



Promoting a Lasting Partnership Between Azerbaijan and America

1101 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW • Suite 600 • Washington, DC 20004 • T +1 202.756.4544 • F +1 202.756.7553
info@azerbaijanamericaalliance.org • www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org

Section 907 Press Release

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- October 24, 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the FREEDOM Support Act into law by President George H.W. Bush.

At the Bill Signing, President Bush highlighted the following goals of the legislation:

“to provide humanitarian assistance; to support democratic reforms and free market systems; to encourage trade and investment; to support the development of food distribution systems; to assist in health and human services programs; and to establish a range of people-to-people exchanges designed to bury forever the distrust and misunderstanding that characterized previous relations with the former Soviet Union.”

Section 907 of this legislation, however, precluded Azerbaijan from receiving any financial or logistical support from the U.S. until it took “demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.” This was an unfair and one-sided perspective on an immensely complicated ethnic conflict. Furthermore, it made Azerbaijan the *only* country in the CIS which under U.S. law would be ineligible from receiving U.S. aid.

Section 907 has been waived by Executive Order every year since 2001, alleviating the practical effects of the legislation. Yet despite this short-term measure, its continued presence under U.S. law is detrimental to Azerbaijani-American relations.

Situated between Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan plays a vital role in supporting the interests of the U.S. and its allies in the region – be they political, economic or security-related. As such, maintaining strong relations with Azerbaijan is a foreign policy imperative for the U.S. – a reason why the repeal of Section 907 has been supported by consecutive presidential administrations.

The Azerbaijan America Alliance believes that Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act unfairly characterizes Azerbaijan as the sole aggressor in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Furthermore, it fails to take into account the great sacrifices that Azerbaijan has taken to preserve the interests of the United States and its allies in the region. As such, we urge that Section 907 be expeditiously repealed.

The Azerbaijan America Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, with a mission to foster an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect between the people of Azerbaijan and America. Through academic discussion, cultural programming, and political discourse, the Alliance aims to become the premier organization dedicated to promoting a lasting partnership between Azerbaijan and America.