BUILDING BRIDGES? U.S.-ARMENIA RELATIONS UNDER THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Josiah Marineau, Doctor of Political Science, Associate Professor,
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
ORCID iD: 0000-0001-5044-787X
(email: josiah.marineau@uncp.edu)

Emil Ordukhanyan, PhD in Political Science, Associate Professor,
Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law
ORCID iD: 0000-0002-6610-8220
(email: emil.ordukhanyan@gmail.com)

Manuscript has been submitted on 15.10.2026, sent for review on 15.10.2026, accepted for publication on 03.11.2026.

Abstract

This research paper examines U.S.-Armenia relations under the second Trump administration, taking into account developments in the South Caucasus during the post-2020 war period. The war significantly altered the regional balance of power in this volatile area traditionally dominated by Russia, creating new opportunities for global actors such as the United States and the European Union to advance their interests and expand their economic and geopolitical influence through initiatives based on soft and smart power strategies. The study incorporates both a theoretical framework and a historical overview of U.S.-Armenia relations in the post-Soviet era, with particular emphasis on recent bilateral cooperation. Special attention is given to the strategic importance of promoting the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process, which may serve as a foundation for future geo-economic initiatives, including the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP). A qualitative case study methodology is employed to analyze U.S.-Armenia relations. The research is based on an in-depth examination of foreign policy decision-making, bilateral diplomacy, official documents, and geopolitical dynamics within a specific historical and political context. The study concludes that the U.S.-Armenia relationship can transform into a strategic one. The U.S. engagement in the South Caucasus can also play a stabilizing role and can contribute to the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process by fostering opportunities for sustainable economic development, regional interdependence, and cooperation among regional states and international actors.

Keywords: U.S. foreign policy, Armenia, South Caucasus, peace process, balance of power, shifting geopolitics.

Introduction

The second Trump administration has seen a fundamental reorienting of U.S. foreign policy. While most analyses of its foreign policy have focused on relations with larger geopolitical actors, such as U.S. relations with China, the European Union, and traditional U.S. allies like Canada, the UK, and Mexico, this paper examines how the U.S. interacts with a smaller state, but one with an important geopolitical location, namely Armenia.

It is important to highlight that U.S. foreign policy toward the South Caucasus has undergone significant changes, particularly following the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war, which altered the regional balance of power and created new opportunities for global actors to advance their strategic interests in the region. Against the backdrop of the United States' increasingly proactive regional and global policies, its emerging role as a mediator in efforts to achieve a lasting resolution to regional conflicts has also provided Washington with opportunities to deepen its engagement and pursue its interests in post-conflict environments. This renewed U.S. engagement has been welcomed by countries that have experienced protracted conflicts for decades. In this context, increased diplomatic involvement and mediation efforts have generated expectations of greater security, stability, economic development, and prosperity among previously conflicting parties.

This paper argues that the second Trump administration's engagement with Armenia embodies quasi-alliance theory: a pragmatic, uninstitutionalized partnership offering mutual gains without the commitments of a formal alliance. Conversely, Armenia's engagement with the second Trump administration illustrates how small states can leverage personalized great-power diplomacy for strategic gain, but in the process exposing themselves to the instability of noninstitutionalized commitments.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, the research methodology employed in the paper is described. Second, the foreign policy of the U.S. under the second Trump administration is outlined, followed by a consideration of the particular relationship between the U.S. and Armenia. Finally, two products of the relationship are examined, namely the peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan negotiated under the Trump administration, and Armenia's decision to join the Board of Peace.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative case study methodology to examine the evolution of U.S.-Armenia relations under the second administration of

Donald Trump. A case study approach is particularly suitable because it enables an in-depth analysis of foreign policy decision-making, bilateral diplomacy, and geopolitical dynamics within a specific historical and political context. This approach is particularly useful for understanding the complex causal mechanisms, policy processes, and state behavior in bilateral relations and in a larger regional perspective.

The research adopts a single-case study design focusing on U.S.-Armenia relations during the post-independence period, with particular emphasis on developments following President Donald Trump's return to office in 2025. The study investigates whether the second Trump administration represents continuity or change in Washington's approach toward Armenia and the broader South Caucasus region. Particular attention is given to security cooperation, economic engagement, regional conflict management, and strategic competition involving other players such as Russia, Turkey, Iran, and the European Union.

The analysis is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the main priorities of the second Trump administration toward Armenia?
2. How has U.S. policy toward Armenia changed or remained consistent compared to previous administrations?
3. What geopolitical factors shape the development of bilateral relations?
4. How do Armenian policymakers respond to shifts in U.S. foreign policy?

This research relies primarily on qualitative data collected from both primary and secondary sources, including:

- Official statements and speeches from the U.S. Department of State and the White House.
- Bilateral agreements, policy documents, press releases, and congressional records.
- Statements from the Government of Armenia and the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Peer-reviewed research papers on U.S. foreign policy and South Caucasus geopolitics.
- Reports, books, policy briefs, and scholarly analyses addressing U.S.-Armenia relations, regional security, and Trump-era foreign policy.
- Media coverage from reputable international, regional and local outlets.

The research employs process tracing and qualitative content analysis. Process tracing is employed to identify key events, policy decisions, and diplomatic interactions that have shaped bilateral relations. This method helps

establish connections between policy choices and observable outcomes in U.S.-Armenia relations.

Qualitative content analysis is applied to official speeches, policy documents, and diplomatic statements to identify recurring themes, strategic priorities, and shifts in foreign policy narratives. The analysis examines how concepts such as democracy, security cooperation, regional stability, strategic partnership, and geopolitical competition are framed by policymakers.

The study is informed by theories of foreign policy analysis (FPA) and small-state diplomacy. Foreign policy analysis provides tools for understanding how leadership preferences, bureaucratic institutions, domestic politics, and international pressures influence state behavior. Research on the Trump presidency highlights the importance of executive leadership, informal decision-making structures, and strategic nationalism in shaping U.S. foreign policy.

At the same time, the study draws on small-state foreign policy literature to explain Armenia's balancing strategies between major powers and its efforts to diversify external partnerships amid changing regional security conditions.

It has to be acknowledged that the second Trump administration is ongoing, meaning that policy developments may continue to evolve further. Taking into consideration the limited access to internal government deliberations, the research is based primarily on publicly available sources. To address these limitations, the study uses multiple sources and combines evidence from official documents, academic literature, and policy analyses to enhance reliability and validity.

Overall, this methodology provides a systematic framework for evaluating whether the second Trump administration is building stronger bridges with Armenia or reshaping bilateral relations according to broader strategic priorities in the South Caucasus.

