP, 8 October 2020:

I rise this afternoon to speak about a matter that is very important to many Australians. I'm talking about the conflict that's currently occurring between Armenia and Azerbaijan. I'm raising this issue about a part of the world that many Australians would not be familiar with because it is an important area of the world for us. I say that for three reasons. Firstly, there is a large diaspora in

Australia—tens of thousands of people—who have family and friends who are caught up in this conflict that has already cost hundreds of lives. Secondly, for me, this is an important issue for Australia to take a stand on because I happen to believe that democracies should stand by other democracies. In this case, we have the vibrant democracy of Armenia under attack from its neighbours. Armenian democracy emerged following the collapse of the Soviet Union and, in the period since, Armenia, like any new nation, has gone through difficult periods. But we saw, particularly emerging from the velvet revolution that happened a couple of years ago, Armenia find its footing as a very vibrant young democracy. They have a parliament where the average age is about half of our own, it's fair to say. But they have legislators that are committed to dealing with some of the entrenched problems that that nation faces. I believe that we have a responsibility to stand by other democracies—in this case, one that is under attack from its neighbouring authoritarian regime.

Thirdly, the most important reason why Australians should care about this conflict in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh or Astrakhan is that we know that if the Azerbaijani government prevails the world will witness ethnic cleansing, which will put the livelihoods and, in fact, the lives of hundreds of thousands of residents in Nagorno-Karabakh at threat. There can be no doubt that these actions, which have been long foreshadowed by the President of Azerbaijan, have one goal in mind—that is, to see every person of Armenian heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh or Astrakhan forced from their homes, forced from their traditional lands and forced out of that country, one way or the other. And I suspect that the other way will involve the heavy loss of life.

This is a conflict that does impact so many people and I know is of concern to so many Australians. The international community must get involved. It must put pressure on the Azerbaijani government to stop its activities. Of course, they say in war the first loss is that of truth, but the reality is that Armenia had nothing to gain and a hell of a lot to lose by military action against Azerbaijan. So I, therefore, respectfully suggest that this conflict is the result of Azerbaijani actions. It has, as I said earlier, long been the goal of the Azerbaijani president to reclaim by force these territories.

What particularly concerns me is that we have seen other players get involved, particularly the Turkish government and its allies within its community. That has seen, at best, the Turkish government provide moral support for Azerbaijani actions. At worst, there is growing evidence that we are actually seeing Turkish interests supporting the military operations that are underway, potentially including the use of mercenaries from Syria.

This is a dire time, and this military action is being taken quite wrongfully under the cloak of the pandemic. So, we need the international community, not to sit back and hope that the parties will themselves come together but to actively intervene and tell the Azerbaijanis that their actions today simply are unacceptable. We must also be ensuring that the international community is either directly or indirectly not providing military equipment to the Azerbaijani forces to continue to fight the Armenians in the way that they have.

We have to ensure that further loss of life is prevented and that we don't see another tragedy emerge in this very difficult part of the world. The Armenians, over the last century-and-a-half, have already suffered a great deal. We must prevent that at every cost from happening again.

The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, 22 October 2020:

Many Armenian Australians live in and around my electorate of Bradfield on Sydney's North Shore and of course in the Deputy Speaker's electorate of North Sydney. In fact, there are around 50,000 Armenians living in Australia, and 40,000 of those live across Bradfield, Bennelong and North Sydney. Armenian Australians have made an enormous contribution to Australian life and are prominent in many areas of commerce, trade and politics. I welcome the fact that the modern Armenia is a vibrant democracy, having come through a challenging period of transition following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I want to speak today about events in the Nagorno-Karabakh, where hundreds of thousands of Armenians live. In the early 1920s, Stalin placed Nagorno-Karabakh under Azerbaijani rule, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union created a vacuum for conflict to escalate in the late 1980s and early 1990s. There was a war from 1988 to 1994, and in 1991 Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh declared themselves an independent state. A ceasefire was reached in 1994, but that has sadly not eliminated hostilities. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is mediating efforts to negotiate a full settlement, and the Australian government supports those efforts.

On 27 September, fighting broke out between Armenian Azerbaijani forces along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh. Since then, fighting has increased in severity despite a temporary ceasefire between 10 and 13 October. Already hundreds have been killed and many more displaced from their homes. With no sign of the situation improving, this is an exceptionally concerning situation, and there is the very worrying scenario of the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh. The prospect of hundreds of thousands of people being forced from their homes and traditional lands is shocking. I fervently trust and hope that outcome does not materialise. I call on parties to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh to return to the OSCE Minsk Group peace process and respect the terms of the ceasefire agreement of 10 October.

I acknowledge the extraordinary contribution made to Australia by Armenian Australians in my electorate and in many other parts of Australia. I note the important work of Mr Haig Kayserian, Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of Australia. I commend the Armenian National Committee for its efforts to raise in Australia awareness of this extremely troubling conflict. I join with them and with all who are calling for all parties to return to the OSCE Minsk Group peace process and to respect the terms of the ceasefire agreement. It is very important that this hostility not continue. It's very important that stability be returned.

