

ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN PEACE TREATY: INTERNATIONAL RELATION

Trump announces historic Azerbaijan Armenia peace deal through “Trump Route” corridor — is this the breakthrough to end 35 years of conflict in the South Caucasus?

Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed a landmark peace agreement brokered by the United States at the White House. This deal formally ends decades of violent conflict over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, aiming to establish lasting stability in the South Caucasus region.

Background of the Nagorno-Karabakh Dispute

Geographical and Demographic Context

Location

Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous, landlocked region located within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. It is situated in the South Caucasus, an area between Eastern Europe and Western Asia that includes modern-day Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Ethnic and Religious Divide

The core of the conflict is the ethno-religious division. The region has historically been inhabited by a majority of ethnic Armenians, who are predominantly Christians, while the surrounding nation of Azerbaijan consists mainly of Azeris, who are predominantly Muslims.



Historical Roots

Ancient and Imperial History

Historically, the region was part of the ancient Armenian Kingdom. Over the centuries, it came under the rule of major empires, including the Ottomans (Turkish), Persians (Iranian), and Russians.

Russian Revolution and WWI

Tsarist Russia controlled the South Caucasus in the 19th century. Following the 1917 Russian Revolution, its influence waned. The modern conflict's origins can be traced to World War I, when Ottoman and Azeri forces conducted campaigns against ethnic Armenians in the region.

Soviet Era

During the Soviet period, Moscow established the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast within the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, despite its majority Armenian population. This decision planted the seeds for future conflict by placing an Armenian-populated enclave under Azeri administration.

Post-Soviet Conflict

First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1991-1994)

As the Soviet Union began to collapse in 1991, the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence from Azerbaijan. This sparked a full-scale war that resulted in approximately 30,000 deaths and displaced hundreds of thousands. The war ended with a Russia-brokered ceasefire in 1994, which left ethnic Armenian forces in control of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territories, though its status remained internationally unresolved.

2020 War

After years of a frozen conflict, Azerbaijan, with significant military support from Turkey and Pakistan, launched a successful 44-day offensive. It recaptured most of the territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh and parts of the region itself.

2023 Offensive

In a final, swift military operation in 2023, Azerbaijan took full and decisive control over the entire Nagorno-Karabakh region, leading to a mass exodus of its ethnic Armenian population.

Key Outcomes of the U.S.-Brokered Deal

The recent peace agreement formalizes the end of hostilities and introduces new geopolitical arrangements.

Cessation of Hostilities

The primary outcome is the formal end to nearly 35 years of conflict. This agreement is intended to pave the way for long-term regional stability, economic cooperation, and development.

"Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP)

A central feature of the deal is the creation of a new transport corridor. This route will link mainland Azerbaijan with its Nakhchivan exclave (which is separated from the rest of Azerbaijan by Armenian territory). This corridor, running through Armenia, is crucial for Azerbaijan's territorial connectivity.

U.S. Exclusive Development Rights

The agreement stipulates that the United States will not deploy soldiers to the region. However, it grants the U.S. exclusive rights to develop and manage the TRIPP corridor. This likely means that American engineering and logistics companies will be contracted to build and operate this strategic route.

India's Strategic Interest in the Region

Historical Ties

India and Armenia share deep historical and cultural connections that span millennia, including trade links and shared heritage.

Modern Diplomatic and Defense Partnership

In contemporary times, the two nations maintain a robust relationship. This was highlighted by a \$250 million defense deal in 2022, where India agreed to supply military hardware to Armenia.

Mutual Diplomatic Support

Armenia has consistently supported India's stance on the Kashmir issue and has backed India's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

Connectivity and Geopolitical Interests

1. The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

The South Caucasus region is geographically vital for India's ambitions to enhance its connectivity with Russia and Europe. The INSTC is a multi-modal network of ship, rail, and road routes designed for this purpose.

2.Chabahar Port and the INSTC

India has heavily invested in the Chabahar Port in Iran as a key gateway to bypass Pakistan and connect to Afghanistan, Central Asia, and beyond. The INSTC route from Chabahar extends north through the Caucasus, making stability in the Armenia-Azerbaijan region crucial for the corridor's viability and efficiency. A peaceful and accessible Caucasus allows for a smoother flow of goods from India to Russia and Europe.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/us/trump-announces-historic-azerbaijan-armenia-peace-deal-through-trump-route-corridor-is-this-the-breakthrough-to-end-35-years-of-conflict-in-the-south-caucasus/articleshow/123196600.cms?from=mdr>

