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Trump Oversees U.S.-Brokered Peace Agreement Between Armenia and Azerbaijan

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On August 8, 2025, President Donald Trump hosted Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the White House, where they signed a historic United States-brokered peace declaration aimed at ending nearly four decades of conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The agreement, which includes the establishment of a transit corridor named the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), seeks to foster economic cooperation and regional stability while diminishing Russia's influence in the South Caucasus.

The signing ceremony, held in the State Dining Room, marked the first formal peace commitment between Armenia and Azerbaijan since the Cold War's end, according to a senior administration official cited by The Associated Press. The conflict, rooted in disputes over Nagorno-Karabakh, an Azerbaijani territory with a historically Armenian population, has claimed over 30,000 lives since 1988, with a 2023 offensive by Azerbaijan displacing 100,000 ethnic Armenians. Trump, speaking at the event, expressed confidence in lasting peace, stating, "It's a long time, 35 years, they fought, and now they're friends, and they're going to be friends for a long time." The agreement also includes a joint request to dissolve the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), a mediation body co-chaired by Russia, France, and the U.S., deemed irrelevant by the White House.

A cornerstone of the deal is the TRIPP corridor, a 27-mile route through Armenia's Syunik province connecting Azerbaijan to its Nakhchivan exclave. The U.S. secured exclusive development rights for 99 years, with plans for rail, oil, gas, and fiber optic lines, to be managed by a consortium under Armenian legal jurisdiction. White House Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly stated, "The roadmap they are agreeing to will build a cooperative future that benefits both countries, their region of the South Caucasus, and beyond." Nine companies, including three U.S.-based firms, have expressed interest in developing the corridor, per a senior official cited by Reuters.

The agreement follows months of U.S. diplomacy, initiated by Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff in Baku in March 2025. Russia's waning influence, distracted by its Ukraine invasion since 2022, created an opportunity for the U.S. to assert dominance in the energy-rich South Caucasus. However, critics like Alex Galitsky of the Armenian National Committee of America expressed concerns, stating, "A deal that rewards Azerbaijan's aggression, undermines Armenia's sovereignty, and denies justice to Artsakh's Armenians will only make it harder to resolve these critical human rights issues down the line." Azerbaijan's 2023 recapture of Nagorno-Karabakh and the displacement of its Armenian population remain contentious.

The deal enhances U.S. economic and strategic interests, with bilateral agreements signed with both nations to boost cooperation in energy, technology, and trade. Trump's administration views the accord as a geopolitical counter to Russia, Iran, and China, with one official noting, "The losers here are China, Russia, and Iran. The winners here are the West." As negotiations for the corridor's development begin, the agreement signals a shift toward regional connectivity, though challenges like Armenia's sovereignty concerns and unresolved border issues persist.