

Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous ethnically Armenian population landlocked in a region in Azerbaijan. During the Soviet Union it was given autonomy but this is now disputed since it declared independence in September 1991. The region is de facto independent but is not recognised by any other country in the world and is still considered by the UN to be part of Azerbaijan.

Key individuals, Groups & Places

Artsakh: another name for Nagorno-Karabakh

Stepanakert: Capital city

Bako Sahakyan: President of Artsakh

Ilham Aliyev: President of Azerbaijan

OSCE: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe - monitoring the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and trying to broker a peace deal

Key dates

19th C: Became part of Russian Empire

1920: Wars between Armenia and Azerbaijan over N-K

1923: Soviet Union took control of N-K

1980s: Collapse of Soviet Union renewed support for independence

1988-1994: Nagorno-Karabakh war

1991: Declared itself independent but this is not officially recognised

2016: 4 day war between N-K & Armenia against Azerbaijan



Threats to peace:

While full scale war is unlikely in Nagorno-Karabakh, the increasingly frequent violations of the ceasefire along the Line of Contact continue to threaten peace in the region. Both Azerbaijan and Armenia have been building up their military - in 2015 Azerbaijan spent \$3 billion and Armenia \$447 million.

Years of peace talks have led to virtually no progress. Karabakh Armenians want internationally recognised independence, Azeris won't grant it. Refugees on both sides want to return to their homes.

No State recognises Nagorno-Karabakh, not even Armenia. Nagorno-Karabakh has right to statehood under international law but its people do have a right to self-determination.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed in the decades of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, and there were allegations of human rights abuses on both sides.

In September 2016, French and German leaders expressed willingness to broker a peace deal. Russia is economically interested in maintaining the status quo.

Humanitarian Situation

Due to Nagorno-Karabakh not being internationally recognised and Azerbaijan forbidding civil society organisations and political figures from entering, there is little support for the people in Nagorno-Karabakh. The population is currently around 150,000 and they rely on the Armenian government for support.

HART's Partner in Nagorno-Karabakh

Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre, Stepanakert

This centre for the treatment and support of people with disabilities, run by Vardan Tadevosyan, is an internationally recognised 'Centre of Excellence'. The centre works to challenge the stigma of disability and empowers individuals with disabilities. The therapeutic facilities include physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Vardan has succeeded in breaking many of the entrenched taboos about disability, a hangover from the Soviet era, including better access to employment for people with disabilities.

Some useful links for more information:

BBC - www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18270325

The Economist - www.economist.com/topics/nagorno-karabakh

Reuters: www.reuters.com/article/armenia-azerbaijan-conflict/armenia-azerbaijan-closer-to-war-over-nagorno-karabakh-than-at-any-time-since-1994-icg-idUSL8N1IY402

Crisis Group - www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/caucasus/nagorno-karabakh-azerbaijan/244-nagorno-karabakhs-gathering-war-clouds

The Guardian - www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/02/conflict-erupts-between-azerbaijani-and-armenian-forces

HART - www.hart-uk.org/locations/nagorno-karabakh

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