

U.S. Working to Stop Azerbaijani Invasion of Armenia, Says Secretary of State Rubio

Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA) and Chris Smith (R-NJ) Press Trump Administration to Enforce Section 907; Secure Azerbaijan's Release of Armenian Prisoners

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Secretary of State Marco Rubio told House Foreign Affairs Committee members this week that the United States is actively working to prevent an Azerbaijani invasion of Armenia, responding to bipartisan calls from Representatives Jim Costa (D-CA) and Chris Smith (R-NJ) to enforce Section 907 restrictions on U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan and secure the immediate release of Armenian hostages, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).



At the May 21, 2025, House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) & Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA) pressed Secretary of State Marco Rubio to enforce Sec. 907 restrictions on U.S. aid to Azerbaijan & secure Azerbaijan's immediate release of Armenian hostages.

“We thank Congressmen Smith and Costa for raising the urgent need for stronger U.S. leadership in holding Azerbaijan accountable for its aggression and ongoing abuse of Armenian hostages, and welcome Secretary Rubio’s constructive response – in particular his assurance that the Trump-Vance Administration is committed to preventing an Azerbaijani invasion of Armenia and ensuring the release of Armenian prisoners,” stated ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian.

“The ANCA welcomes Sec. Rubio’s assurances that the Trump-Vance Administration is committed to preventing an Azerbaijani invasion of Armenia and ensuring the release of Armenian prisoners.”

*Aram Hamparian, ANCA
Executive Director*

[Rep. Chris Smith \(R-NJ\) raised concerns](#) about Azerbaijani war crimes and political hostages: “It’s very clear that after the genocide committed by Aliyev against the Armenians, there are many, many political prisoners and POWs being

held... I would just encourage you to do whatever you can to get those men and women released — at least 300.”

Rubio acknowledged the urgency of the issue, stating that the U.S. is using its diplomatic presence to prioritize human rights and peace. “The issues you raised about prisoners and human rights are critical... Azerbaijan provides us an opportunity to do that in the context of the broader peace that we’re trying to establish.”

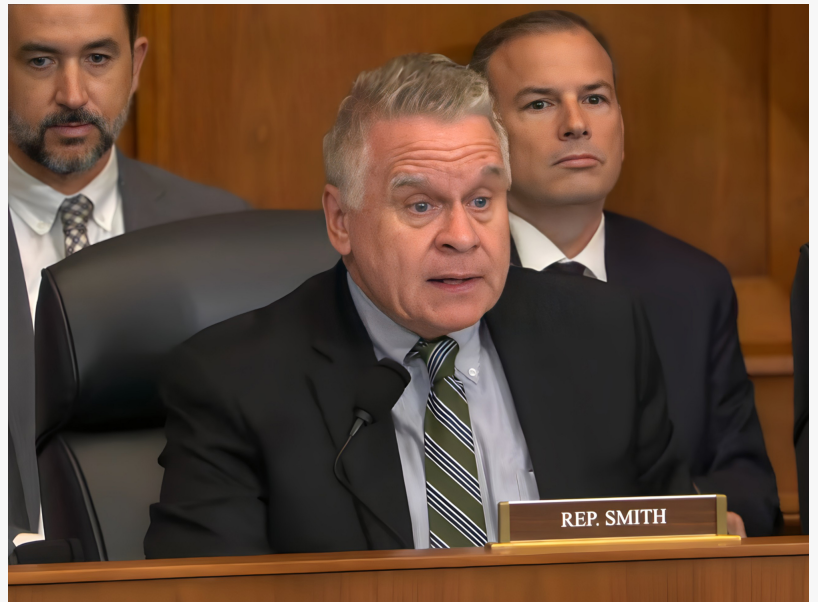
[Rep. Jim Costa \(D-CA\)](#) urged U.S. support for Armenia and called for an end to U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan, stating: “We’ve tried to get Republican and Democratic administrations to forego the waiver on Section 907 on military aid to Azerbaijan. Finally, last year, the Biden Administration rightfully refused to issue the waiver. I think it should be permanent.”

