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## Pelosi condemns Azerbaijan's attacks on Armenia

By Reuters

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[1/5] U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi receives flowers from Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan during a meeting in Yerevan, Armenia September 18, 2022. The Office to the Prime... [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) [Read more](#)



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### Summary Companies

Pelosi blames Azerbaijan for starting conflict

Azerbaijan says Pelosi endangering peace in Caucasus

Azerbaijan says Pelosi's remarks unacceptable

Pelosi lauds Armenia's 'Velvet Revolution'

U.S. listening to Armenia on defence, Pelosi says

TBILISI, Sept 18 (Reuters) - U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday condemned what she said were "illegal" border attacks by Azerbaijan on Armenia, using a visit to the Russian ally to pledge American support for its sovereignty.

Pelosi cast her trip to Armenia, a sliver of land the size of the U.S. state of Maryland that is wedged between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Iran, as an attempt to strengthen support for what she cast as a beacon of democracy. RE-0055

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Speaking in the ancient city of Yerevan, Pelosi said her trip had significance following the "illegal and deadly attacks by Azerbaijan on Armenian territory" that triggered border clashes in which more than 200 people were killed.

"We strongly condemn those attacks," Pelosi said beside Armenian parliamentary speaker Alen Simonyan, who last week expressed unhappiness with the response of a Russian-led military alliance to Yerevan's request for help. [read more](#)

Pelosi, who angered China with a trip to Taiwan last month, said it was evident that the border fighting was triggered by Azeri assaults on Armenia and that the chronology of the conflict should be made clear.

The fighting "was initiated by the Azeris and there has to be recognition of that," Pelosi said.

Pelosi's remarks drew an unusually strong rebuke from Baku, which said she was endangering the peace in the Caucasus.

"The unsubstantiated and unfair accusations levelled by Pelosi against Azerbaijan are unacceptable," the foreign ministry said in a statement. [read more](#)

"This is a serious blow to the efforts to normalize relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan," the ministry said, casting Pelosi's remarks as "Armenian propaganda".

Such a definitive apportioning of blame for the conflict goes beyond what the U.S. State Department has so far said in public.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has expressed concerns over the fighting and called for calm but did not assign blame.

Blinken urged Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev on a call on Sunday "to adhere to the ceasefire, disengage military forces, and work to resolve all outstanding issues between Armenia and Azerbaijan through peaceful negotiations," State Department spokesperson Ned Price said.

Armenia said Azerbaijan shelled at least six Armenian settlements inside the border shortly after midnight on Sept. 13, attacking civilian and military infrastructure with drones and large calibre guns. Yerevan said it was unprovoked aggression.

Azerbaijan, backed by Turkey, rejects those claims. Baku says Armenian sabotage units tried to mine Azeri positions, prompting soldiers to respond. Armenia says that narrative is Azeri disinformation.

## RUSSIA'S BACKYARD

Russia, which repeatedly condemned Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, considers the Caucasus as its own sphere of influence and bristles at what it casts as U.S. meddling in the region.

Moscow though, is preoccupied by the war in Ukraine which has triggered the biggest confrontation with the West since the height of the Cold War.

Russia is Armenia's major military ally, has a military base in northern Armenia and peacekeepers along the contact line in Nagorno-Karabakh, over which Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a war in 2020.

President Vladimir Putin said on Friday that Russia had enough resources to mediate in the conflict. The latest fighting ended after a Russian-brokered ceasefire.

But after appeals for help, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a Russian-led military alliance of former Soviet republics that includes Armenia but not Azerbaijan, decided on Tuesday to dispatch a monitoring mission.

Armenian Parliamentary Speaker Simonyan said he was dissatisfied with the response, likening the CSTO to a pistol that did not shoot bullets.

Speaking beside Pelosi, U.S. Representative Frank Pallone said the United States wanted to do whatever it could to be more supportive of Armenia's security.

The United States, Pelosi said, was listening to Armenia about what its defence needs were and said Washington wanted to help and support Armenia in what she cast as a global struggle between democracy and autocracy.

"We should be using our influence, our leverage showing that Armenian democracy and sovereignty is a priority," Pelosi said. "The velvet revolution was cheered globally."

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan rose to power in 2018 after anti-government protests referred to as Armenia's Velvet Revolution.

Pelosi said it was interesting that Armenia was disappointed by the response from Russia.

"It is interesting that they were disappointed they got fact finders and not protection from that relationship and we'll see what happens next," she said.

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