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: [John Geering](#); [Steven Barraclough](#)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: s33(a)(iii) + s47C
Date: Tuesday, 27 October 2020 12:08:29 PM

OFFICIAL

With a big thanks to s22(1)(a)(ii) and Ankara and Moscow posts, see below. We will s47E(d)

s33(a)(iii) + s47C

Background:

Although visits to Azerbaijan and Armenia have been constrained since early 2020 due to COVID, DFAT continues to engage with both countries on a range of issues. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

DFAT has also engaged though correspondence with the Armenian National Committee, most recently on 2 October 2020 (letter from John Geering, FAS ELD) regarding the current fighting.

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

DFAT's bilateral relationship with Armenia is underpinned by strong people to people links, but is limited in terms of trade and investment (total merchandise two way trade only \$2.5 million for 2018-19, and two trade in services is \$8 million). Trade and investment with Azerbaijan is larger but still limited, as is primarily in natural resources (including petroleum imports to Australia and mining equipment, technology and services to Azerbaijan). In 2018-19, two way merchandise trade was \$62 million, and two way trade in services \$11 million.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director Eastern Europe and Western Balkans

Latin America and Eastern Europe Branch | Europe and Latin America Division

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Telephone: s22(1)(a)(ii)

www.dfat.gov.au

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s47F(1)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) ; [Steven Barraclough](#)
Subject: Cables: conflict in the South Caucasus [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, 30 October 2020 10:05:18 AM
Attachments: s47E(d)

[REDACTED]

Good morning s47F(1)

Attached are two cables about events in the South Caucasus.

s47E(d)

This link is to a report by shelling of the Azerbaijani town of Barda where there were civilian casualties. Azerbaijan accused Armenia of shelling the town and using cluster munitions.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cw24m3ex3nyt/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Eastern Europe and Western Balkans Section

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)@dfat.gov.au

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Title: Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict - s47C
s22(1)(a)(ii)

Summary

The US brokered 3rd ceasefire was broken almost immediately, and Aliyev gave a s47C speech indicating the offensive would continue. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The US-brokered ceasefire that came into effect at 0800 local time on 26 October was again immediately broken. President Aliyev again blamed Armenia. In a s47C public address later that day, the Azerbaijani President made clear the offensive would continue and he did not regard the Minsk Group Co-Chairs as neutral actors. He announced that 17 new villages and the town of Qubadli had been taken.

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)



s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)



s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

Vice President

Okday did say last week that Turkey was willing to provide military assistance if Azerbaijan requested it. On 26 October, MFA spokesperson Aksoy said in response to a question "We deem it necessary that Minsk Group Co-Chairs should start a result-oriented negotiation process which aims at a permanent solution in line with UN Security Council resolutions and international law by taking Armenia's violations into consideration in order to be able to have their efforts yield concrete results. We believe that ceasefires which have been declared can only become sustainable by this means."

s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)



s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Title: Armenia - Nagorno-Karabakh: 'Wounded' but 'unshakeable'

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Summary

Armenian PM Pashinyan has described Nagorno-Karabakh/'Artsakh' as 'wounded' but still standing despite the ongoing fighting. However, ICG reported an apparent lack of a government strategy to win the war as the humanitarian situation worsens, casualties increase and ceasefires crumble. s47E(d)

s47E(d)

The domestic side of the war

2. On 27 October, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan addressed the country. He said that while 'Artsakh' had been 'wounded', it was still standing and would continue to stand as its will was 'unshakeable' despite being attacked with 'tanks, planes, helicopters, Azeris, terrorists, mercenaries, as well as Turkish and Pakistani special squads'. Blaming Azerbaijan for the failure to abide by the ceasefires, Pashinyan called for 'nationwide consolidation and discipline' as the 'Artsakh' army awaited 'the right moment ... to deliver a victorious blow'. He emphasised that Armenia had a 'constructive approach' and was determined to 'fight for Artsakh's legitimate rights'. He had earlier acknowledged that Armenia was ready for 'painful compromise'.

3. In yesterday's address, Pashinyan claimed that Azerbaijan and Turkey had been declared internationally as the 'aggressive side', adding that Azerbaijan was not prepared for compromise which legitimised 'the right of the Armenian people to fight to the end'. He reassured that 'the government ... elected [by Armenians had] not given up its mission and responsibility to show ... the way to victory'. This followed an earlier address on Facebook on 21 October, in which Pashinyan said there was no Armenia without 'Artsakh' and suggested that currently there was no diplomatic solution in sight. s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47E(d)

Humanitarian concerns ongoing

9. Azerbaijan continues to report further gains s22(1)(a)(ii) and, as of 27 October, Armenian military losses officially passed 1,000. The Nagorno-Karabakh 'Defence Ministry' reported a 'relatively stable-tense' situation overnight between 27–28 October, with Azerbaijani bombardment in residential areas and localised battles. However, in a speech on 22 October, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia believed the death toll on both sides was approaching 5,000. s47E(d)

11. In addition to the conflict, the spike of new cases of COVID–19 is continuing in Armenia with a total of 82,651 cases recorded in total on 28 October. s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)



s47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH, s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUES

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Australia's position on current fighting between Armenia-Azerbaijan and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the escalation in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

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Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.
- In referring to "disputed territory," the Foreign Minister's statement of 1 October referred to the conflict itself, and does not constitute a change in Australia's position.
- Australia is not aware of any evidence of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's role in supporting Azerbaijan

- Turkey is a long standing ally of Azerbaijan, and Australia continues to call on all parties to show restraint

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Background

Fighting on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border

Fighting erupted again on 27 September along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh, and has intensified in early October. Both sides have accused the other of attacking civilian areas, including Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert, and the Azerbaijan city of Ganga.