Theories of U.S. Foreign Policy under the Second Trump Administration

Scholars have put forward different models to explain U.S. foreign policy. Among them George Kennan (2012) has argued that American foreign policy needed to be based on a clear understanding of national interests rather than in support of idealistic agendas. Another prominent scholar Michael Hunt (2009) has responded that ideology, rather than abstract ideas like national interests, has always been at the center of U.S. foreign policy. In this regard, Walter McDougall (1997) has rightly argued that U.S. foreign policy has been a mixture of realist and idealist goals that has led to overextension of U.S. resources and a confused view of national interests.

If the broader literature has characterized U.S. foreign policy as pursuing either national interests in a realist view or chasing ideological purposes, such as liberal internationalism, scholarly treatment of the second Trump administration presents a stark contrast. Rather than being characterized as grounded in a view of national interests or ideological ideas, the second Trump administration's foreign policy is noted by some as fundamentally reorienting U.S. foreign policy toward the world order. Rather than serving as a pillar of the post-World War II global order and sacrificing short-term interests in favor of long-term gains, as argued by John Ikenberry (2001), the U.S. under the second Trump administration appears to seek a fundamental restructuring of the liberal international order. Instead of upholding the international order, the second Trump administration foreign policy is characterized by transactionalism, an emphasis on hemispheric domination, and economic nationalism.

One trend that has characterized the administration's foreign policy is transactionalism. Rather than recognizing joint interests and mutual gains, the administration seems to treat international relations as opportunities to exert leverage in order to extract concessions. This is particularly the case with countries that had been typically considered the closest allies of the U.S., such as Canada. The administration's prioritization of a transactional approach to foreign policy is also demonstrated through its reliance on non-standard foreign policy actors such as Steve Witkoff, who had a career in real estate development and limited international diplomatic experience. Witkoff does claim to bring a background in business dealings with foreign counterparts, which he said he believes is relevant for diplomacy. The lack of experience is often seen as liberating and allowing him to approach problems in novel ways (Atwood et al., 2025).

Another attempt to explain foreign policy is the so-called "Donroe Doctrine." This foreign policy orientation is a distant echo of the 19th-century Monroe Doctrine, which established the Western Hemisphere as a U.S. sphere of influence vis-à-vis European powers. The new articulation of a similar concept was released in the 2025 National Security Strategy of the U.S., which calls for the U.S. to "maintain global and regional balances of power to prevent the emergence of dominant adversaries" (The White House, 2025a, p. 10). One demonstration of the perceived U.S. regional dominance is its decision to attack and destroy vessels coming from Latin and Central America suspected of smuggling drugs. The demand for Greenland to cede its territory to the U.S. under the pretext that Russia and China are seeking to increase their presence in the Arctic is another.

Economic nationalism is another theme. The second Trump administration has relied on tariffs in an attempt to reshape trade relations with nearly every

country around the world*. The success of the tariffs has been uneven, partly because of the confusing manner in which the administration declares a date by which the tariffs will be implemented, only to push the date back once the declared date arrives. Another obstacle was the Supreme Court ruling which stated that the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act**, which the administration relied upon to implement the tariffs, did not grant the president the unilateral authority to impose tariffs. Nevertheless, the administration made it clear that bolstering free trade was no longer a U.S. priority.

Stacie Goddard and Abraham Newman (2025) call the emerging world order resulting from the Trump administration's foreign policy "neo-royalist." A neo-royal world order is one in which "a small group of hyper elites, which we term cliques… seek to legitimize their authority through appeals to their exceptionalism in order to generate durable material and status hierarchies based on the extraction of financial and cultural tributes" (p. S12). The foreign policy of the Trump administration, according to this model, seeks to create ties to authoritarian leaders and secure personal enrichment for the president and his personal entourage through the foreign policy apparatus of the U.S. government. Goddard and Newman's model help explain why the Trump administration has threatened traditional U.S. allies like Canada and Europe with military confrontations and trade threats, but treated traditional U.S. adversaries like Russia with relative restraint.

Taken together, these models help explain some of the U.S. foreign policy shifts that have characterized the international policies since January 2025. Yet it is difficult to suggest a single theory to explain all of the major foreign policy decisions of the administration. The U.S. attack on Iran, for instance, conflicts with the goal of hemispheric domination and keeping out of foreign wars. The approach we take is to assume variation in U.S. foreign policy across regions, and propose to analyze U.S. relations with one geopolitically important region, the South Caucasus and Armenia specifically.

Theoretical Framework for U.S.-Armenia Relations under the Second Trump Administration

This study also explores how U.S. foreign policy shapes bilateral ties with Armenia under Donald Trump's second administration. Given recent developments and the steady growth of U.S. interests in the South Caucasus, the relationship between the two states should be analyzed through four complementary theoretical lenses: (a) realism or neorealism, emphasizing

* See more in detail in The White House. (2025a).

** See more in detail in The International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). (1977).

power, security, and strategic interests; (b) liberal institutionalism or regime theory, emphasizing institutions, cooperation, and strategic partnerships; (c) constructivism, emphasizing norms, identity, and discursive frames in foreign policy; and (d) quasi-alliance theory, emphasizing strategic cooperation short of formal alliance. Each lens highlights different drivers, mechanisms, and likely policy choices.

As an international-relations theory, political realism understands international politics as an anarchic system where countries mostly prioritize security and power above all other aspects. Classic formulations emphasize balance-of-power behavior and the primacy of material capabilities (Morgenthau, 1972). In this viewpoint, political realism characterizes international politics with its competitive and conflictual side.

Political realism is usually contrasted with idealism or liberalism, which tend to emphasize cooperation (Korab-Karpowicz, 2026). Political realism pursues foreign policies that maximize national interests and strategic advantages, often through balancing power against rivals and securing geopolitical influence (Waltz, 1979).

Neorealism adds some structural emphasis when states respond to the distribution of power by seeking security through balancing, bandwagoning, or hedging (Mearsheimer, 2014). These frameworks predict great powers' willingness to spread their influence in geostrategic chokepoints and the middle powers' alignment to instrumentally secure protection and autonomy (Morgenthau, 1949).

In this regard, it becomes evident that the U.S. advances its strategic footprint in the South Caucasus through peace agreements and transport routes. These actions can be interpreted as part of power balancing vis-à-vis Russia, Turkey, and Iran. The strategic partnership between the U.S. and Armenia as well as control over new routes reflect the great-power competition logic based on securing influence, access, and regional leverage rather than primarily normative goals. Consequently, U.S. actions related to Armenia can be explained by decisions focused more on geopolitical competition and territorial influence rather than solely shared values or institutional cooperation.

