



## Forming a Militia in Armenia



*Nagorno-Karabakh Map.*

Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nagorno-Karabakh\\_Map2.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nagorno-Karabakh_Map2.png), CC BY YA 4.0

**OE Watch Commentary:** The Ministry of Defense of Armenia has been carrying out several notable reforms of its armed forces since the April 2016 clashes with Azerbaijan. Most of the reforms have focused on building up specific capabilities in the armed forces in order to avoid a similar situation as the 2016 clashes, which resulted in Azerbaijan taking control of a few pockets of territory of the occupied Nagorno Karabakh region. The accompanying excerpted article reports on a Armenian Ministry of Defense proposal to create a militia to support the armed forces during a conflict and there a few things worth noting.

The article, from the Armenian news website *Lragir*, reports how the Armenian defense ministry “submitted a proposal for the creation of a militia” and that the proposal outlined how the militia would be involved with “protecting Armenia (territory, population, and infrastructure) from

sabotage, terrorist or intelligence activities of the enemy.” Additionally, the article mentioned how militias could “be used in border defense or dangerous parts of the line of contact with the enemy.” It is worth remembering that in April 2016 Azerbaijani forces pushed through the line of contact following heavy rocket and artillery strikes in a couple of areas within the first few hours of the clashes and if the proposal is any indication, the militia could play a role as a reserve force in a similar scenario.

The article goes on to discuss how “command of the units would be carried out by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces with help from a newly-formed militia headquarters,” how the militia’s will be made up of citizens under contract and that “the contract cannot be made with someone who has yet to complete compulsory service, a soldier, a first responder or employee of a prison, as well as those with a criminal background.” The article also states that “weapons will be assigned to militias, they will be given uniforms, appointed to appropriate positions and go through appropriate training.” The article does not mention a timeline for when the Armenian government would approve or reject the proposal, but the creation of a militia marks another effort to bolster the armed forces. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

***“Command of the units would be carried out by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces with help from a newly formed militia headquarters”***

**Source:** “В Армении создается ополчение (A militia is being created in Armenia),” *Lragir*, 25 August 2020.  
<https://www.lragir.am/ru/2020/08/25/181582/>

*The Ministry of Defense of Armenia has submitted a proposal for the creation of a militia for public discussion according to the press secretary Sushan Stepanyan...*

*As noted in the bill, the militia is a system of voluntary participation of citizens in the defense of Armenia during an armed attack or military action. Among the goals of the militia – protecting Armenia (territory, population, infrastructure) from sabotage, terrorist or intelligence activities of the enemy...*

*The militia can be used in border defense or dangerous parts of the line of contact with the enemy, in the battle against sabotage or reconnaissance groups, in the protection of objects of special significance and communications of soldiers or the population, and the organization of civil defense.*

*The militia will operate on a territorial basis, according to administrative departments. It will be made up of military formation, divided into brigades and battalions.*

*Command of the units would be carried out by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces with help from a newly formed militia headquarters...*

*The basis for recruiting the militias is a contract with a citizen. The contract cannot be made with someone who has yet to complete compulsory service, a soldier, a first responder or employee of a prison, as well as those with a criminal background.*

*Weapons will be assigned to militias, they will be given uniforms, appointed to appropriate positions and go through appropriate training.*