Turkey's President Erdogan continues to support Azerbaijan. France has supported Armenia's claim on 30 September that Turkey has deployed Syrian militants to Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey has denied these rumours. Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia – both are members of the CSTO military alliance - called for an immediate ceasefire and talks. The US, EU, France and NATO, among others, have called for an end of fighting, as has Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with both Azerbaijan President Aliyev and Pashinyan, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric that could inflame the situation. On 5 October, the Co-Chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (Russia, France and the US) released a statement calling for a ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Following earlier skirmishes in July along the border of Armenian-Azerbaijan border, on 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

On 24 August, Trent Zimmerman (Liberal, North Sydney) spoke in Parliament about the outbreak of fighting, and was critical of Azerbaijan. In particular, *he highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting the Metzamur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.'* Mr Zimmerman said that it was 'extraordinary that the Azeri government would at this time—indeed, at any time—threaten to attack a nuclear reactor with a missile strike. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I urge both nations to ensure that their disputes continue to be the subject of peaceful negotiations, not armed conflict'.

On 1 October, Foreign Minister Payne issued a statement expressing Australia's concern over the renewed fighting, urging all parties to show restraint, and supporting the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to negotiate a peaceful solution. DFAT wrote to the Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC) Haig Kayserian on 2 October in response to concerns he had raised over recent fighting. The ANC has subsequently criticized Australia (6 October), for failing to call out Azerbaijan and Turkey. On 6 October, there was a further protest outside the Azerbaijan Embassy in Canberra, which attracted some media coverage (the Guardian).

Australians in Azerbaijan

On 28 September, media reported that several commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

s47E(d)

Nagorno-Karabakh

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state (it is also known as the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh'). No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

The conflict has its origins in 1923 when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the then Soviet republic of Azerbaijan. The population of the region was overwhelmingly Armenian, but the numbers of Azerbaijanis increased during the late Soviet

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07 October 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

period. In February 1988, local representatives voted to request permission of the central government to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia. This led to protests and violence. Armed conflict grew after Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence in September 1991, continuing until a Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. As a result Armenia gained control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts of Azerbaijan. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions seeking a resolution of the conflict. Despite ongoing skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh/'Republic of Artsakh' is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the *Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict* to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Also known as the Madrid Principles, these Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement:

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

Visit of representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

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Recent Media

The outbreak of fighting since late September 2020 has generated local media coverage.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

24 August 2020	Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, Member for North Sydney spoke in the Federation Chamber about the fighting (July) on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the alleged threat from Azerbaijan to attack the Metzamor Atomic Energy Station in Armenia.
12 June 2020	Mr Scott Morrison MP – representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, answered the question of Mr Josh Burns MP (below).
23 March 2020	Mr Josh Burns MP, Member for Macnamara, submitted a Question in Writing regarding the Prime Minister's previous (May 2011) comments on recognition of the 'Armenian Genocide'.
30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
29 October 2019	ANC media release reporting Australia had recognised the 'Republic of Artsakh' as a party to the conflict (only Armenia and Azerbaijan are recognised as parties to the conflict according to the OSCE Minsk Group process)
24 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: SE: asked about Nagorno-Karabakh and the 'Azerbaijan laundromat's' alleged links to Australian companies
24 October 2019	Sen. Richard Di Natale: SE: submitted twelve questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh and DFAT's travel advice
28 September 2019	ANC press release reporting delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, including federal and NSW state members
19 September 2019	Federal MP John Alexander makes a speech in the House of Representatives criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov
17 September 2019	NSW MP Dr Hugh McDermott makes a speech in the Legislative Council criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov (an Azerbaijani army officer pardoned in 2012 for murdering an Armenian officer) and calling for the right to self-determination for the 'Republic of Artsakh'
27 August 2019	ANC press release announces expansion of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Group to include Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, and Senator the Hon Richard di Natale
1 August 2019	ANC press release advises of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Launch, with 40 Inaugural Signatories including Communications Minister the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Assistant Treasurer the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, and the Shadow Home Affairs and Agriculture & Resources Ministers.
30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh'

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delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra

22 January 2019

ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUES

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Australia's position on current fighting between Armenia-Azerbaijan (and an alleged threat [July] by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamor Atomic Energy Station)

- Australia is concerned by the escalation in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
- Welcome the ceasefire of 10 October
 - which hopefully will provide an opportunity for substantive negotiations to find a permanent settlement to this longstanding conflict.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Australia's position on reports of shelling civilian areas and using cluster munitions

- Australia shares international concern at reported indiscriminate shelling by all sides of civilians and the reported use of illegal cluster munitions, explosive weaponry and airborne missile attacks on populated areas.
- Australia supports the International Committee of the Red Cross' call (4 October) that all feasible measures be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

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- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

Does the Foreign Minister's statement of 1 October describing Nagorno-Karabakh as "disputed territory" mean a change in Australia's position (or recognition of the 'Republic of Artsakh')?

- The Foreign Minister's mention of 'disputed territory' in her statement of 1 October referred to the conflict itself and does not constitute a change in Australia's position.
- It is long-standing policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's role in supporting Azerbaijan

- Turkey is a long-standing ally of Azerbaijan, and Australia continues to call on all parties to show restraint.