Secretary Rubio replied, “We have not made a determination on that yet because what we are focused on now is getting them to agree to a peace agreement that does not cause them to invade a neighboring country, Armenia,” calling an Azerbaijan-Armenia war, “destructive, counterproductive, and the last thing we need right now in the region.”

The ANCA reiterated its longstanding call for full enforcement of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act – which restricts U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan until it ceases offensive force against Armenia and Artsakh.



On May 21, 2025, Secretary of State Marco Rubio told House Foreign Affairs Committee members that the U.S. is working to prevent an Azerbaijani invasion of Armenia, citing the release of Armenian prisoners “critical” to peace efforts.



At the May 21, 2025, House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) stated “Aliyev is a dictator,” and urged Secretary of State Marco Rubio to secure Azerbaijan’s release of Armenian prisoners.

“We continue to urge Secretary Rubio and the Trump-Vance Administration to maintain and

uphold the enforcement of Section 907 restrictions on military assistance to Azerbaijan – a critical tool at our disposal to deter the very real threat of war,” stated Hamparian. “We thank our Congressional allies for their continued leadership to ensure not a dollar of U.S. taxpayer money is used to arm Azerbaijan’s genocidal regime.”

ANCA Rallies Growing Bipartisan Pressure for U.S. Accountability Measures

The ANCA has been working closely with Congressional leaders to press the Trump/Vance Administration to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its genocidal ethnic cleansing of Artsakh’s Armenian Christian population, enforce Section 907 restriction on U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan, sanction the the Aliyev regime for war crimes, work to secure Azerbaijan’s immediate release of Armenian hostages, support the protected right of return of Artsakh’s Armenian Christian population, bolster Armenia’s security, and expand aid to Armenia to assist Artsakh genocide victims.

In March, [sixty U.S. Representatives](#) - led by Representatives Mike Lawler (R-NY), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), and Gabe Amo (D-RI) - called on Secretary Rubio to fully enforce Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act – demanding an immediate end to U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan, citing Baku’s ethnic cleansing of Artsakh’s 120,000 indigenous Armenian Christian population, continued occupation of sovereign Armenian territory, and illegal detention and abuse of Armenian prisoners. In the ANCA-backed letter, Representatives stressed that “having faced no material consequences or accountability for its actions, Azerbaijan continues to undermine efforts to ensure a just, durable, and dignified peace in the region through its ongoing aggression against Armenia.”

On April 8th, Congressional Armenian Caucus leaders Frank Pallone, David Valadao (R-CA), Brad Sherman (D-CA) and Gus Bilirakis were joined by two dozen U.S. House members in cosigning a letter - again backed by the ANCA - urging Secretary Rubio and National Security Advisor Michael Waltz to secure the release of Armenian prisoners and strengthen U.S. policy safeguarding Armenia’s sovereignty and security as part of expanded engagement in the South Caucasus. “We strongly agree with Secretary Rubio’s statement that ‘now is the time to commit to peace’ in the South Caucasus and NSA Waltz’s call to ‘finalize this peace deal now, release the prisoners, and work together to make the region more secure and prosperous,’” wrote the Representatives, underscoring the urgency of U.S.-led confidence-building measures.

On April 11th, thirty-six U.S. Representatives – led by Representatives Dina Titus (D-NV) and Chris Smith – called on Secretary of State Marco Rubio to impose Global Magnitsky sanctions on Azerbaijani officials responsible for grave human rights abuses against Armenians, including the illegal detention, abuse, and sham trials of Armenian prisoners of war and former Artsakh leaders.

On April 29th, Rep. Chris Smith chaired a Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on Azerbaijan where he urged the Trump/Vance Administration to “ratchet up” pressure on

Azerbaijan. "We need to work for the release of political prisoners and POWs held by the government of Azerbaijan, to protect Armenian cultural heritage, and to uphold the right to return one day to live in peace and freedom in Nagorno-Karabakh," stated Smith during the Lantos hearing.

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