The first Trump administration generated extensive scholarly debate regarding the nature of U.S. foreign policy. While early interpretations framed "Trumpism" as isolationist, later scholarship increasingly conceptualized it as transactional realism (Walt, 2018a, 2018b; Dueck, 2019). Stephen Walt (2018a) argues that the first Trump administration's foreign policy reflected a selective realist logic, prioritizing tangible gains, burden-sharing, and visible returns over alliance maintenance or democracy promotion. Similarly, Colin Dueck (2020) emphasizes that Trump did not abandon American primacy but

sought to restructure it through bilateral deals, skepticism toward multilateral institutions, and personalized diplomacy. A large majority of Republican voters supported President Trump's foreign policy while he was commander in chief. Under a second Trump administration that can be described as transactional-realist, U.S. initiatives in the South Caucasus are focused on promoting transport corridors and deepening security ties. These initiatives should be read primarily as instruments for securing geopolitical access and denying strategic depth to rivals – Russia, Iran, and Turkey – in the region. Such actions follow a neorealist logic: controlling or facilitating transit routes increases a state's capacity to project influence and shape rivals' options, while security cooperation with Armenia functions as regional balancing to offset Russian dominance and Iranian influence in the South Caucasus (Cornell, 2001).

From a realist perspective, the most compelling evidence of geostrategic intent are tangible capabilities and access conditions, such as levels of military assistance, basing and access agreements, intelligence cooperation, and infrastructure agreements that expand U.S. logistical capabilities. Transactional realism predicts that Washington will prioritize deals that increase its leverage (e.g., transit agreements with enforceable logistical clauses or port access guarantees) and that assistance will be conditioned on strategic returns rather than exclusively on governance benchmarks*.

In this context, the realist logic implies that Armenia will gain security dividends from closer U.S. ties as a counterweight to Russia but will also risk negative perception and measures from competitors if its alignment deeply undermines regional balances. Consequently, Armenian policymakers should be incentivized to extract more credible, phased security commitments and to maintain hedging capacity to avoid becoming entirely dependent only on one side. Balancing these competing interests accurately is essential for maintaining stability and creating prospects for cooperation.

Liberal theories treat international relations differently. They hold that international institutions as well as norms and mechanisms of cooperation are able to reduce the likelihood of conflicts and can shape state behavior by creating incentives for cooperation, even within an anarchic international system. In this regard, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977) rightly highlight the role of institutions which facilitate cooperation by reducing uncertainty, lowering transaction costs, providing information and creating expectations of durable interaction among states. Through the use of such mechanisms, institutions help states to overcome collective action problems

* See more in detail in Walt, S. M. (2018a); Dueck, C. (2015).

and pursue mutually beneficial outcomes despite the absence of a central authority.

Within the liberal framework, regime theory emerged as an important analytical approach during the late 1970s and early 1980s. It is focused on how international regimes – comprising rules, norms, and decision-making procedures – structure interactions among states and help mitigate competitive behavior. Regime theorists mostly argue that even in an anarchic system, states can coordinate their actions through shared institutional frameworks that guide expectations and behavior. It is quite important to highlight the definition of regimes provided by Stephen Krasner (1983), who described them as a set of "principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (p. 2).

Further contributions by scholars such as Robert Axelrod (1984) and Oran R. Young (1989) highlighted how repeated interactions, reciprocity, and institutionalized cooperation can foster compliance and stability within regimes. These perspectives suggest that regimes play a crucial role in facilitating cooperation, managing interdependence, and shaping features of state behavior in specific issue areas such as trade, environmental governance, and security.

From this perspective, U.S. policy toward Armenia can be understood as constructing a regime of cooperation, where institutional mechanisms facilitate predictable behavior and reduce uncertainty. In this regard, the U.S.-Armenia Strategic Partnership Charter (2025) can be seen as a regime-like framework for sustainable cooperation across security, economic, and governance issues. It can institutionalize long-term engagement through shared goals and commissions. This demonstrates that transactional governance can continue to invest in the institutional structures of partnership, highlighting the role of norms and cooperative frameworks in stabilizing bilateral ties beyond pure power competition.

Constructivism highlights that international relations are shaped by shared ideas, identities, and social norms rather than being determined by material values and power or some structural constraints. In this regard, state interests as well as their behavior internationally are shaped by social interactions and collective meanings that can evolve over time. From this perspective, Alexander Wendt (1992) rightly argues that the international order is not determined only by anarchy but also by the meanings that states attach to it. According to his famous formulation, "anarchy is what states make of it," he suggests that in general, the peculiarities of cooperation or conflict are related to more socially constructed expectations and identities rather than to structural conditions alone.

Therefore, constructivist approaches underline the role of values, norms, and especially identities in shaping how states perceive their own interests and define appropriate behavior internationally. For example, the interpretation and internalization of norms such as democracy, sovereignty, integrity, or partnership may influence how states interact with one another and how they respond to international order, institutions, and agreements. Martha Finnemore (1996) and Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) show how international norms can spread and become institutionalized through socialization and persuasion, eventually shaping state behavior and policy choices. From this viewpoint, international cooperation and conflict are shaped not only by strategic calculations but also by shared understandings, identities, and normative frameworks that guide state behavior.

Applying constructivism to U.S.-Armenia relations shows that the U.S. engagement as a strategic partnership (including reference to democratic values and norms, rule of law, cooperation, etc) also shapes relevant expectations and identity-based commitments.

Armenia's foreign-policy decisions such as its cautious distancing from Russian-led institutions and exploring closer cooperation with Western partners (Ordukhanyan & Ananyan, 2024) may be influenced not only by strategic calculations but also by evolving identity narratives and new normative orientations. From a constructivist viewpoint, shifts in how political elites and society define Armenia's political identity (as part of a post-Soviet security space or as a former Soviet republic oriented toward democratic and Western values) can shape its foreign policy priorities as well as strategic perspectives. For instance, discussions about Armenia's membership with the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union, alongside its growing engagement with European and other Western institutions, demonstrate how identity-based narratives and discourses can influence the country's foreign policy rearrangements. Such geopolitical shifts in Armenia's foreign policy have become more evident exactly after the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War. This circumstance engendered broader domestic debates about Armenia's new security partnerships and its geopolitical alignment in the evolving South Caucasus.

From the U.S. perspective, a constructivist approach helps evaluate how political rhetoric, norms, and symbolism shape the behavior and interpretation of bilateral relations under the second Trump administration. Particularly, it will become more important if the U.S. leadership continues to frame its foreign policy and relevant actions in terms of durable peace, prosperity for nations, and normative goals alongside its strategic interests.

Quasi-alliance theory centers on a security relationship in which two states share common strategic priorities, often through a major power, without

establishing a formal alliance. Victor Cha (1999) developed this approach to analyze triangular security relationships during the Cold War, particularly in East Asia. In this context, two states with similar strategic interests cooperate indirectly through their shared relationship with a powerful ally while avoiding the political costs or sensitivities associated with a direct, de jure alliance. This framework offers a useful lens for interpreting recent developments in U.S.-Armenia relations. Despite Armenia's long-standing security ties with Russia and its membership in the CSTO and EEU, recent developments indicate a gradual expansion of political dialogue and security cooperation between Yerevan and Washington. Armenia is not a NATO member, and regional security dynamics and existing alliance commitments limit the prospects for a formal military alliance. Armenia may gain benefits from deeper U.S. cooperation without assuming the uncontrolled risks that would accompany NATO membership in Russia's neighborhood.