Claims of (likely) ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh

- Australia is not aware of any evidence of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Background

Fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, September-October 2020

Fighting over the self-proclaimed (Armenian controlled) 'Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh' and seven surrounding districts in Azerbaijan erupted on 27 September. Fighting involves Azerbaijan and forces of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia provides military support to Nagorno-Karabakh and the two militaries are closely integrated.

In Moscow on 9-10 October, in talks chaired by Russian foreign minister Lavrov, the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a ceasefire from midday Moscow time, 10 October. This entailed the 'humanitarian aims' of the exchange of prisoners, detained persons and collection of the dead. Both sides agreed to return to OSCE Minsk Group talks.

On 11 October, the Turkish and Russian foreign ministers (the key external powers in the Southern Caucasus) agreed on the necessity of implementing the agreement. The warring sides have since accused each other of violating the ceasefire: Azerbaijan accused Armenia (11 October) of shelling its second-largest city, Ganja, with the loss of civilian life, and other targets. Azerbaijan claims to have taken some territory around Nagorno-Karabakh. Since fighting began both have accused the other of attacking civilian areas, including Nagorno-Karabakh's administrative centre, Stepanakert. There were reports of cluster munitions being used. Foreign journalists have been injured in shelling.

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When fighting commenced, Moscow called for an immediate ceasefire and talks, as did the US, EU, France, NATO, and Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with the Azerbaijan and Armenian leaders, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations. The US also called on the two countries to refrain from provocative rhetoric. On 5 October, the Co-Chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (Russia, France and the US) released a statement calling for a ceasefire. On 13 October, the Co-Chairs noted 'with alarm the continuing violence' and called on the two leaders to execute in full the obligations agreed on 10 October 'in order to prevent catastrophic consequences for the region'.

A new factor in the fighting has been Turkey's increased political and military support (e.g. drones) for Azerbaijan. Satellite imagery showed some Turkish F-16s in Azerbaijan, left after joint exercises in July-August. Armenia has accused Turkey of funneling Islamist fighters from Syria to the conflict zone. France said it had evidence that supported this claim. Armenia and Russia are members of the CSTO military alliance, and Russia has a military base in Armenia. s47C

Australian reactions to the current fighting

On 1 October, the Foreign Minister issued a statement expressing concern over the renewed fighting, urging all parties to show restraint, and supporting the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to negotiate a peaceful solution. The Executive Director (Kayserian) of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC) criticized the statement for 'failing to call out the attack...instigated [by]...Azerbaijan' which was 'backed by Turkey'. On 6 October, several hundred Armenian youth held a protest outside the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. The ANC called on the Government to condemn Azerbaijan (and Turkey) as the aggressors and avoid 'fence-sitting'. s33(b)

On 8 October, the co-convenor of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), Trent Zimmerman MP (North Sydney) called for international action. He claimed 'ethnic cleansing' would occur and that Azerbaijan's aim was to allegedly 'see every person of Armenian heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh...forced from their homes...traditional lands [and]...out of that country.' John Alexander MP (Bennelong) on 6 October called on all parties to de-escalate the conflict while calling on Turkey to "stop egging on" Baku.

On 11 October, following the announcement of a ceasefire, DFAT tweeted:

We welcome this important step of a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which must be fully implemented and observed to help end the longstanding conflict between the parties.

Australian reactions to the July 2020 fighting

Following July 2020 skirmishes on the Armenian-Azerbaijan border, Trent Zimmerman (24 August) spoke in Parliament about the fighting. He highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting [Armenia's] Metzamur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.' Mr Zimmerman said such behavior was 'not acceptable.' ANC Executive Director early wrote to DFAT (17 July) about 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

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Statement of the International Committee of the Red Cross about attacks on civilians

Following reports of shelling during the current conflict of civilian areas (in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh) and claims both sides had used cluster munitions and explosive weaponry, the International Committee of the Red Cross (4 October) issued a statement:

"The ICRC strongly condemns the reported indiscriminate shelling and other alleged unlawful attacks using explosive weaponry in cities, towns and other populated areas, in which civilians are losing their lives and suffering terrible injuries, including life-changing ones".

"All feasible measures must be taken to protect and spare civilians and civilian infrastructures like hospitals, schools, and markets. Water supply for civilians must also be protected. These are obligations under international humanitarian law".

Australians in Azerbaijan (*information provided when fighting started*)

On 28 September, media reported that several commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

s47E(d)

Nagorno-Karabakh

The long-standing policy of successive governments is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state (Armenia refers to the region as the [so-called] 'Republic of Artsakh'). No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. The Government supports the efforts of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to regulate the conflict and does not seek to intervene. During the current fighting, Armenia raised the possibility of recognising the 'independence' of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The conflict has its origins in the early years of the Soviet Union when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan (1923). The region's population was overwhelmingly Armenian, but more Azerbaijanis settled there during the late Soviet period. In February 1988, local representatives sought Moscow's permission to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia, which it declined. This led to protests, violence and ethnic Azerbaijanis leaving the region. Nagorno-Karabakh declaring independence in September 1991 led to war that continued until the Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. Armenia gained control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions on the conflict. Despite skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

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The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh') is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. A settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the *Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict* (Madrid Principles):

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

On 8 December 2016 the Minsk Group reiterated there was 'no military solution to this conflict', called on parties to adhere to the 1994/95 ceasefire agreements, and the settlement 'must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Under the current (2018-) government, s47C

