



2019 FEDERAL ELECTION



ANCC

POLICY PRIORITIES

OTTAWA - 2019 // ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF CANADA

ABOUT ANCC

The Armenian National Committee of Canada (ANCC) is the largest and most influential Armenian Canadian grassroots political organization. Working in coordination with a network of offices, chapters and supporters throughout Canada and affiliated organizations around the world, the ANCC actively advances the concerns of the Armenian Canadian community on a broad range of issues.

The primary goals of the ANCC are:

- To foster public awareness in support of a free, united and independent Armenia;
- To influence and guide Canadian policy on matters of interest to the Armenian-Canadian community;
- To represent the collective Armenian Canadian viewpoint on issues of public policy, while serving as the liaison between the community and its elected officials.

The Armenian National Committee of Canada is active in a number of areas and engages in a wide variety of political and educational activities, including:

- Initiating legislation on issues of concern to the Armenian Canadian community, such as strengthening Armenia as a secure, prosperous and democratic state; supporting the Republic of Artsakh right to self-determination and independence within secure borders; promoting economic and democratic development; ensuring the appropriate commemoration of the Armenian Genocide; and encouraging Turkey and Azerbaijan to lift their blockades and adhere to international standards for human rights and humanitarian practices.
- Participating in the Canadian electoral process at the federal, provincial, and local levels by educating elected officials about Armenian-Canadian issues and providing voters with up-to-date information about the positions of candidates on Armenian-Canadian concerns. The ANCC regularly endorses candidates and organizes voter drives.
- Publishing testimony, position papers, press releases, fact sheets, and newsletters.



The image shows a close-up, textured view of the Canadian flag. The colors are vibrant and have a fine, woven fabric texture. The white square on the left contains a red maple leaf. The red and blue sections are separated by diagonal lines. The text is centered in the lower half of the image.

**STRONGER CANADA-
ARMENIA RELATIONS**

ESTABLISHING A CANADIAN EMBASSY IN YEREVAN

- Canada is the only G7 country that is not permanently represented in Armenia. To substantially advance Canada-Armenia relations and build on the momentum created by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's historic visit to Armenia in October 2018, it is crucial for Canada to establish a permanent diplomatic mission in Armenia. The establishment of a permanent mission will serve mutual interests in various realms, especially in increasing trade volume between the two countries. Canada represents an ideal partner in reinforcing Armenia's international engagement and enhance political ties and promote and protect Canada's and Canadians' wide-ranging interests in Armenia. The establishment of a permanent Canadian diplomatic mission in Yerevan is key to the realization of this effort.

BILATERAL FREE-TRADE AGREEMENT

- A free-trade agreement between Canada and Armenia will establish a comprehensive framework between the two countries and it will facilitate a more consistent flow of trade and investments, hence, strengthening the bilateral ties between the countries and promoting more international trade. Over the last few years, Armenia's investment climate has consistently been ranked favourably by international agencies such as the Heritage Foundation and the World Bank. With various investment-friendly legislation and by its participation in the Eurasian Union (population 180 million), Armenia can serve as a gateway for Canadian businesses expanding into Eurasia and the Greater Middle East, providing a business-friendly, Western-oriented, English-speaking base for enterprises to reach large nearby markets.

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN ARMENIA

- Since gaining independence in 1991, Armenia has shown outstanding commitment to strengthening its democratic standards and to providing equitable social assistance to its population. With the current wave of changes in Armenia, Canada can play a crucial role in assisting Armenia's commitment to stronger democratic standards and important social justice issues, by extending the "Arnold Chan Initiative for Democracy in Armenia" to become an annual strategic funding program.





**ADVANCING MATTERS
IN THE REPUBLIC OF
ARTSAKH**

UPHOLDING ARTSAKH'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

- The ANCC strongly advocates for the formal recognition of the Republic of Artsakh and its people's fundamental right to self-determination. Furthermore, the ANCC supports the peaceful resolution of the conflict through the OSCE Minsk Group initiative, strongly rejecting a resumption of hostilities and Azerbaijan's continuous aggression towards Artsakh. Canada, through its participation in the OSCE, can play a pivotal role in advocating for the peaceful resolution of the conflict and in urging both Azerbaijan and Turkey to end their illegal blockade of Armenia and policy of isolation towards Artsakh.

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONALLY OPERATED MONITORING MECHANISMS

- To deter further violations from the Azerbaijani side and to reduce the chance of further escalation along the Line of Contact (LoC), the establishment of monitoring mechanisms along the LoC is the most viable and practical solution to mediate the current tensions between the Artsakh and Azerbaijan. The main characteristics for such a mechanism should be transparency and swiftness. Currently, Azerbaijani forces intentionally violate the ceasefire at all times, blaming the Armenian side for breaching the agreement. However, if these violations are correctly recorded and reported by the observers, Azerbaijan would be deterred by the risk of becoming a proved aggressor state with all its consequences.

