



Newsletter

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Annual Membership Meeting

Our annual membership meeting will be held at noon **November 13** (that's Friday the 13th !) at **12 PM**. **Due to COVID -19 our meeting will be online**. Go to the website: www.upiftarmenia.com; click button to join Annual Meeting or call 786-535-3211; access code: 607-740-709..

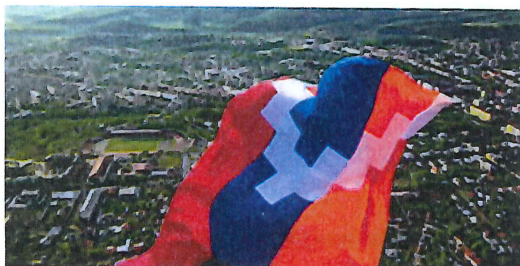
There are three objectives for the meeting:

- 1) to bring together our supporting members who move together to achieve our goals;
- 2) to present our financial goals and fund raising for 2021 which strengthens our projects (See the Pledge Form enclosed); and
- 3) to nominate and elect a new member to our board.

This is an important meeting for the Armenian Children's Support Fund and Uplift Armenia so plan to attend.

2020 Armenian Conflict with Azerbaijan

Joe Clase, Logistics Committee Chairman



Almost a year after the U.S. government has finally recognized the historical Armenian genocide by Turkey, a long-standing territorial conflict with another Armenian neighbor to the east, Azerbaijan, is escalating into what many fears to be the start of a new genocide.

Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as the Republic of Artsakh, is a forested, mountainous area of Azerbaijan that is independently governed. Armenian troops have occupied the territory as its population was estimated to be 95% Armenian during the last census.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed territory, covers 1,700 square miles, and currently is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has not exercised political authority over the region since before the Nagorno-Karabakh War which ended in 1994. Since then representatives of the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan have been holding mediated peace talks on the region's disputed status.

On the morning of Sunday, September 27th, clashes in the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resumed along the Nagorno-Karabakh line. Both the armed forces of Azerbaijan and Armenia reported military and civilian casualties. The United Nations has strongly condemned the conflict and called on both sides to deescalate

tensions and resume meaningful negotiations. Though, if history is any indicator, as we see Turkey now sending relief to Azerbaijan troops, it appears the conflict is still escalating.

History

Armenians are known to have settled in the region in the 7th century BC and population grew as the area over a few centuries as the area became recognized as a part of Armenia. In around 180 BC, Artsakh became one of the 15 provinces of the Armenian Kingdom and contained royal lands thought to have been owned by Tigran the Great, King of Armenia, who ruled from 95–55 BC and founded a city in Artsakh called Tigranakert, which held his namesake.

In the mid-7th century, the region was conquered by the invading Muslim Arabs through the Muslim conquest of Persia. Subsequently, in the early 18th century, Iran placed it under his own control. In 1920 Azerbaijani armed forces took control and it became a protectorate of the Russian Empire through the Kurekchay Treaty. With the beginning of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the question of Nagorno-Karabakh re-emerged.

In 1989, direct rule in Nagorno-Karabakh was ended and the region was returned to Azerbaijan, however the legislative body of Nagorno-Karabakh, proclaimed the unification of Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia. In 1989, the population at that time was 76% Armenian and 23% Azerbaijanis. In 1991, Azerbaijan rearranged the administrative division and brought the territory under direct control of Azerbaijan.

In 1991, Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh approved the creation of an independent state. A Soviet proposal for enhanced autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan satisfied neither side and a full-scale war subsequently erupted between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh, with the latter receiving support from Armenia. The struggle over Nagorno-Karabakh escalated after both Armenia and Azerbaijan attained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Over the next couple years, the conflict had caused thousands of casualties and created hundreds of thousands of refugees on both sides. A cease-fire was reached on 12 May 1994 through Russian negotiation. Despite the ceasefire, fatalities due to armed conflicts between Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers has continued over the past few decades.

In 2008, the UN General Assembly demanded withdrawal of all Armenian forces from all occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan". Several world leaders have met with the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan over the years, but efforts to maintain the ceasefire have failed.