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Recent Media

The current outbreak of fighting has generated local media coverage.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

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12 June 2020	Mr Scott Morrison MP – representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, answered the question of Mr Josh Burns MP (below).
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30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh'

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delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra

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ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH, s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUES

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Australia's position on fighting (July, September 2020) between Armenia-Azerbaijan and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzumur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) following fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

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Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Background

Fighting on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, July and September 2020

Since 27 September fighting has erupted again along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh. Authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh (28 September) published the names of 84 killed military personnel. Armenia stated that Azerbaijan was undertaking attacks in both the north and south (near the border with Iran) along the Line-of-Control. Since the start of fighting, both sides claim to have inflicted serious damage on the other – Azerbaijan claims to have seized Armenian controlled territory. In recent months Azerbaijan had been undertaking exercises in the border region. Both sides accuse the other of launching hostilities. Armenia launched a general call-up and the first group of volunteers have been sent to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's President Erdogan continues to support Azerbaijan. Turkey denies rumours it has introduced Syrian opposition fighters into the conflict, considering such a step 'unnecessary'. Armenia has stated it will use Russian supplied 'Iskander' missiles if Turkey becomes involved and uses F16 fighters. Russia has also supplied 'Iskander' missiles to Azerbaijan. Armenia PM Pashinyan has said he did not exclude the possibility that the escalation in Nagorno Karabakh could expand beyond the boundaries of the region and threaten international stability. Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia – both are members of the CSTO military alliance - called for an immediate ceasefire and talks. The US, EU, France and NATO, among others, have called for an end of fighting, as has Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with both Azerbaijan President Aliyev and Pashinyan, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations, a position also adopted by the OSCE. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric that could inflame the situation.

Skirmishes earlier broke out on 12 July along the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating fighting that included drone attacks and shelling, which resulted in at least 16 deaths of soldiers and senior officers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth

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30 September 2020

Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

On 24 August, Trent Zimmerman (Liberal, North Sydney) spoke in Parliament about the outbreak of fighting on the Azerbaijan--Armenia border conflict, and was critical of Azerbaijan. In particular, *he highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.'* Mr Zimmerman said that it was 'extraordinary that the Azeri government would at this time—indeed, at any time—threaten to attack a nuclear reactor with a missile strike. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I urge both nations to ensure that their disputes continue to be the subject of peaceful negotiations, not armed conflict'.

ANC Executive Director Kayserian (17 July) earlier wrote to DFAT seeking the Government's reaction to 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

Australians in Azerbaijan

On 28 September, media reported that several commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

s47E(d)

Nagorno-Karabakh

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state (it is also known as the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh'). No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

The conflict has its origins in 1923 when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the then Soviet republic of Azerbaijan. The population of the region was overwhelmingly Armenian, but the numbers of Azerbaijanis increased during the late Soviet period. In February 1988, local representatives voted to request permission of the central government to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia. This led to protests and violence. Armed conflict grew after Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence in September 1991, continuing until a Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. As a result Armenia gained

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30 September 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts of Azerbaijan. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions seeking a resolution of the conflict. Despite ongoing skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh/'Republic of Artsakh' is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the *Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict* to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Also known as the Madrid Principles, these Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement:

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

Visit of representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

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Recent Media

The outbreak of fighting on 27 September and in July generated some local media coverage.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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ARMENIA, NAGORNO-KARABAKH s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on Nagorno-Karabakh s22(1)(a)(ii)

DISPUTED TERRITORY OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH ('REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Recent meetings between State/Federal parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

- Australia has an open, multicultural society and a federal system of government where community groups – and parliamentarians – are free to express their views, within Australian law.
- Parliamentarians are free to meet with individuals claiming to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh'
 - this does not constitute a change in the Australian Government's position.

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Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene in the dispute. Then-Foreign Minister Bishop confirmed the Australian Government's long-standing policy on Nagorno-Karabakh in Parliament in November 2015.

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02 June 2020

On 31 March 2020, 'presidential' and 'parliamentary' elections were held in the disputed territory. In response, HOM Ankara tweeted on 3 April: "Australia supports the territorial integrity of #Azerbaijan and does not recognise the 'elections' which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. It is more important than ever the OSCE Minsk Group continues its role in the peace process to achieve a negotiated settlement."

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

In late September 2019, a delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh region, including federal members John Alexander, Trent Zimmerman and Tim Wilson, and NSW state member Hugh McDermott. The delegation was escorted by Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC), Haig Kaiserian, and Representative of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia, Kaylar Mikaelian. They met Armenia's Prime Minister, ministers, senior officials, politicians, businesspeople, and representatives from the 'Republic of Artsakh'. During this visit, the delegation discussed recognition of the Armenian 'genocide' and expressed support for the 'Republic of Artsakh'.

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Government Ministers. In late August Senator Eric Abetz joined the membership of the 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group'.

On 19 July 2019, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, while visiting Armenia, said that: 'It's already 20 years [since] New South Wales has recognised the Armenian Genocide and is recognising the independence of Artsakh. We hope that Australia will also recognise, if Germany and some countries can recognise, and I always raise this issue among my parliamentary friends.'

