

# ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION



## PROGRAM

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation in its world outlook and traditions is essentially a nationalist, socialist, democratic, and revolutionary party.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation with all the power at its disposal strives to defend the aggregate political, economic, and socio-cultural interests of the Armenian nation.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation grounds the national liberation struggle of the Armenian people through its own ideology. It advocates individual freedom, national self-determination, independent statehood, social harmony, and economic well being to secure unobstructed, multifaceted, and sustainable development of both the individual Armenian and Armenian nation.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation strives for the resolution of the Armenian Cause. – A united homeland for the entire Armenian people.

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## **A.R.F.**

### **IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION**

Humanity has arrived at its current stage in history through a process of social, economic, political, and cultural achievements. Human progress, however, remains incomplete as long as not all individuals, groups, and nations, have the opportunity to benefit from the accomplishments of human thought and labor.

Man's domination over man and exploitation of human labor has existed throughout history.

Capitalism, imperialism, totalitarianism, and colonialism are all different expressions of domination and exploitation and are manifested as militarism, racism, and oligarchy, as well as economic, ideological and cultural expansionism. The results are economic monopoly, disregard for national rights, neglect of human rights, ecological and environmental degradation, and political abuses often in the name of protecting human rights.

However, human beings and human societies, peoples and nations have aspired to freedom and equality and have struggled to attain them. This natural and conscious struggle for the development of both individuals and societies has progressed through the interaction of the subjective and objective factors of life.

This is the historical context in which both national liberation struggles and human societies' evolutionary and revolutionary progress is positioned towards the establishment of just and equitable political, social, and economic systems.

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Increased industrialization and rapid technological developments have contributed to human progress and have created new opportunities for further advancement. However, human society remains subject to both international and international discrimination and social polarization.

Capitalism has absorbed pre-industrialized societies into the globalized economic system and has converted them into producing and consuming entities. Other peoples still bear the consequences of totalitarian regimes that, under ideological and other banners, established state capitalism and dictatorship and undermined their subject peoples' national, political, and socioeconomic rights and freedom.

The emergence of socioeconomic classes and the disruption of social harmony have been the results of the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a few. The dominating powers have consolidated their position by establishing biased laws and institutions.

Major powers as well as advanced economic institutions, such as multinational and transnational corporations have politically and economically subdued and controlled many peoples, nations, and governments to obtain additional capital, natural resources, markets, and access routes. Even politically independent states remain so dominated.

In industrialized countries labor movements have attained certain successes. Capitalist states have yielded to labor demands for social welfare and other social reforms. However, despite their progressive nature, these reforms are rendered incomplete since the conditions of subjugation and exploitation have persisted.

Contemporary capitalism is characterized by economic globalization, utilization of the latest technologies, growth in the quality of labor, and an expanding communication and information network.

Although globalization has somewhat expanded technological and information exchanges and created some opportunities for economic development, it has not contributed to international cooperation and growth. Instead, negative consequences have been disintegration of national economies, mass migration of labor forces, increased unemployment, devaluation of labor, monopolization and abuse of information, exploitation of quality manpower, and the development of worldwide consumerism that has distorted national cultures.

Industrialized countries and multinational corporations have created such a [system of economic and military-political investments and aid] [strategy of economic investment and a foreign aid system] which situates less developed countries within the international economic, political, and strategic contour of capitalism, and threatens their identity and sovereign. Less developed countries are forced to adopt economic and social policies that preserve unchecked market relations, serve the interests of the ruling elite which accumulates capital in its own hands, and establishes oligarchic and centralized political regimes.

The struggle against oppression and exploitation thus strives not only for cultural distinctiveness but also presumes political and economic freedom both on domestic and international levels.

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The Armenian Revolutionary Federation believes that through socialism political, economic, and social development is endowed with just and harmonious relationships.

Socialism strives for liberation of individuals and labor. It also strives for complete liberation, independence, and sovereignty of nations as collective units, and for their harmonious coexistence and cooperation.

These parallel struggles are carried out by democratic means, but where democracy is obstructed, through revolution.

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The ideal of socialism for the A.R.F. is the founding of a society in which the individual will be liberated from all forms of ethnic, religious-denominational, national, political, social, and economic discrimination, oppression, and exploitation.

Through the implementation of democracy, socialism encourages citizens' participation in the establishment of just economic relations in the interest of social harmony.

National culture, land, environment, and resources are national assets and have strategic significance.

Socialism consents to diverse forms of ownership: state, collective-cooperative, and private-individual.

Conducive to society's well-being and growth are multiple forms of ownership of the industrial, agricultural, and service sectors. However, as a prerequisite, the determination, implementation, and organization of these forms must provide for social welfare, preclude exploitation, and prevent concentration of wealth and monopolization.

Industry and agriculture are to be organized with full and free participation of the working majority as partners in administering production. The system is to be characterized by self-governance and decentralized administration, as well as the guarantee of unrestricted and free function of cooperatives and labor unions.

This objective will be attained contrary to the immediate interests of the ruling classes. It benefits not only the working majority but also the sustained development of the whole nation.

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For the Armenian Revolutionary Federation the nation - as a unique historico-cultural, linguistic, and socio-political entity - is a fundamental value. It is an essential factor for universal human progress and multifaceted intellectual and moral growth.