PREVENTING CANADIAN ARMS SALES TO AZERBAIJAN

- According to Freedom House's most recent "Freedom in the World" report, Azerbaijan is listed as one of the most autocratic and oppressive states in the world. The 2017 sale of Canadian-made armoured personnel carriers to Azerbaijan shocked the Armenian-Canadian community. As has been demonstrated repeatedly, the Azeri regime is adamant on using such weaponry not only to perpetuate regional instability by threatening the peace and security of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh but also to crack down on dissent at home. Canada should not run the risk of becoming complicit in Azerbaijan's acts of violence, by contributing to the expansion of Azerbaijan's military arsenal. The sales of dangerous weaponry to a rogue state such as Azerbaijan violate the very basic norms of Canada's arms exports regulations and pose a significant danger to domestic and regional stability. In observance of Canada's stated priorities regarding arms exports, namely preserving regional peace and security, and protecting human rights, the ANCC urges the government not to allow the interests and motives of hostile nations overpower our shared values of justice and democracy





**GENOCIDE RECOGNITION,
CONDEMNATION &
PREVENTION**

URGE THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO RECOGNIZE ITS DARK PAST

- Justice for the Armenian Genocide will not be served until the current Turkish government recognizes the crimes of its past and delivers a just resolution to the victims and descendants of the Armenian Genocide. The ANCC strongly advocates for a fair and comprehensive reparations package to the Armenian people, who lost nearly all their material and cultural wealth during the Genocide of 1915-23. Canada, along with other advanced western countries, can exert the necessary pressure on Turkish authorities to recognize its past and look forward to building a more open and harmonious relationship with Armenia and Armenians around the world.

IMPROVED TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS, WITHOUT TURKISH PRE-CONDITIONS

- A just resolution of the Armenian Genocide would decrease regional tensions, open the door to improved Armenia-Turkey relations, help reform Turkey into a pluralist and tolerant society, and contribute to putting an end to the cycle of genocide. However, none of this can take place if Turkey cannot come to terms with its past, and it continues to impose pre-conditions on opening its border with Armenia.

DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- Ensure that the rights of Christians and other ethnoreligious minorities are upheld in Turkey and the Middle East. Through its participation in various international organizations, such as the United Nations, Canada should stand up for the rights of minorities in the region, address the issues facing these populations, condemn any discrimination and persecution, and allocate local funding to help build and empower communities in Turkey and the Middle East.



SUPPORTING ARMENIANS IN JAVAKHK

SUPPORT THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF ARMENIANS IN SAMTSKHE-JAVAKHETI REGION OF GEOGIA

- Samtskhe-Javakheti is one of 12 administrative regions (provinces) in Georgia. An area of 6,400km², it is located in the southern part of the country, bordering Armenia and Turkey. Armenians constitute 55% of the total population of Samtskhe-Javakheti, and are currently facing grave economic hardship, due to the isolation, and forced assimilation policies adopted by the central Georgian government. The economic well-being, civic engagement, and healthy social development of the Armenian population of Javakhk represent essential steps to a unified, independent, and democratic Georgia that both respects pluralism and promotes local self-government. The ANCC advocates for granting the region an autonomous territorial unit status within a federal Georgia with proper representation in state institutions. The use of the Armenian language in public administration, respecting the rights of the Armenian majority in the region and the end to social engineering efforts to settle ethnic Georgians in the areas populated by Armenians are equally essential to maintain the identity of the local ethnic Armenian population.

COMBATTING HATE & RACISM IN CANADA

SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT ONLINE & OFFLINE HATE

- The Government of Canada should launch a national strategy to combat online hate, by investing more in national programs of education and prevention and by working with various web-providing partners to identify, track, and prevent such discourse from being disseminated in the online world. The ANCC also encourages the Canadian government to provide consistent and additional funding to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to expand its educational programs and to provide support for advocacy organizations as well as resettlement groups to help them in refugee integration programs.



OUR ASKS

STRONGER CANADA-ARMENIA RELATIONS

- *The establishment of a Canadian Embassy in Armenia.*
- *Initiate a free-trade agreement between Canada and Armenia and encourage the application of direct foreign investments and the exchange of technological innovation with Armenia.*
- *Support the strengthening of democratic institutions in Armenia and other important social initiatives such as women's education and empowerment.*

ADVANCING MATTERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH

- *Support lasting peace and security in the Republic of Artsakh and defending its people's right to self-determination.*
- *Advocate for the establishment of internationally operated monitoring mechanisms along the line of contact between the Republics of Artsakh and Azerbaijan to deter Azerbaijani aggression*
- *Prevent private Canadian arms sales to the Republic of Azerbaijan.*

GENOCIDE RECOGNITION, CONDEMNATION & PREVENTION

- *Urge the Turkish government to come to terms with its past and recognize the Armenian Genocide*
- *Improved Turkey-Armenia relations, without Turkish pre-conditions*
- *Defend the fundamental rights of Christians and other religious minorities in Turkey and other parts of the Middle East*
- *Support events and various educational programs across Canada, during Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month (April).*

SUPPORTING ARMENIANS IN JAVAKHK

- *Extended protection and basic human rights to the Armenian population of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of southern Georgia.*
- *Support civic engagement programs and the healthy social development of the Armenian population of Javakhk, through job-creation and poverty reduction initiatives.*

COMBATting HATE AND RACISM IN CANADA

- *Adopt a national strategy to combat hate online and offline.*



**CONNECT WITH
US...
GET INVOLVED...**



Working in coordination with a network of offices, chapters, and supporters and affiliated organizations throughout Canada, the ANCC actively advances the concerns of the Armenian-Canadian community on a broad range of issues and works to eliminate abuses of human rights throughout Canada and the world.

***CONTACT US TODAY AND WE'LL PUT YOU IN TOUCH
WITH YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES TO LEARN
HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!***

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