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland and Turkey, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations, despite Armenia's efforts to have them participate formally in the talks.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the OSCE Minsk Group presented the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to the Foreign Ministries of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Also known as the Madrid Principles (after the place of drafting), the Basic Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement. They are:

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control;
- interim autonomous status for the region with guarantees for security and self-governance;
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- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will;
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Recent Media

Media attention to the parliamentary delegation's visit in September 2019, the NSW Premier's visit in July and the July 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation visit has been limited to ethnic community media in Australia, and coverage in Azerbaijan and Armenia. s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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ARMENIA, NAGORNO-KARABAKH s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on Nagorno-Karabakh s22(1)(a)(ii)

DISPUTED TERRITORY OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH ('REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
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 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
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06 May 2020

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Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene in the dispute. Then-Foreign Minister Bishop confirmed the Australian Government's long-standing policy on Nagorno-Karabakh in Parliament in November 2015.

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On 31 March 2020, 'presidential' and 'parliamentary' elections were held in the disputed territory. In response, HOM Ankara tweeted on 3 April: "Australia supports the territorial integrity of #Azerbaijan and does not recognise the 'elections' which took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on 31 March. It is more important than ever the OSCE Minsk Group continues its role in the peace process to achieve a negotiated settlement."

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

In late September 2019, a delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh region, including federal members John Alexander, Trent Zimmerman and Tim Wilson, and NSW state member Hugh McDermott. The delegation was escorted by Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC), Haig Kaiserian, and Representative of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia, Kaylar Mikaelian. They met Armenia's Prime Minister, ministers, senior officials, politicians, businesspeople, and representatives from the 'Republic of Artsakh'. During this visit, the delegation discussed recognition of the Armenian 'genocide' and expressed support for the 'Republic of Artsakh'.

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Government Ministers. In late August Senator Eric Abetz joined the membership of the 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group'.

On 19 July 2019, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, while visiting Armenia, said that: 'It's already 20 years [since] New South Wales has recognised the Armenian Genocide and is recognising the independence of Artsakh. We hope that Australia will also recognise, if Germany and some countries can recognise, and I always raise this issue among my parliamentarian friends.'

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland and Turkey, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations, despite Armenia's efforts to have them participate formally in the talks.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the OSCE Minsk Group presented the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to the Foreign Ministries of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Also known as the Madrid Principles (after the place of drafting), the Basic Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement. They are:

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06 May 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control;
- interim autonomous status for the region with guarantees for security and self-governance;
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh;
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will;
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

s47C

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Recent Media

Media attention to the parliamentary delegation's visit in September 2019, the NSW Premier's visit in July and the July 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation visit has been limited to ethnic community media in Australia, and coverage in Azerbaijan and Armenia. s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
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22 January 2019	ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on the recent fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, s22(1)(a)(ii)

Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Australia's position on the July 2020 outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan

- Australia is concerned by the outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
 - though welcome the relative stability along the border since 16 July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - and resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Government Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

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In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Both sides agreed to conduct negotiations based on these principles, but there is little sign that either society is prepared to accept them.

On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Azeri Embassy in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' have condemned Azerbaijan for its role in the attacks.

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19 August 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Recent Media

Nil.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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19 August 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

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30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
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30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh' delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra
22 January 2019	ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on the recent fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, s22(1)(a)(ii)

Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Australia's position on the July 2020 outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan

- Australia is concerned by the outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
 - though welcome the relative stability along the border since 16 July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - and resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

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24 August 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Government Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. NagornoKarabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Both sides agreed to conduct negotiations based on these principles, but there is little sign that either society is prepared to accept them.

On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Azeri Embassy in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' have condemned Azerbaijan for its role in the attacks.

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24 August 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Recent Media

Nil.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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24 August 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

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ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on the recent fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, s22(1)(a)(ii)

Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
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- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
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Australia's position on the July 2020 outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan

- Australia is concerned by the outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
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- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

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Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

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Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

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On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Azeri Embassy in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' have condemned Azerbaijan for its role in the attacks.

On 24 August, Trent Zimmerman (Liberal, North Sydney) spoke in Parliament about the above Azeri-Armenian border conflict, and was critical of Azerbaijan. In particular, he highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.' Mr Zimmerman said that it was 'extraordinary that the Azeri government would at this time—indeed, at any time—threaten to attack a nuclear reactor with a missile strike. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I urge both nations to ensure that their disputes continue to be the subject of peaceful negotiations, not armed conflict'.

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ANC Executive Director Kayserian (17 July) earlier wrote to DFAT seeking the Government's reaction to 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

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25 August 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Recent Media

Nil.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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25 August 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

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ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, NAGORNO-KARABAKH,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUE

Australia's position on the recent fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including Azerbaijan's alleged threat to bomb a nuclear power station in Armenia; Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Australia's position on the July 2020 outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan

- Australia is concerned by the outbreak in fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan
 - though welcome the relative stability along the border since 16 July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

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Background

Nagorno-Karabakh

No UN member-state recognises the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh' (Nagorno-Karabakh), located in the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

Recent meetings between parliamentarians and representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh'

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Government Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met with a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

The OSCE Minsk Group and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992 to resolve the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Group's permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. NagornoKarabakh/ 'Republic of Artsakh' does not have formal representation in the negotiations.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict themselves. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Both sides agreed to conduct negotiations based on these principles, but there is little sign that either society is prepared to accept them.