Therefore, the quasi-alliance framework helps explain how the U.S. and Armenia may deepen bilateral cooperation in spheres such as defense reform, economic development and logistics without establishing a formal alliance relationship. This kind of evolving partnership between the U.S. and Armenia may reflect a pragmatic arrangement shaped by coincident common interests, geopolitical constraints, and Armenia's foreign policy gradual diversification. From this perspective, Armenia is more positioned between traditional power-balancing conduct and formal alliance structures. This can structure U.S.-Armenia ties as a strategic cooperation short of formal alliance due to shared interests and concerns (security, economy, logistics, and countering regional powers) but also by Armenia's caution about entering a formal defense pact under Russia's scrutiny.

Taken together, the four theoretical frameworks show that their perspectives are not mutually exclusive. They serve as complementary analytical tools for understanding the multiple drivers of recent U.S.-Armenia relations.

Theoretical Implications

These theoretical approaches provide a coherent analytical picture of U.S.-Armenia ties. Realist and neorealist theories suggest that U.S. foreign policy toward the South Caucasus, and especially Armenia, will most likely prioritize tangible geopolitical gains: transport routes, infrastructure access, and political leverage over regional competitors such as Russia, Iran, and Turkey. In this regard, the second Trump administration would likely deepen bilateral engagement with Armenia in a strategic and transactional manner.

At the same time, liberal approaches suggest that the institutional frameworks and mechanisms of cooperation may play a principal role for the

stabilization of bilateral relations. In this context, the role of relevant instruments such as the U.S.-Armenia Strategic Partnership Charter will illustrate how well-structured bilateral cooperation can serve as a basis for reducing uncertainty and make long-term engagement more sustainable across security, economic, and governance sectors.

From a constructivist standpoint, the evolution of U.S.-Armenia relations is also shaped by narratives of democratic partnership, shared norms and values, and identity discourses that considerably influence how both states perceive and interpret their cooperation.

Quasi-alliance theory helps to explain the emerging features of security cooperation between the two states despite Armenia's still persisting membership in Russian-led institutions such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union, and its non-membership in NATO.

Taken together, these approaches suggest that U.S.-Armenia relations are likely to enter a new phase of development as a flexible strategic partnership characterized by consistent pragmatic cooperation rather than formal alliance commitments. Such an arrangement may generate sustainable security and economic benefits primarily for Armenia, but it will absolutely require careful strategic planning and management. Most likely Armenian policymakers will need to maintain a balanced foreign policy by diversifying partnerships, managing regional sensitivities, and ensuring that expanding cooperation with the U.S. does not excessively constrain diplomatic flexibility in a complex and vulnerable geopolitical environment.

History of U.S.-Armenia Relations in Post-Soviet Period (1991–2026)

The establishment of relations between the United States and Armenia began in the early 1990s covering diplomatic, humanitarian, economic, security, and strategic developments.

Shortly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States officially recognized the independence of Armenia. Formal diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1992, with the opening of embassies in Yerevan and Washington, D.C. In the 1990s, the U.S. provided extensive humanitarian and technical assistance to help Armenia transition from former Soviet structures, recover from economic disruption, and manage regional isolation due to blockades by neighboring states like Azerbaijan and Turkey. U.S. aid also supported small enterprises, energy, water supply regulation, and legislative modernization.

Soon after independence, the U.S. Peace Corps began operations in Armenia, laying a foundation for people-to-people engagement and grassroots

development. To promote trade and investment cooperation, a U.S.-Armenia Joint Economic Task Force began meeting annually in the late 1990s*.

In the 2000s cooperation between the two countries became more consistent and reliable. For example, in 2006, Armenia signed a $235 million Millennium Challenge Compact with the United States designed to improve rural infrastructure and reduce poverty – one of the largest U.S. government development commitments in the South Caucasus at the time**.

Some agreements were concluded on cooperation in areas such as counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and on nuclear and civil aviation safety***.

Although this is not a U.S.-Armenia treaty, Armenia's participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace and Euro-Atlantic dialogue from the early 1990s**** onward also demonstrated alignment with U.S. security frameworks in the broader region.

For nearly two decades supporting democratic institutions, civil society, independent media, rule of law reforms, and economic resilience was another aspect of U.S. continuous assistance to Armenia through diverse USAID programs. In this regard, the U.S. assisted Armenia in achieving sustainable development through increased competitiveness, strengthened democratic governance, secure and reliable energy resources, higher quality social services, and a more empowered civil society (U.S. Mission Armenia, n.d.).

Armenia also participated in multinational peacekeeping operations (e.g., in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Kosovo, Mali*****) alongside U.S. and other international forces – reflecting shared security interests.

Beginning in the 2020s, some strategic shifts were noticed between the two countries' relationship, especially based on partnership elevation. After the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war in April 2021, the U.S. President Joe Biden formally recognized the 1915 Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire ("BBC", 2021). This was an important symbolic milestone in bilateral relations and with broader implications in Washington-Ankara dynamics. In September 2023, Armenian and U.S. forces held Exercise Eagle Partner 2023 in Armenia (U.S. Mission Armenia, 2023), focusing on peacekeeping skills and security cooperation that reflected an expanding defense relationship and showed the growing U.S. interests not only in Armenia but also in the whole South Caucasus region.

* See more in detail in Official website of the MFA of the RA. (2026a).

** See more in detail in U.S. Department of State. (2006).

*** See more in detail in U.S. Department of State. (2002).

**** See more in detail in Official website of the MFA of the RA. (2026b).

***** See more in detail in Official website of the PM of the RA. (2019).

The Nagorno-Karabakh crisis as a frozen conflict boiled over in 2023 when Azerbaijan initiated a military offensive against the Armenian population (Landgraf & Seferian, 2024), and thus, Armenia faced a humanitarian crisis with tens of thousands displaced. In this regard, the U.S. provided crucial support and continued engagement on humanitarian and security issues to overcome the consequences of that violent process.

Summarizing the strategic dialogue and rising bilateral coordination since 2019, it is important to note that Armenia and the U.S. held an expanded format for intergovernmental cooperation covering economic, trade, energy, and governance issues. The first Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council meeting under this framework was held in March 2024*, focusing on investment and trade ties. This has created more sustainable ground for elevating bilateral cooperation to the new level of strategic partnership in 2025 when on January 14, Armenia and the U.S. signed the Strategic Partnership Charter** in Washington, D.C. The Charter committed both countries to deepening ties in defense, security, economic engagement, democratic governance, and people-to-people exchanges. In the context of broader parliamentary support, in late 2025, a bipartisan bill titled the "Armenia Security Partnership Act"*** was introduced in the U.S. Congress aiming to strengthen Armenia's security ties with the U.S. and limit aid to Azerbaijan absent measurable peace progress.

