

Resolution of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet regarding the decisions of the Supreme Soviets of Azerbaijan and Armenia on Nagorny Karabakh

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[abridged]

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, having examined the 15 June 1988 request from the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Armenia for the Nagorny Karabakh autonomous region to be united with Armenia in conjunction with an application by the Soviet of People's Deputies of Nagorno-Karabakh and the 17 June 1988 decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Azerbaijan that making the Nagorny Karabakh autonomous region part of Armenia is unacceptable, deems a change of borders and an ethnic-territorial division of Azerbaijan and Armenia on a constitutional basis impossible.

Making this ruling, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet is guided by a provision in the Constitution of the USSR (Article 78), under which the territory of a union republic may not be altered without the latter's consent.

A different decision would contradict the fundamental interests of the peoples of both republics and cause serious harm to inter-ethnic relations in the area.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet notes that over the years of Soviet Government the working people of Nagorny Karabakh have achieved significant success in developing the economy and science and in other spheres of social life on the basis of implementing Lenin's nationalities policy and under the guidance of party and local government organizations.

At the same time no action has been taken in the autonomous region for a long time to solve many issues affecting the national interests of the Armenian population, especially in the fields of culture and education and in personnel policy. The autonomous region's constitutional rights have been breached.

The authorities of Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Region have taken a superficial attitude to assessing the situation, failed to realize the political danger of unfounded calls for reviewing the existing ethnic-territorial arrangement in the area and adopted a passive, wait-and-see posture.

The situation in the republics has grown tense and heavy damage has been done to the economies and inter-ethnic relations of the peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

With a view to rectifying the situation in Nagorny Karabakh and overcoming the serious shortcomings, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the USSR Council of Ministers have passed resolutions outlining far-reaching measures to further the economic and cultural development of the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Region, improve the well-being of its working people, strengthen socialist legality and public order, and intensify the education of the population of Azerbaijan and Armenia in a spirit of fraternal friendship and cooperation.