On 12 July, skirmishes broke out on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating the fighting, which resulted in at least 16 deaths comprising of soldiers and senior officers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' have condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

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On 24 August, Trent Zimmerman (Liberal, North Sydney) spoke in Parliament about the outbreak of fighting on the Azerbaijan--Armenia border conflict, and was critical of Azerbaijan. In particular, he highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting the Metzamur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.' Mr Zimmerman said that it was 'extraordinary that the Azeri government would at this time—indeed, at any time—threaten to attack a nuclear reactor with a missile strike. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I urge both nations to ensure that their disputes continue to be the subject of peaceful negotiations, not armed conflict'.

ANC Executive Director Kayserian (17 July) earlier wrote to DFAT seeking the Government's reaction to 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

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Recent Media

Nil.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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25 September 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

24 August 2020	Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, Member for North Sydney spoke in the Federation Chamber about the fighting on the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the alleged threat from Azerbaijan to attack the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station in Armenia.
12 June 2020	Mr Scott Morrison MP – representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, answered the question of Mr Josh Burns MP (below).
23 March 2020	Mr Josh Burns MP, Member for Macnamara, submitted a Question in Writing regarding the Prime Minister's previous (May 2011) comments on recognition of the 'Armenian Genocide'.
30 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: PQ: submitted eight questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh, mine-clearing initiatives and human rights abuses in Azerbaijan
29 October 2019	ANC media release reporting Australia had recognised the 'Republic of Artsakh' as a party to the conflict (only Armenia and Azerbaijan are recognised as parties to the conflict according to the OSCE Minsk Group process)
24 October 2019	Sen. Eric Abetz: SE: asked about Nagorno-Karabakh and the 'Azerbaijan laundromat's' alleged links to Australian companies
24 October 2019	Sen. Richard Di Natale: SE: submitted twelve questions on notice relating to Nagorno-Karabakh and DFAT's travel advice
28 September 2019	ANC press release reporting delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, including federal and NSW state members
19 September 2019	Federal MP John Alexander makes a speech in the House of Representatives criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov
17 September 2019	NSW MP Dr Hugh McDermott makes a speech in the Legislative Council criticising Azerbaijan's pardoning of Ramil Safarov (an Azerbaijani army officer pardoned in 2012 for murdering an Armenian officer) and calling for the right to self-determination for the 'Republic of Artsakh'
27 August 2019	ANC press release announces expansion of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Group to include Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, and Senator the Hon Richard di Natale
1 August 2019	ANC press release advises of 'Australian Friends of Artsakh' Launch, with 40 Inaugural Signatories including Communications Minister the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Assistant Treasurer the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, and the Shadow Home Affairs and Agriculture & Resources Ministers.
30-31 July 2019	ANC press releases advise that Commonwealth parliamentarians hold a welcome reception in honor of a visiting 'Republic of Artsakh'

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25 September 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

delegation, which also met with a number Commonwealth Senators in Canberra

22 January 2019

ANC press release reported meeting between ANC and the 'foreign minister of Artsakh', in which ANC claimed it had shifted Australian policy to a 'more neutral standing' on Nagorno-Karabakh

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ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH, s22(1)(a)(ii)

ISSUES

Australia's position on fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan around Nagorno-Karabakh; s22(1)(a)(ii)

Australia's position on fighting (July, September 2020) between Armenia-Azerbaijan and an alleged threat (July) by Azerbaijan that its missiles could hit Armenia's Metzamur Atomic Energy Station

- Australia is concerned by the renewed fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan (September) following fighting in July.
- We urge the conflicting parties to exercise restraint
 - avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats, and
 - resolve outstanding issues in good faith.
- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.

Is there any additional support available to stranded Australians in Azerbaijan to ensure an urgent return, before conflict escalates beyond the NK region?

- Due to long-running tensions, the Australian Government has long-advised Australians not to travel to the affected region
 - and since the global outbreak of COVID-19, Australians have been advised not to travel to Azerbaijan or Armenia.
- Commercial flights departing Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, are available if Australians want to leave the country.
- Australians seeking to leave Azerbaijan now should check with airlines about next available commercial flights.
- Australians in Azerbaijan should continue to monitor Smartraveller, and can contact the [Australian Embassy in Ankara](#) (responsible for Azerbaijan) if they need consular assistance.

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Disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh ('Republic of Artsakh')

- It is long-standing Government policy that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state.
 - we do not recognise the so-called 'elections' which took place on 31 March 2020.
- We support the efforts of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and do not seek to intervene.
 - dialogue between the communities and governments directly involved is the best way forward to resolve such a sensitive issue
 - this includes the people living in Nagorno-Karabakh
 - but this does not imply recognition of any diplomatic or political status for Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Background

Fighting on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, July and September 2020

Since 27 September fighting has erupted again along the line-of-control in Nagorno-Karabakh. Authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh (28 September) published the names of 84 killed military personnel. Armenia stated that Azerbaijan was undertaking attacks in both the north and south (near the border with Iran) along the Line-of-Control. Since the start of fighting, both sides claim to have inflicted serious damage on the other – Azerbaijan claims to have seized Armenian controlled territory. In recent months Azerbaijan had been undertaking exercises in the border region. Both sides accuse the other of launching hostilities. Armenia launched a general call-up and the first group of volunteers have been sent to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's President Erdogan continues to support Azerbaijan. Turkey denies rumours it has introduced Syrian opposition fighters into the conflict, considering such a step 'unnecessary'. Armenia has stated it will use Russian supplied 'Iskander' missiles if Turkey becomes involved and uses F16 fighters. Russia has also supplied 'Iskander' missiles to Azerbaijan. Armenia PM Pashinyan has said he did not exclude the possibility that the escalation in Nagorno Karabakh could expand beyond the boundaries of the region and threaten international stability. Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia – both are members of the CSTO military alliance - called for an immediate ceasefire and talks. The US, EU, France and NATO, among others, have called for an end of fighting, as has Iran. The UN Secretary General (28 September) spoke with both Azerbaijan President Aliyev and Pashinyan, urging both sides to establish a ceasefire and resume negotiations, a position also adopted by the OSCE. The US also called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to refrain from provocative rhetoric that could inflame the situation.