Since 2025 the U.S. has considerably increased efforts to build peace in the South Caucasus. The U.S. mediation in Armenia-Azerbaijan peace efforts in 2025 underscores Washington's role as a key external actor in regional conflict resolution. In this framework, in August 2025, the U.S. President Donald Trump brokered a historic trilateral peace declaration between Armenia and Azerbaijan at the White House****, marking a potential milestone toward ending decades of conflict rooted in Nagorno-Karabakh. The deal includes development of a strategic transit route through Armenia (respecting Armenia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and legislation) linking Azerbaijan to its Nakhchivan exclave – a project granted exclusive U.S. development rights for decades and dubbed the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity". In this respect, recently Armenia and U.S. signed a "Joint Statement on the Publication of the Armenia-U.S. Implementation Framework for the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" which outlines a

* See more in detail in U.S. Department of State. (2024).

** See more in detail in Charter on Strategic Partnership between the United States of America and the Republic of Armenia. (2025).

*** See more in detail in "Armenpress". (2025).

**** See more in detail in The White House. (2025b).

concrete path to operationalize the TRIPP, which is intended to establish unimpeded, multimodal transit connectivity on the territory of Armenia. While connecting the main part of Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and creating a vital link in the Trans-Caspian Trade Route, the TRIPP is expected to generate reciprocal benefits for international and intra-state connectivity for the Republic of Armenia (U.S. Mission Armenia, 2026).

U.S.-Armenia Relations by Presidential Administration

The Clinton administration (1993–2001) focused on institution-building, humanitarian assistance, and conflict management. During this period, the United States provided substantial humanitarian and development assistance as Armenia navigated post-Soviet transition, making the country one of the largest per-capita recipients of U.S. aid in the 1990s.

In the context of USAID & Peace Corps expansion, the U.S. focused on institution-building, energy reform, and democracy assistance.

As an OSCE Minsk Group co-chair, the U.S. emerged as a key mediator in the Nagorno-Karabakh peace process. The U.S. adopted Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, restricting U.S. government aid to Azerbaijan, and indirectly benefiting Armenia diplomatically. Under the Clinton administration, Armenia was primarily seen as a fragile post-Soviet state rather than a strategic partner.

The George W. Bush administration (2001–2009) focused more heavily on security issues after 9/11. The global security agenda and the Global War on Terror became central to U.S. engagement in the South Caucasus. In 2006, the Millennium Challenge Compact became a key U.S. initiative, granting Armenia $235 million for rural infrastructure and poverty reduction. The United States also expanded security cooperation in non-proliferation, border security, and export controls.

Armenia, in turn, contributed troops to Iraq and Kosovo, aligning with U.S.-led peacekeeping missions.

During George W. Bush's administration, Armenia remained important, but Washington avoided alienating Turkey. Armenia was valued as a cooperative, reliable small partner, but not yet a geopolitically central one.

The Obama administration (2009–2017) emphasized democracy assistance, multilateralism, and cautious continuity. Its strategic "reset" with Russia reduced U.S. appetite for hard-power engagement in the region. Democracy and governance assistance, rule of law, election reforms, and media freedom remained key priorities. The United States continued its Minsk Group engagement but did not achieve a breakthrough, and despite Obama's campaign promise, the administration did not recognize the Armenian

genocide. Security cooperation remained limited, in part because Armenia was still viewed largely through a Russia-centric lens.

The Obama administration was stable but cautious, opting for strong civil-society ties and limited strategic ambitions.

The first Trump administration (2017–2021) favored a low-engagement and transactional model of diplomacy. The "America First" doctrine reduced emphasis on democracy promotion and shifted strategic attention elsewhere, especially toward China and Iran. Diplomatic attention to Armenia was downgraded because the country was not treated as a priority. During the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war, the United States was largely sidelined, while Russia and Turkey dominated the outcome. No major new initiatives were launched, and relations continued largely on autopilot. Overall, bilateral relations were minimalist and reactive at a moment when Armenia experienced U.S. disengagement during this critical crisis.

The Biden administration (2021–2025) marked a normative turn and strategic reengagement. It emphasized support for democracy against authoritarianism in former Soviet republics. At the same time, Russia's war in Ukraine reshaped Eurasian geopolitics and encouraged Armenia to reassess its reliance on Russia. Biden's official recognition of the Armenian genocide in 2021 was a historic symbolic milestone in U.S.-Armenia relations. USAID and governance support expanded with a focus on democratic resilience, and post-2020 security recalibration encouraged Armenia's diversification of partnerships.

The Eagle Partner 2023 military drills were the first visible U.S.-Armenia joint military activity on Armenian soil. The strategic dialogue between the two countries was then institutionalized and led to the signing of the Strategic Partnership Charter in January 2025.

Under the Biden administration, Armenia was redefined as a values-based and increasingly strategic partner rather than merely an aid recipient.

The second Trump administration (2025–) focuses more on hard geopolitics, deal-making, and regional reengineering. It returned to transactional realism by reducing emphasis on democracy rhetoric and prioritizing visible geopolitical "victories". As of 2025, the key feature is the U.S.-brokered Armenia-Azerbaijan peace framework, in which the White House hosted an agreement that positioned the United States as the chief external mediator of the peace deal. At the same time, the United States gained a long-term role in South Caucasus regional infrastructure. Despite some controversial expectations, the administration continued the strategic partnership with Armenia that had been formalized under Biden. The Charter remains intact, but it is framed pragmatically rather than normatively; security cooperation is framed as stability management rather than alliance-building.

Notably, Armenia accepted the invitation of the U.S. President Trump to join the Board of Peace as a founding member in January 2026. This is further evidence that Armenia consistently gains more importance as a regional node, not primarily as a democracy project for the U.S.

Analysis of the Peace Agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan

Since late 1980s and in parallel with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the relations between two nations Armenia and Azerbaijan have been exclusively dominated by the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (Broers, 2015). Since May 1988, hostility between Armenians and Azerbaijanis spread like an infection through Nagorno-Karabakh (De Waal, 2013). This dispute has generated one of the most militarized and long-lasting conflicts in the post-Soviet space. But after the 2nd Nagorno-Karabakh War in 2020 and the Azerbaijani offensive in 2023, the balance of power in the South Caucasus shifted dramatically. Azerbaijan gained control over significant territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, eliminating the conflict that had blocked negotiations for decades.

