



# Glendale Teachers Association

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## **ARTSAKH RESOLUTION September 2023**

WHEREAS, Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) is the ancestral homeland of the Armenian people and has been a center of Armenian language, culture, and religion, having maintained its autonomy for over two millennia; and

WHEREAS, The Armenians of Artsakh were targeted during the Armenian Genocide of 1915 by Azeris with the backing of the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire, where they massacred over 30,000 Armenians in Baku, over 20,000 Armenians in Shushi, and over 10,000 Armenians in Nakhichevan; and

WHEREAS, Artsakh was an integral part of the First Republic of Armenia founded in the wake of the Armenian Genocide due to the advocacy of United States President Woodrow Wilson, who recognized the independence of the fledgling Armenian state; and

WHEREAS, Despite Artsakh's distinctly Armenian identity, it was arbitrarily and illegally separated from Armenia by Joseph Stalin in 1921 and placed under the administrative control of Soviet Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, For over 70 years, the Armenians of Artsakh suffered routine discrimination and persecution at the hands of Soviet Azerbaijani authorities culminating in anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait (1988), Kirovabad (1988), and Baku (1990), resulting in hundreds of deaths and the forced displacement of over 400,000 Armenians; and

WHEREAS, In response to escalating anti-Armenian violence, the Armenians of Artsakh exercised their right to self-determination and declared their independence on September 2, 1991 in accordance to the Soviet Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was reaffirmed by referendum on December 10<sup>th</sup> of the same year, recognizing that the Azerbaijani government was unable and unwilling to ensure the fundamental rights and security of the Armenians; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan shortly thereafter launched a war of aggression against Artsakh that saw Azerbaijani lay siege to Armenian towns and cities, and perpetrate human rights violations, which ended in the victory of the Armenians of Artsakh; and

WHEREAS, For the next 25 years, the Armenians of Artsakh consolidated a free and democratic society despite constant attempts by Azerbaijan to undermine the security and prosperity of the region; and

WHEREAS, In September 2020, Azerbaijan abandoned decades of multilateral diplomacy and launched a war of territorial expansion that resulted in the ethnic cleansing of over 30,000 Armenians from their ancestral lands in Artsakh, currently occupied by Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan perpetrated widely documented human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations, including the unlawful targeting of schools, homes, hospitals, and churches with prohibited weapons, the execution of Armenian civilians, and torture of Armenian prisoners of war; and

WHEREAS, Following a trilateral ceasefire statement signed in November 2020, Azerbaijan's aggression has continued unabated, including routine incursions in Artsakh's territory and the continuous invasion and occupation of the sovereign territories of the Republic of Armenia since May 2021; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan has maintained an illegal blockade of the Lachin Corridor since December 12, 2022, completely severing Artsakh's "Road of Life" which connects it to the world via the Republic of Armenia, preventing the transport of food, fuel, medicine, and other vital humanitarian supplies to the region, and leaving Artsakh's 120,000 Armenians facing critical shortages of life-sustaining goods; and

WHEREAS, The State of California is home to the largest Armenian American population in the United States, and Armenians living in California have enriched our state through their contributions in business, agriculture, academia, government, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, The State of California recognize the independence of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh in 2014 and has been at the forefront of efforts to raise awareness of the plight of its indigenous Armenian population amidst Azerbaijan's relentless aggression; and

WHEREAS, The United States acknowledged the threat Azerbaijan poses to the Armenians of Artsakh with the passage of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act in 1992, which prohibited the provision of United States assistance to Azerbaijan until the time it ceases all blockades and the offensive use of force against the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh; and

**WHEREAS**, because the United States is founded on a commitment to the values of democracy, liberty, and the right of self-determination, the United States has a moral obligation to stand up and speak out on behalf of the Armenians of Artsakh, who have earned their right of self-governance and have flourished as a free, democratic and sovereign nation for over 30 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Glendale Teachers Association celebrates the rich diversity of their student population and recognizes thousands of students, families, and colleagues of Armenian descent who are valued members of the school community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Glendale Teachers Association recognizes the importance of teaching past and present accurate historical events regarding human rights violations, the role it plays in combating future violations, and understanding peaceful conflict resolution through dialogue and acceptance of diversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Glendale Teachers Association reaffirms their commitment to the emotional and physical well-being of our students and their families, and a heightened awareness of the need for emotional and mental support for all children; and

**WHEREAS**, the Glendale Teachers Association stands in solidarity with the people of Armenia and Artsakh.

**Now therefore, be it resolved that the Glendale Teachers Association, by adoption of this resolution:**

- Condemns Azerbaijan's illegal blockade of Nagorno Karabakh and urges the United States government to take immediate action to assist the Armenians of Artsakh;
- Calls on the President of the United States and the United States Department of State to condemn Azerbaijan's blockade against the Armenian people and immediately take action to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its human rights abuses and war crimes through the enforcement of restrictions on the provision of military assistance to Azerbaijan pursuant to Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, and through the imposition of targeted sanctions on Azerbaijani officials involved directly in the commissioning of war crimes;

- Calls on the President of the United States and the United States Agency for International Development to work to immediately facilitate the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance to the Armenians of Artsakh in order to prevent an impending humanitarian catastrophe;
- Calls on the President of the United States to introduce a United Nations Security Council resolution to establish a United Nations Mission in Nagorno-Karabakh, consisting of at least 5,000 military personnel and representing at least two permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs;
- Calls on the President of the United States and the United States Department of State to engage proactively in multilateral conflict resolution efforts to ensure a lasting resolution to this conflict that ensure the fundamental right to self-determination for the Armenians of Artsakh;
- Calls on the Board of Education of the Glendale Unified School District to provide all GUSD staff and educators with education and professional development regarding the aforementioned topics and regarding trauma based instruction and social emotional support so that all employees in GUSD are prepared to address the needs of our Armenian colleagues, students, families, and community.

Adopted by the GTA Board of Directors on 09-18-23.

Adopted by the GTA Representative Council on 09-19-23.

GTA President's Signature: 