



Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

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P.O. Box 635 • Tujunga, CA 91043-0635 • 818-951-7411 • Website: stnc.org

October 21, 2020

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

This community impact letter is established in an urgent manner with conjunction to the DLANC Board in support of the City Council File 20-0004. The STNC board recommends a separate council file to be considered for this resolution. The purpose of this impact letter is to bring awareness and a hopeful change to the present atrocities committed by the military aggression of Azerbaijan with the help of Turkey against the Republic of Artsakh, also known as Nagorno-Karabagh.

As American citizens, violations of human rights and the non-recognition of the democratic process stand in opposition to everything we believe. On September 2, 1991, the Republic of Artsakh (also known as Nagorno-Karabakh) was established just after the fall of the Soviet Union. As countries within the region were regaining their independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union, disputes were occurring over certain territories that predated the 1922 establishment of the Soviet Union. Through the democratic process in 1991, Artsakh held a referendum and with the unanimous approval of voters, it successfully established an autonomy from Azerbaijan creating a presidential democracy with a unicameral legislature. Soon after the 1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war took place in defiance by Azerbaijan. Artsakh defended itself and expressed its will to be free from the soviet established territories that placed its borders within the boundaries of Azerbaijan primarily for being a highly concentrated Armenian ethnic region with a predominantly Christian community, historical structures, churches, and for centuries having belonged to Armenia proper.

On September 27, 2020 Artsakh witnessed the military aggression of Azerbaijan causing atrocities to the civilians living within the region. The situation is detrimental to the existence of the population given artillery supplied by Turkey as a super power and ISIS mercenaries recruited from Syria and other Middle Eastern countries make it impossible for this small group of people to have a fighting chance. The media will refer to it as a war but a war it is not. With only a population of 170,000 people, it is currently facing the might of not only Azerbaijan, but as well Turkey with combined population well over 90 million.

The Armenian community here in Los Angeles and throughout the diaspora is severely effected by the present events. Many express the medical phenomenon of "Diaspora paralysis" with the urge to take action but the unfortunate inability to do so. Many other Armenian members within our community whom are direct descendants of survivors from the 1915 Armenian genocide fear a new genocide is taking place.

The STNC firmly believes that no "conflict of interest" should be at stake when voicing ourselves for the interest of the community. We can only hope our political leaders will hold the same obligations when sanctioning Turkey, a U.S. ally with artillery assistance to Azerbaijan. We cannot let the history of mankind be written by our own interests in mind but rather for moral obligation and historical truth at heart.

When our fellow Armenian- American community members gather every April 24th to commemorate the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide that took place in 1915, raising their flags and marching the streets, one of the main slogans you'll hear is "Never Again" Unfortunately, on September 27, 2020 when the Azerbaijani military invaded and attacked the civilian region of Artsakh, the many told horror stories of 1915 have been reignited in the hearts of every Armenian around the world. Please join the STNC council in condemning the military aggression of Azerbaijan and supporting the righteous existence of Artsakh to live and operate freely and independently from Azerbaijan.

Sincerely,

Liliana Sanchez, President
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council