The 2023 Azerbaijani military operation against the core Armenian population ended the political structure of Nagorno-Karabakh. These hostilities totally demolished the territorial status quo in the region that had existed since the early 1990s and created some structural conditions for a comprehensive peace agreement between the two states which was initialed on 8 August 2025 in Washington, with mediation by the United States (Commonspace.eu, 2025).

From a realist perspective, peace agreements often emerge following decisive shifts in the balance of power. The military outcome of the 2020 war fundamentally altered the strategic relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan, reducing Armenia's bargaining leverage and consolidating Azerbaijan's position as a dominant military power in the region.

Taking into consideration the regional security complex (Buzan & Wæver, 2009), it has to be emphasized that in the post-war period the security of states in this region is closely interlinked. It means that "changes in one bilateral relationship can, therefore, reshape the entire regional security structure" (Wæver, 2011).

These circumstances opened ground for a new international mediation led by the U.S. aiming to build durable peace and stability in the region taking into account the new balance of power that was established in the after war period. Despite persistent efforts by traditional mediators like Russia as well as European countries, only the U.S. could assume a real role in the peace process. Shortly, after the U.S. president Donald Trump came to the office in 2025, a peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan was reached.

The peace agreement, formally titled "Agreement on Establishment of Peace and Inter-State Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan", has been pre-signed but not yet been fully signed or ratified.

The document consists of 17 articles that determine the core provisions of normalization of relations between two states. The key points of the agreement include: a) mutual recognition of sovereignty – Armenia and Azerbaijan recognize each other's territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders, and both commit to no territorial claims in the future; b) renunciation of force – both states pledge not to use force or threaten force against each other; c) non-interference – each country commits to not interfering in the internal affairs of the other; d) establishment of diplomatic relations – it foresees the opening of embassies and formal diplomatic relations between the two states; e) withdrawal of legal disputes – both sides agree to withdraw interstate legal claims filed in international courts related to the conflict; f) security arrangements – include provisions limiting the presence of foreign military forces along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border; g) connectivity and transit – include transport connectivity projects, particularly opening routes between two states and third actors. As for the implementation mechanism, the agreement defines a bilateral commission that will monitor the process and resolve disputes related to the treaty*.

Both sides had strategic calculations that led them to reach an agreement taking into account local, regional and global perspectives. From this viewpoint, Armenia's efforts aimed at the preparation and pre-signature of the agreement were based on its need for security stabilization due to the emergence of a new regional balance of power after the wars and weakening security guarantees from the Collective Security Treaty Organization. New economic openings as well as unblocking of borders to normalize relations with neighbors were considered as another priority for Armenia. In this regard, Armenia's foreign policy transformed from heavy reliance on Russia toward a new multi-vector foreign policy that projects *a normalization with Turkey, development of stronger relations with the European Union, and building of deeper cooperation with the United States*. Azerbaijani strategic calculations were primarily based on the international recognition of new territorial gains and constant ambitions to develop new regional connectivity projects. In this respect, it has to be noted that the war in Ukraine and broader geopolitical shifts have weakened Russia's influence in the South Caucasus and opened more space for greater diplomatic engagement primarily by the United States and the European Union. Consequently, the U.S. and EU assumed a crucial

* See more in detail in Official website of the MFA of the RA. (2025).

role in the peace process. Most likely, they also supported normalization to reduce further the regional influence of Russia and to promote new trade corridors between Central Asia and Europe.

From the perspective of possible multi-level effects, the agreement has a realistic potential of ending the decades-long conflict and leading to the remaking of regional geopolitics, especially collapsing the OSCE Minsk Group's mediation role, reducing Russia's role in regional security, and increasing Western diplomatic involvement in the region. For nearly three decades the conflict was managed within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. However, geopolitical tensions between the co-chairs and the changing regional environment completely minimized the effectiveness of this mechanism.

Particularly, as for economic and connectivity effects, the peace agreement may enable new railways and highway roads, increase regional trade and integration between Europe, South Caucasus, and Central Asia. The peace agreement can be considered as a potentially historic turning point in the geopolitical evolution of the South Caucasus in the post-Soviet era. In this regard, the region may likely develop into a strategic economic corridor linking Europe to Asia, including integration with projects such as the Chinese "Belt and Road Initiative"* which bypasses Russia.

Meanwhile, Western actors have increased their diplomatic engagement in the South Caucasus and are involved in economic initiatives, regional powers such as Turkey and Iran also play important strategic roles. Turkey can gain more importance and economic advantage if the new routes function.

At the same time, the development of regional transport routes is not simply an economic project but a reconfiguration of power geography in the South Caucasus. Turkey's potential rise in importance stems from its ability to convert infrastructure into influence, while Iran's resistance reflects a classic geopolitical response to being bypassed in emerging connectivity networks. Iran perceives the new routes as a potential expansion of Turkish and Western influence and strategic encirclement risk, especially given Azerbaijan's ties with Israel and the U.S.

The recent wars in Iran deepen the posture that new geo-economic projects can be considered more as threats than opportunities. That is why Iran will continue to behave as a status quo-oriented regional player, seeking to preserve existing transit hierarchies and prevent its geopolitical marginalization. Therefore, the corridor question is best interpreted as a contest over regional order, where infrastructure becomes the primary instrument of geopolitical competition.

* See more in detail in The Belt and Road Portal. (n.d.).

By turning back to the peace agreement, it has to be noted that it may trigger a fundamental transformation in Armenia's strategic orientation. For much of the post-Soviet period, Armenia's security policy relied heavily on a strategic alliance with Russia and participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization. But recent developments suggest a gradual shift toward a more diversified foreign policy strategy involving closer cooperation with Western institutions and a reduction of exclusive dependence on Russian security guarantees. Such a shift reflects the broader trend among small states seeking to balance competing great powers through diversified diplomatic and economic partnerships.

Despite the peace agreement's potential significance and its several positive provisions, the real peace can still remain fragile because of some sensitive issues like *the unresolved technical issues related to border delimitation; domestic political opposition in both countries; humanitarian concerns related to displaced populations from Nagorno-Karabakh; and ongoing security dilemmas between the two states.*

These challenges showcase the difficulty of transforming a long-standing conflict into a stable peace. But if the agreement holds, it could totally reshape the regional order by building a new regional security architecture that will lead South Caucasus from a conflict-based system toward normalized interstate relations. From this viewpoint, the possible future equilibrium in the region may include Armenia as pursuing and prioritizing diplomatic balancing and deterrence as well as economic development perspectives, Georgia as functioning as a Western-oriented transit state being very cautious toward Russia, and Azerbaijan as emphasizing its economic and military power.

