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Sent: Monday, March 2, 2026

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Media Advisory & Interviews: Armenian Diaspora Voices Russian Interests On Capitol Hill

Dear [REDACTED]

I hope this message finds you well - I appreciate that it arrives at a very busy moment given developments over the weekend.

As you will know, JD Vance's recent visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan was the highest-profile American diplomatic engagement with the region in more than two decades. The visit signalled strong commitment to advancing the peace agreement between Yerevan and Baku and delivered a clutch of security and technology deals, just months ahead of a crucial general election in Armenia.

If fully realised, the peace process promises significant gains for Armenia. These include new regional trade and transit routes via the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), bringing considerable economic advantage; a reduced risk of conflict with Azerbaijan and the prospect of deeper regional integration; reduced dependence on Russian security guarantees and economic ties; and a pathway to stronger ties with the US and the EU. Much is at stake for Armenians: IRI polling shows that unemployment (15%), low wages (10%), and cost of living (7%) are the issues weighing most heavily on Armenian households, and, indeed, a plurality of Armenians (47%) support signing a peace treaty, either entirely or in part.

US administration efforts, however, including Vance's recent visit to the region, face resistance and opposition from the influential Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), the largest Armenian diaspora organisation in the US, which, it is feared by some on Capitol Hill, is seeking to undermine the ongoing peace process in Congress. ANCA itself is accused of aligning itself with pro-Moscow forces, working against Armenian national interests by endorsing Russian positions and misinformation narratives, often verbatim, at the heart of American institutions.

If you are interested in exploring this issue further, I can connect you to the spokespeople listed below. I am also happy to share further materials and information, should it interest.

-- A senior staffer at the US Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe - a congressional commission- who would be happy to speak on background about ANCA's lobbying efforts in Congress;

-- Maria Karapetyan, Member of Parliament for Armenia's ruling Civil Contract party and a member of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations, who can comment on the significance of the Vance visit as well as the TRIPP;

-- Nzhdeh Hovsepyan, respected academic and historian, who can speak to the fraternity between ANCA and the pro-Moscow Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) party in Armenia, as well as links between ARF and Russia itself.

-- Garo Paylan, too, visiting scholar with the Europe Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, is available to speak off the record on Armenian politics, Russian interference operations, as well as ANCA's affiliation with pro-Moscow actors.

Ahead of June's crucial ballot, Russia has increasingly thrown its weight behind Russia-aligned forces in Armenia that, were they to prevail, would seek to torpedo Yerevan's rapprochement with Baku. Chief among these is the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), senior officials of which have travelled to Moscow, and with which ANCA maintains formal and ideological ties.

This alignment with pro-Russian elements does not limit itself to party politics. During JD Vance's visit, senior ANCA officials issued an impassioned defence of the Armenian Apostolic Church amid a government crackdown targeting clerical figures, despite credible documentation of the Church's collaboration with Russian state actors seeking to destabilise Armenia and preserve Moscow's presence in the South Caucasus.

ANCA's criticism of Vance's visit and the peace deal, much of it mirroring pro-Russia talking points, if not openly supportive of Russia-affiliated organisations, raises a series of pertinent questions: why is one of the largest diaspora lobbying organisations in the US, with an established presence on Capitol Hill, maintaining strong affiliations with pro-Moscow actors and fighting against Armenia's national interests? To what extent are Russian interests being played out in American institutions themselves? And to what extent is ANCA capable of derailing this historic peace process, commended by figures on all sides of the political spectrum?

If you are interested in exploring these questions further, I would be happy to connect you with the spokespeople mentioned above.

I hope to hear from you.

Best regards,

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