Skirmishes earlier broke out on 12 July along the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan near Tavush north-west of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan accused the other side of instigating fighting that included drone attacks and shelling, which resulted in at least 16 deaths of soldiers and senior officers from both sides. On 24 July, the Armenian Youth

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30 September 2020

Federation of Australia held a protest outside of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Canberra. A number of federal and state politicians, who are members of the 'Friends of Artsakh Group' condemned Azerbaijan regarding the July 2020 fighting.

On 24 August, Trent Zimmerman (Liberal, North Sydney) spoke in Parliament about the outbreak of fighting on the Azerbaijan--Armenia border conflict, and was critical of Azerbaijan. In particular, *he highlighted a comment of an Azeri defence ministry spokesman that their weapons were 'capable of hitting the Metzumur Atomic Energy Station with high accuracy, which will turn into a catastrophe for Armenia.'* Mr Zimmerman said that it was 'extraordinary that the Azeri government would at this time—indeed, at any time—threaten to attack a nuclear reactor with a missile strike. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I urge both nations to ensure that their disputes continue to be the subject of peaceful negotiations, not armed conflict'.

ANC Executive Director Kayserian (17 July) earlier wrote to DFAT seeking the Government's reaction to 'Azerbaijan's nuclear threats'. DFAT replied that Australia was concerned about the outbreak of fighting and supported the call of the UN Secretary General (13 July) for an immediate end to the fighting, for both parties to de-escalate the conflict and to avoid provocative rhetoric, including threats.

Australians in Azerbaijan

On 28 September, media reported that several commercial international flights to/from Baku had been cancelled, in connection to the declaration of Martial Law. This included AZAL (Azerbaijan's national carrier) flights on the Baku-London route scheduled for 1 October, and Baku-Berlin route scheduled for 2 October. FlyDubai cancelled its flights on the Dubai-Baku-Dubai route scheduled for 29 September, 1 and 3 October; Aeroflot cancelled its Moscow-Baku-Moscow flights scheduled for 1 and 4 October, and Belavia cancelled its Minsk-Baku-Minsk flights scheduled for 2 and 4 October.

Based on Turkish media reporting, flights have not been cancelled to Turkey: AZAL runs 11 flights to Istanbul per week, and according to flight tracking websites, AZAL and Turkish Airways flights from Baku departed as scheduled on 28 September. A new twice-weekly Baku-Ankara service also commenced on 28 September, departing Baku at 10:00am local time as scheduled.

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Nagorno-Karabakh

Successive governments' long-standing policy is that Australia supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and does not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state (it is also known as the so-called 'Republic of Artsakh'). No UN member-state recognises Nagorno-Karabakh. The Government supports the efforts of the OSCE (Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group and does not seek to intervene.

The conflict has its origins in 1923 when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the then Soviet republic of Azerbaijan. The population of the region was overwhelmingly Armenian, but the numbers of Azerbaijanis increased during the late Soviet period. In February 1988, local representatives voted to request permission of the central government to leave Soviet Azerbaijan and join Soviet Armenia. This led to protests and violence. Armed conflict grew after Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence in September 1991, continuing until a Russian-brokered ceasefire in 1994. As a result Armenia gained

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30 September 2020

s22(1)(a)(ii)

control of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding seven districts of Azerbaijan. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions seeking a resolution of the conflict. Despite ongoing skirmishes, the last serious violence pre-2020 was in April 2016.

The OSCE Minsk Group

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by the US, Russia and France, was established in 1992. The permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno Karabakh/'Republic of Artsakh' is not represented.

The Minsk Group maintains that responsibility for reaching a settlement rests with the parties to the conflict. It has stated that a settlement must be based on the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act (1975-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), namely: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. In addition, in 2007, the Minsk Group presented the *Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict* to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Also known as the Madrid Principles, these Principles serve as a possible road map for a settlement:

- the return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control
- an interim autonomous status for the region providing guarantees for security and self-governance
- a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh
- future determination of the final legal status of the region through a legally binding expression of the popular will
- the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

Visit of representatives of the 'Republic of Artsakh' to Australia

In late-July 2019, a delegation purporting to represent the 'Republic of Artsakh' visited Australia on Armenian passports and met a number of Commonwealth and NSW politicians. s33(a)(iii) + s33(b)

On 1 August 2019, the Armenian National Committee of Australia announced an 'Australian Friends of Artsakh Group', which included two Federal Ministers and later Senator Eric Abetz. In August 2020, former Australian Ambassador to the US Joe Hockey also joined.

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Recent Media

The outbreak of fighting on 27 September and in July generated some local media coverage.

Senate or Parliamentary Questions on this Topic

As per Attachment A

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30 September 2020

Attachment A: Parliamentary debate / questions on Armenia in 2019-2020

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