Analyzing the Board of Peace

Against a backdrop of renewed interstate tensions and a search for durable solutions, U.S. President Donald Trump first announced the "Board of Peace" in September 2025 as part of his plan to end the conflict in Gaza (Le Monde, 2026). On January 22, 2026, he formally launched the initiative[*] as an international organization with the stated goal of promoting stability, rebuilding governance systems, and supporting long-term peace in regions affected by armed conflict. The organization gained international attention through its proposed role in postwar Gaza reconstruction and governance initiatives. According to its founding charter, the Board seeks to provide an alternative model for international peacebuilding based on "pragmatic judgment" and "common-sense solutions" rather than traditional multilateral institutions. The Board of Peace shall undertake such peacebuilding functions

[*] See more in detail in The White House. (2026).

in accordance with international law, including the development and dissemination of best practices capable of being applied by all nations and communities seeking peace (Charter of the Board of Peace, art. 1).

The Board's charter presents the organization as a response to perceived failures of existing international peacekeeping structures. It argues that many previous institutions have prolonged crises instead of resolving them and calls for a more centralized and decisive approach to governance and reconstruction. The organization is chaired by U.S. President Donald Trump, who holds broad authority over membership, decision-making, appointments, and interpretation of the charter ("Britannica", n.d.).

Structurally, the Board operates through invited member states and leadership-directed governance. While decisions are formally made through voting procedures, the Chairman retains veto power and final approval authority (Charter of the Board of Peace, art. 4.1). Reports have also indicated that long-term membership opportunities may be tied to substantial financial contributions, which has generated controversy regarding transparency and influence (Irish, 2026).

Supporters of the Board describe it as an innovative mechanism capable of bypassing bureaucratic inefficiencies associated with existing international organizations. Critics, however, argue that its concentration of executive authority and limited accountability raise some concerns about democratic governance mechanisms and the balance of international power. Some analysts have suggested that the Board could evolve into a parallel global governance structure competing with institutions such as the United Nations. The deeper danger lies in normalizing a model in which global crises are managed outside the UN while the UN itself is left in a state of permanent financial fragility, perpetually months away from collapse (Kremidas-Courtney, 2026).

Overall, the Board of Peace represents a controversial and highly debated experiment in international governance, combining peacebuilding objectives with an unusually centralized institutional framework.

From the perspective of the peacebuilding process in the South Caucasus, Armenia and Azerbaijan joined the Board with distinct expectations.

For Armenia, the Board of Peace is primarily part of a broader strategy to strengthen ties with the United States and other Western partners while advancing regional stability and the regional peace process. Armenian officials explained that participation followed an invitation from U.S. President Donald Trump and emphasized that Armenia's initial membership did not require mandatory financial contributions during the first three-year term ("Armenpress", 2026a). Participation in the initiative is therefore both a diplomatic and strategic decision.

In this respect, one of Armenia's key motivations is the strengthening of U.S.-Armenia relations. Armenia sees the Board as a mechanism for maintaining active U.S. engagement in the South Caucasus and in Armenia-Azerbaijan peace negotiations. The August 8, 2025, declaration in Washington was an important step toward normalization after the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia's participation in this initiative is therefore viewed as part of its consistent effort to deepen political and strategic cooperation with Washington.

At the same time, Armenian policymakers hope that involvement in a U.S.-supported international organization will help sustain international attention on the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process and reduce the likelihood of renewed conflict. These conditions have led Armenian officials to argue that the Board could contribute to "regional stability and to a new balance of power in the South Caucasus."

Armenia's participation also reflects its broader foreign-policy diversification following the 2020 and 2023 Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts. In recent years, Yerevan has sought closer ties with Western institutions and governments, including the European Union, France, and the United States. France has one of the largest Armenian expatriate communities in Europe, and Macron has long championed a European path for Yerevan. It was with his encouragement that more than 40 European leaders gathered in Yerevan on May 4-5, 2026, under the banner of the European Political Community, a body that brings together EU and non-EU countries (Wintour, 2026). This geopolitical shift has been reinforced by growing European political support for Armenia and cooperation perspectives.

The Armenian government has also presented the Board as a peacebuilding institution that may provide governance support and international legal frameworks for conflict resolution. Core discussions in Armenian political media noted that the organization aims to establish international "best practices" for sustainable peacebuilding ("Armenpress", 2026b).

Economically and diplomatically, Armenia also expects potential benefits from participation without assuming major financial risks. Officials clarified that Armenia did not commit to the reported $1 billion contribution associated with permanent or extended membership arrangements discussed in international reporting (The Armenian Report, 2026). Instead, Armenia joined under a limited and voluntary participation framework.

Despite these expectations, the decision to join the Board has generated debate within Armenia. Skeptics argue that participation could complicate Armenia's relations with regional actors such as Iran or create tension with existing international institutions. These concerns appeared in public discussions examining Armenia's geopolitical positioning in the newly

emerged situation. Russia has also criticized the possibility of geopolitical realignment in the region and continues to monitor these developments closely. Nevertheless, Armenia has gained greater sovereignty and has become more flexible in making independent political decisions.

Conclusion

In the context of a new regional balance of power, recent developments in the South Caucasus, and especially in Armenia, demonstrate the importance of the U.S. role as a stabilizing factor. U.S. engagement both reflects and amplifies Washington's growing strategic influence in the South Caucasus while signaling a shift in Armenia's foreign-policy orientation toward diversified and balanced partnerships beyond its historic reliance on Russia.

In summary, U.S.-Armenia relations grew between 1991 and 2026 from diplomatic recognition into a strategic partnership spanning political, economic, defense, and cultural domains. The United States has been one of Armenia's largest donors, with long-term USAID programs (which faced massive cuts and eventual shutdown beginning January 20, 2025) (Faguy, 2025) helping build democratic governance, civil society, and infrastructure resilience. Security cooperation has evolved from peacekeeping cooperation to joint exercises and defense dialogues. The relationship now includes increasing security coordination, though it stops short of formal defense guarantees. Educational exchanges, cultural programs, and diaspora networks have reinforced bilateral ties beyond government-to-government interactions.

Looking ahead, the U.S.-Armenia partnership in 2026 and beyond will most likely focus on the implementation of the 2025 Strategic Partnership Charter; continuation of the U.S. engagement in peace and security dynamics in the South Caucasus; expanded economic and trade cooperation in the framework of TRIPP; less support for democratic governance and human rights reforms in Armenia taking into account the new U.S. Administration priorities in the South Caucasus.

References

"Armenpress". (2025). *U.S. Congressmen Introduce Bill to Limit Aid to Azerbaijan, Strengthen Armenia's Security*. Retrieved March 25, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/o4afV.

"Armenpress". (2026a). *Armenia Joins Board of Peace without Mandatory Membership Fee*. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/xcXqg.

"Armenpress". (2026b). *Armenian Government Approves Ratification of Board of Peace Charter*. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/Q5WkP.