Conclusion

The battles continue to escalate. Regardless of who initiated this flare up this current situation represents the most significant military escalation between these countries since the original cease-fire was signed in May 1994. Ultimately, the parties must decide to stop fighting and weigh the important of holding land against the lives that will be lost if fighting continues. Because of both nation's history with Russia, President Vladimir Putin probably is best positioned to negotiate a solution. Though, since one has not been reached since the Nagorno-Karabakh War, both sides have declared martial law and are bracing for more conflict.

Sources

Various news sources were used to compile this article, including articles by CNBC, NBC and the CNN and NPR along with social media posts from our friends in Armenia.

Committee Structure for 2021

Committees are our life blood. They establish goals, present a budget and initiate activities (actions) based on our strategic plan. Our committees for 2021 include Marketing, Humanitarian and Logistics.

The **Marketing Committee** will meet monthly in seeking funding opportunities, evaluate our funding goals toward our objectives, and monitor funding for our goals. This committee will administer our web site, oversees publications maintains membership and sponsor information.

The **Humanitarian Committee** administers our program under Uplift Armenia including the 4-H Youth Program focuses on evaluating requests for assistance from our Armenian stakeholders such as UMCOR and Green Lane NGO, and establishes and maintains day to day programming Armenia, including staffing and volunteer recruitment

The **Logistics Committee** has the objective to transport people and materials between the US and Armenia. This committee assists with developing operations in in Armenia including staffing and volunteer recruitment.

From the Director

Richard Funt, Director

We had plans to return to Armenia to establish a 4-H/Youth Program. This was discussed in November 2019 and was well received in the Village of Lukashin. However, travel was quickly shut down as COVID-19 spread from Europe to the US. *Uplift Armenia* has continued to gather STEM classroom materials, textbooks, children's books, plastic fruit and vegetables harvesting containers and grower magazines. A donation from Ohio State, provided *Soil Science* journals from 1925 to 1975. Thus, we are developing a strong children's library, an exciting Agricultural library and STEM classroom materials. We plan to ship these materials in early 2021. The children's library is an important component in education in that children learn and read in English so that they can be creative in their STEM education.

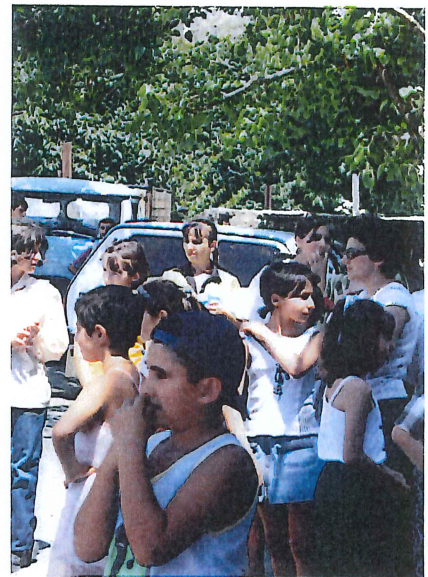
A Reflection

Richard Funt, Director

The article by Joe Clase about the current conflict brought back a memory of my experience in November 2003. As part of the USDA/MAP, I visited an orphanage and as I walked to the building, I saw several large holes in the concrete walls from either artillery or mortar shells that were created in 1994. I went to the second floor and witnessed 16 orphan girls (3 years old) in their beds for the afternoon nap. The director of this orphanage brought in goat cheese and other food items for the children and explained that 1 cubic inch of goat cheese provided 1/3 of the daily protein needed for brain development. They explained that the USDA/MAP program had provided \$1,000. toward the purchase of the cheese which was purchased from local farmers who were being educated by the USDA/MAP program. Clearly, war has the largest impact on poverty and poverty leads to hunger and malnutrition/under nutrition which can have an effect upon the children of the 21st Century. It is from these experiences that the Uplift Armenia project has been developed.



Mt. Ararat & Yerevan



Dedication of Well; A. Lines, speaker

Support the 'Fund' when ordering from Amazon— Use Amazon Smile: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/881-4900695>.

Uplift Armenia is a project under the Armenian Children's Support Fund a 501©(3) Charitable Nonprofit Corporation which has a long term goal of providing an opportunity to all people through education. Make checks payable to the *Armenian Children's Support Fund*; send to Richard Funt, 1877 Stockwell Drive, Columbus, OH 43235.