
Press Release

AGBU Statement on Transition Government in Armenia

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For Immediate Release

Statement by the Armenian General Benevolent Union

Our nation has faced extraordinary challenges over the past century. At each juncture, AGBU has worked to advance the national interest of the Armenian people and has historically been at the forefront on issues when the survival of our nation was at stake, without engaging in local Armenian politics, in Armenia or the diaspora. These times are no different. This is a defining moment in our history, one that requires resolve, courage and vision on the part of our nation's leaders, as well as its citizens and supporters around the world.

In the last two months, we lived through the bitterness of tremendous loss, but we are not a defeated nation. As long as we have the strength and wisdom to heal our wounds, learn from events, rebuild our shaken homeland and move forward, we will ensure our sacred place in history and civilization. We are acutely aware that unabated, the shockwaves of the Artsakh catastrophe may shatter the very foundation of Armenian statehood and bring upon us even greater vulnerabilities. These dangers are felt and feared by our global Armenian community, which must be anchored by a strong and sovereign Armenia – the pillar of our identity.

Not a single Armenian, anywhere across the globe, can allow this to happen.

This is neither the time for finger-pointing nor determining blame for the immensity of failures that got us to where we are today, failures compounded over decades of shortcomings. We are a nation in crisis confronting a volatile political situation. Therefore, extraordinary action, both symbolic and direct, must be taken. Our young democracy must prove its resilience and strength at this critical time.

Of paramount importance is preserving the unity of our people; we cannot afford the risk of further fallout or even violence. It is our belief that an independent body, disassociated with present and past administrations, should assume leadership as a transitional government. It should be comprised of citizens recognized for their knowledge and expertise working with qualified and respected advisors from Armenia and the diaspora to provide insight and support across key sectors. We call upon the Prime Minister in his good will and conscience, and for the sake of the nation and every Armenian, to yield his position so that this new, temporary government can be formed. We want to ensure that a legitimate independent body assumes interim leadership until fair and democratic elections can be held. This body, having a clear understanding and respect for the realities we must confront, should serve with objectivity to get us through this watershed moment in our history.

As with all democracies, this must be a peaceful transition through a lawful and constitutional process that must uphold the highest democratic standards with profound respect for the fundamental rights of all citizens. We call on Parliament to support this transitional government. This process should also involve our Armenian Apostolic Church and the Mother See of Etchmiadzin, whose leadership has been a beacon of hope for our nation through challenging times throughout its more than 1700-year history.

As an organization that has accompanied our nation on its arduous journey since our founding in 1906 and has stood by our nation through both Ottoman and Soviet governance, as well as independence, we solemnly renew our pledge to ensure the bright future of Armenia, to the reconstruction of our ravaged Artsakh, and to our mission to tend to the humanitarian and social needs of our people in Armenia and across the globe. In the coming weeks, we will convene leaders of our global community to jointly develop strategies to overcome the consequences of the war and to quickly return to the path of nation-building and development.

We pray for the wisdom of our nation, the speedy healing of our wounds and the recovery from political turmoil. We also bow to the memory of our fallen heroes and wish a speedy recovery to the wounded, whose bravery and sacrifice have left an indelible mark on our hearts and will guide us throughout our lives. And we appeal to every single Armenian in Armenia, in Artsakh and across the diaspora to remain engaged, strong, and committed to our nation as we confront these difficult times and together build a better future.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) is the world's largest non-profit organization devoted to upholding the Armenian heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs. Each year, AGBU is committed to making a difference in the lives of 500,000 people across Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian diaspora. Since 1906, AGBU has remained true to one overarching goal: to create a foundation for the prosperity of all Armenians. To learn more visit www.agbu.org.

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