"BBC". (2021). *Biden Says Armenian Mass Killing was Genocide*. Retrieved March 9, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/Kq85T.

"Britannica". (n.d.). *Board of Peace*. Retrieved May 1, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/WxIQ0.

Atwood, K., Treene, A. & Marquardt, A. (2025). *Trump's 'Lone Ranger': How Steve Witkoff Became the De Facto Point Man on America's Foreign Policy Challenges*. CNN Politics. Retrieved April 18, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/BXMt0.

Axelrod, R. (1984). *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Basic Books.

Broers, L. (2015). From "Frozen Conflict" to Enduring Rivalry: Reassessing the Nagorny Karabakh Conflict. *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 43, No. 4. 556–576. DOI: 10.1080/00905992.2015.1042852.

Buzan, B. & Wæver, O. (2009). *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cha, V. (1999). *Alignment despite Antagonism: The United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Charter of the Board of Peace. (2026). Retrieved April 27, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/1fUGn.

Charter on Strategic Partnership between the United States of America and the Republic of Armenia. (2025). Retrieved March 19, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/OqaH0.

Commonspace.eu. (2025). *The Agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, initialed at the White House in Washington DC, on Friday 8 August 2025, has been Published on the Website of the Armenian Foreign Ministry*. Retrieved April 2, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/5FAK7.

Cornell, S. E. (2001). *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*. Curzon Press, LTD.

De Waal, T. (2013). *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War*. 10th-Year Anniversary Edition, Revised and Updated. New York and London: New York University Press.

Dueck, C. (2015). *The Obama Doctrine: American Grand Strategy Today*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dueck, C. (2019). *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dueck, C. (2020). *The GOP's Foreign-Policy Tribes Prepare for Battle*. National Review. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/3kklG.

Faguy, A. (2025). *USAID Officially Closes*. BBC. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/0o21x.

Finnemore, M. (1996). *National Interests in International Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Finnemore, M. & Sikkink, K. (1998). International Norm Dynamics and Political Change. *International Organization*, Vol. 52, Iss. 4. 887–917. DOI: 10.1162/002081898550789.

Goddard, S. E. & Newman, A. (2025). Further Back to the Future: Neo-Royalism, the Trump Administration, and the Emerging International System. *International Organization*, Vol. 79, Iss. S1. S12–S25. DOI: 10.1017/S0020818325101057.

Hunt, M. H. (2009). *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Yale University Press.

Ikenberry, G. J. (2001). *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Irish, J. (2026). *Trump's Gaza Peace Board Charter Seeks $1 Billion Extended Membership*. Reuters. Retrieved April 29, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/168oh.

Kennan, G. F. (2012). *American Diplomacy 1900-1950.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Keohane, R. O. & Nye, J. S. (1977). *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Korab-Karpowicz, J. W. (2026). *Political Realism in International Relations*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. 1–40. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/eqGev.

Krasner, S. D. (1983). Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables. In S. D. Krasner (Ed.), *International Regimes* (1–21). Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Kremidas-Courtney, Ch. (2026). *Trump's 'Board of Peace' isn't about Gaza: It's about replacing the UN*. European Policy Centre. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/Fa1jQ.

Landgraf, W. & Seferian, N. (2024). *A "Frozen Conflict" Boils over: Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023 and Future Implications*. Foreign Policy Research Institute. Retrieved March 13, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/Hkcni.

Le Monde. (2026). *A 'Board of Peace,' to Do What?* Retrieved April 29, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/GT7pS.

McDougall, W. (1997). *A Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World since 1776*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (updated edition). New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company.

Morgenthau, H. J. (1949). *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (1st edition). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Morgenthau, H. J. (1972). *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (5th edition). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the Republic of Armenia. (2025). *Publication of the Initialed Agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan*. Retrieved April 6, 2026, from: https://tinyurl.com/34fb5662.

Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. (2026a). *Bilateral Relations, USA*. Retrieved March 5, 2026, from: https://tinyurl.com/3df2may2.

Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. (2026b). *International organizations: North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. Retrieved March 7, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/1Wwlt.

Official Website of the Prime Minister (PM) of the Republic of Armenia. (2019). *Statement by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan at UN General Assembly 74th Session*. Retrieved March 8, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/oCazM.

Ordukhanyan, E. & Ananyan, G. (2024). Post-Soviet Destabilization as a Struggle between Autocratic and Democratic Trends. *The POLITNOMOS. Journal of Political and Legal Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2. 6–32. DOI: 10.54503/2953-8165-2024.3(2)-16

The Armenian Report. (2026). *Armenia Joins Board of Peace as Founding Member without $1 Billion Fee.* Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/P3ZDH.

The Belt and Road Portal. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/qLgAx.

The International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). (1977). Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/hdKJ8.

The White House. (2025a). National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/QonHy.

The White House. (2025b). *President Trump Brokers Another Historic Peace Deal*. Retrieved April 1, 2026, from: https://tinyurl.com/3nde3c2f.

The White House. (2026). *President Trump Ratifies Board of Peace in Historic Ceremony, Opening Path to Hope and Dignity for Gazans*. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/69JAD.

U.S. Department of State. (2002). Armenia (02-1125) – "Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Area of Counterproliferation of

Weapons of Mass Destruction." Retrieved March 6, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/K6PXb.

U.S. Department of State. (2006). Millennium Challenge Corporation and Republic of Armenia to Sign $235 Million Millennium Challenge Compact. Retrieved April 29, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/RgaYu.

U.S. Department of State. (2024). *2024 Investment Climate Statements: Armenia*. Retrieved March 15, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/1spFn.

U.S. Mission Armenia. (2023). *Eagle Partner Exercise Builds upon Longstanding U.S.-Armenian Security Cooperation*. Retrieved March 10, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/tYD2b.

U.S. Mission Armenia. (2026). *Joint Statement on the Publication of the Armenia-U.S. Implementation Framework for the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity*. Retrieved April 1, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/l3TCF.

U.S. Mission Armenia. (n.d.). *The USAID Mission to Armenia*. Retrieved March 8, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/AmKsi.

Wæver, O. (2011). Politics, Security, Theory. *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 42, Iss. 4-5. 465–480. DOI: 10.1177/0967010611418718.

Walt, S. M. (2018a). U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War: Can Realism Explain it? Should Realism Guide it? *International Relations*, Vol. 32, Iss. 1. 3–22. DOI: 10.1177/0047117817753272.

Walt, S. M. (2018b). *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Waltz, K. N. (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2. 391–425.

Wintour, P. (2026). *Macron Backs Armenia's Pro-Europe PM as Re-election Campaign Draws to Close*. The Guardian. Retrieved April 30, 2026, from: https://shorturl.at/9dGuH.

Young, O. R. (1989). *International Cooperation: Building Regimes for Natural Resources and the Environment*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.