

Swiss-Led Delegation Arrives in Washington DC to Advance Peace and Protected Return for Artsakh Armenians

Watch Live: Capitol Hill Briefing on July 8th to Spotlight Swiss Initiative for Nagorno-Karabakh

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Swiss Parliamentarians Erich Vontobel (Federal Democratic Union) and Lukas Reimann (Swiss People's Party) are leading an international delegation to Washington, DC, for a series of high-level meetings promoting the [Swiss Peace Initiative for Nagorno Karabakh](#) - a diplomatic effort focused on securing a just and lasting peace in the South Caucasus, including the collective, protected return of Artsakh's forcibly displaced Armenian Christians to their homes, reported by the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

Swiss MPs Vontobel and Reimann, joined by Christian Solidarity International (CSI) President Dr. John Eibner, and former Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian – who currently serves as coordinator of the Committee for the Defense of the Fundamental Rights of the People of Nagorno Karabakh, a body established by the Artsakh Parliament in exile – met earlier today with U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretaries of State Jake McGee and Monica Ager Jacobsen to discuss the rights of displaced Armenians and recent developments in the South Caucasus and the wider region.

“The Swiss Peace Initiative offers a Swiss-sponsored mechanism for dialogue between the Government of Azerbaijan and representatives of the forcibly displaced Armenians, with a view to creating conditions to enable the latter to return to their homes,” stated Dr. Eibner. “The two key conditions for this return are security and respect for the fundamental human rights of the returnees. Switzerland, as a neutral country with vast experience as a mediator is well suited to

A promotional poster for a Capitol Hill briefing. It features a red Swiss cross logo on the left. The text reads: "CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING SWISS PEACE INITIATIVE FOR NAGORNO KARABAKH". Below this, it says: "HEAR FROM TWO SWISS PARLIAMENTARIANS AND OTHER EXPERTS SUPPORTING THE GLOBAL PLATFORM CREATED BY SWITZERLAND FOR TALKS ON THE RETURN OF ARMENIANS TO THEIR ANCIENT ARTSAKH HOMELAND". The date and time are "TUESDAY | JULY 8 | 3-4 PM" and the location is "RAYBURN HOB | RM 2044". A YouTube link "youtube.com/ancagrassroots" is provided. On the right, there is a graphic of the US Capitol building with a red "WATCH LIVE" banner hanging from its dome.

**CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING
SWISS PEACE INITIATIVE
FOR NAGORNO KARABAKH**

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WATCH LIVE

: Parliamentarians Erich Vontobel and Lukas Reimann will brief Members of Congress and Congressional staff on ongoing efforts to secure the dignified and protected return of Armenian Christians to their Artsakh homes.

fulfill this function.” Dr. Eibner noted that Switzerland’s impending leadership of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2026 will offer additional diplomatic tools to advance peace initiatives.

The delegation is holding additional consultations with Members of Congress, human rights organizations, and policy institutions, including a Capitol Hill briefing on Tuesday, July 8, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Room 2044 of the Rayburn House Office Building. The event will be live-broadcast on CSI and ANCA's YouTube channels and other social media channels.

“We commend Switzerland’s leadership as a neutral platform for peace – an impartial advocate for international

law – and welcome this opportunity to work with U.S. policymakers and international partners to realize the universally recognized right of Artsakh’s indigenous Armenian population to return to their ancient homeland,” stated Aram Hamparian, Executive Director of the ANCA. “The Swiss Peace Initiative charts a diplomatic path toward return, restoration, and eventually, reconciliation

– grounded upon justice, humanitarian values, and international law –core requirements for any true and enduring peace.”

“

The Swiss Peace Initiative charts a diplomatic path toward return, restoration, and reconciliation– grounded upon justice, humanitarian values, and international law– essential to an enduring peace.”

*Aram S. Hamparian, ANCA
Executive Director*



Swiss-led Delegation meeting with U.S. State Department representatives (from left to right): S. Biedermann, Executive Director of CSI; Swiss MP Lucas Reimann (Swiss People’s Party), Vartan Oskanian, former Foreign Minister of Armenia, Swiss MP Erich Von

Former Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian, writing in a [July 6 article for Modern Diplomacy](#), framed the stakes for international engagement in stark terms: “The displaced Armenians did not simply flee a war zone. They endured a ten-month blockade that strangled daily life, followed by a rapid military offensive and the arrest of remaining local leaders—now held unlawfully in Baku. No independent investigation has taken place. No international enforcement mechanism has been applied. No safe

pathway has been secured for return.” Oskanian emphasized the need for “credible guarantees: international monitors, security assurances, legal protections, and institutional mechanisms for enforcing rights on the ground. With those in place, the overwhelming majority of the displaced

would be willing to return.”

In 2023, Azerbaijan carried out a genocidal campaign against Artsakh’s 120,000 indigenous Armenian Christians, beginning with a ten-month blockade of the Lachin Corridor—the republic’s only lifeline to the outside world—deliberately depriving civilians of food, medicine, and humanitarian aid. This brutal siege was followed in September by a full-scale military assault that killed hundreds, terrorized the population, and resulted in the forced displacement of virtually the entire Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh. The campaign was marked by widespread human rights abuses, including the ongoing illegal imprisonment of Artsakh’s elected Armenian leaders and other prisoners and the destruction of centuries-old Armenian Christian and cultural heritage.

The Swiss Peace Initiative was launched in May 2025 following the unanimous adoption of Motion No. 24.4259 by both chambers of the Swiss Federal Assembly. The measure mandates the Swiss government to convene a neutral international forum for dialogue between Azerbaijani authorities and representatives of the displaced Armenian population, supported by international mediation and protection guarantees.

Information about the July 8th Congressional Briefing is provided below:

Event information:

Capitol Hill Briefing – Swiss Peace Initiative for Nagorno-Karabakh
Tuesday, July 8th from 3:00 to 4:00 pm
Capitol Hill, Rayburn House Office Building 2044

Key stakeholders will discuss Switzerland’s global platform for talks toward the safe return of Artsakh’s Armenians to their indigenous homeland.

- Erich Vontobel, MP (Federal Democratic Union)
- Lukas Reimann, MP (Swiss People’s Party)
- Vartan Oskanian, former Foreign Minister of Armenia
- John Eibner, International President of Christian Solidarity International

Members of Congress are invited to offer remarks.

[Watch Online Here.](#)

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