

HOUSE RESOLUTION 145

By Towns

A RESOLUTION urging national support for and a partnership with the country of Azerbaijan.

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan is a strategic partner of the United States in a strategically important South Caucasus region bordering Iran, Russia, and Central Asia; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America and the Republic of Azerbaijan established diplomatic relations on February 28, 1992; and

WHEREAS, the United States supports the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, over the past twenty years, the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan expanded their partnership and developed multi-faceted cooperation ranging from energy security, to the fight against international terrorism, to drug and human trafficking, to the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry stated on June 3, 2013, that, “Azerbaijan has been an important partner in Afghanistan, in ISAF, and equally important with respect to the northern distribution route but also the southern gas line and other issues that are of great importance to us”; and

WHEREAS, over the past decades, Azerbaijan has succeeded in rebuilding its economy; its GDP has tripled, and it is currently a rapidly developing global economy accounting for 80% of GDP of the South Caucasus region The country is also the biggest U.S. trade partner in the South Caucasus; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan has initiated a number of strategically important, trans-regional energy and transportation projects, like the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-

-Erzurum gas pipeline, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, that contribute to the prosperity not only of Azerbaijan, but of our regional allies, like Turkey and Georgia; and

WHEREAS, despite these positive developments, persistent protracted conflicts in the South Caucasus, including the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, continue to threaten regional peace and stability and impede further development of regional cooperation for the benefit of all three countries of the South Caucasus; and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2008, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Russian Federation adopted a Joint Declaration in which they stated that the political settlement of the conflict on the basis of international law would create favorable conditions for economic development and comprehensive cooperation in the region; and

WHEREAS, the United States, France, and Russia are Co-Chairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, tasked to facilitate negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan towards a political settlement of the conflict, based on the principles and norms of international law and the decisions and documents adopted by the OSCE and the applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

WHEREAS, U.S. President Barack Obama, on August 5, 2013, appointed Ambassador James Warlick as the next U.S. Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group; and

WHEREAS, the international community, including the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries, has stated on a number of occasions that they support the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and do not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent entity; and

WHEREAS, the U.N. Security Council, in its resolutions 822, 853, 874, and 884, reaffirmed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, the international community, including NATO and such international organizations as the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Non-Aligned Movement, has reaffirmed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and recognized that the conflict should be resolved on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that the General Assembly:

(1) Supports strategic partnership between the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan; and

(2) Urges the U.S. Administration to reinvigorate efforts aimed at soonest and just political settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Chief Clerk of the House to the President of the United States and to each member of the Tennessee Congressional delegation.