The nation is the most vibrant setting for human progress. Therein the individual has the broadest set of opportunities for intellectual and moral development, interaction, and personal growth.

The A.R.F. rejects, however, all notions of national supremacy and chauvinistic manifestations as they impede the normal progress of human society.

Every nation's natural and inalienable rights include its homeland – its historical, territorial habitat – as its distinct environment, vital to creativity, survival, and development.

The survival of every nation is guaranteed by an independent and legitimate statehood in its homeland. The state embodies the political will of the nation, protects its interests, provides for the common defense and security, and ensures its development. Independent statehood is required for natural human progress. Any imposed political regime or rule is a flagrant violation of the principle of national self-determination, is despotic, and unacceptable under any circumstances. No limitations apply to the right of self-determination. It remains in effect even for nations that have been massacred and deported from their homeland. Every attempt to annihilate a nation is a crime against humanity. It is the incontestable right of all nations to overthrow tyranny through a national liberation struggle or any other appropriate means.

Only through their distinct characteristics and particular cultures can nations enrich humanity. A harmonious coexistence of sovereign nations precludes their assimilation.

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The Armenian Revolutionary Federation believes that the ideals of socialism are unattainable without democracy, and democracy is incomplete and lacking without socialism.

Democracy is anchored by respect for human and civil rights and freedoms. It provides legal protection to freedom of opinion, the existence of multiple political parties, and complete freedom of speech, conscience, press, creativity, and labor.

Democracy is characterized by a free and equal right to vote, and by equal protection under the law. It assures the free expression of the people, and through an institutionalized representative system secures the complete and unequivocal participation of people in political, social, and cultural life, thus establishing productive relations between the government and the people.

Democracy is rooted in separation of power between legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and on the principle of checks and balances.

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True to its ideology the Armenian Revolutionary Federation is dedicated to utilizing all its resources to defending the political, economic, social, and cultural interests of the Armenian nation with the goal of creating the Free Armenian, the Free Citizen, and a free homeland.



## **HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Armenia, homeland of the Armenian nation, is one of the oldest countries of the Near East. Situated amid the Black, Caspian, and Mediterranean seas, it constitutes a distinctive highland. There the Armenian people formed, lived, dwelt uninterruptedly for millennia, and developed its history, civilization and national character.

Armenia's geographic position, the Armenian people's history, and the influence of various civilizations, have led to the development of a distinct material and spiritual culture.

The Armenian people's history is characterized by a continuous struggle to reestablish or maintain national statehood.

The Turanian invasions constituted a turning point in the natural evolution of Armenian life. Not only did Turks devastate the land, but they settled in large numbers in Armenia. They altered the homogeneous national composition of the Armenian Highland, hindered the progress of Armenian culture and civilization, and subjected Armenians to periodic massacres and deportations that resulted in the creation of large expatriate communities.

This state of affairs lasted the duration of the Ottoman Empire and had a decisive impact on the destiny of the Armenian people and the nature and evolution of the Armenian Question.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Armenia was divided between the Ottoman and Russian Empires. This deepened the separation between the eastern and western segments of the Armenian people.

Ottoman persecution and the intellectual Renaissance of both segments of the Armenian people gave rise to the initial conception of the Armenian Question demanding respect for Armenians' fundamental human rights. Not only did the Ottoman response disregard the Armenian people's demands, but it intensified persecution. Motivated by the elemental need for self-defense, uprisings ensued in various parts of Western Armenia.

The Armenian Question became internationalized through the efforts of the Armenian leadership and the political and economic interests of the great powers. Efforts to resolve the Armenian Question were fruitless because of the conflicting interests of the various powers involved. This reality and the reawakening of Armenian political consciousness gave birth to the Armenian Revolution.

The Armenian Revolution imparted a new character to the Armenian Question, transforming it into a Cause pursued through its own liberation struggle. The Armenian Revolution strove to unite all Armenians around its political and social propositions, thus forming conscientious Armenians who were ardent defenders of their individual and collective rights. Beginning in the 1880's, the Armenian Revolution forged Armenian political thought, will, and military vigor over the course of four decades.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation was founded in 1890 to coordinate Armenian revolutionary efforts. Through its activity and the sacrifice of its members, the ARF became the standard bearer of the Armenian Revolution.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the aim of altering the demography of the Transcaucasus, persecution intensified in Eastern Armenia as well. The Armenian people, led by the ARF, stood firm against this repression.

Conforming to the principle of universal respect for all human and national rights, the ARF advocated as fundamental propositions the federative coexistence and solidarity of the peoples of Asia Minor and Transcaucasia.

The Ottoman Sultanate and Ittihadist elite, guided by theocratic and racist ideologies, deemed the Armenian people an obstacle to Turkish expansionism and sought to eradicate it through periodic massacres.

Under cover of WWI, and with precise government planning, the Ottoman state sought a radical solution to the Armenian Question through the Armenian Genocide beginning in 1915. This policy of deportation and total annihilation of the Armenians was continued by Turkey until 1923.

Western Armenia was emptied of Armenians.

This Pan-Turanian plan did not succeed. In 1918, the remnants of the Armenian nation stood fast against the invading Turkish armies, halted their progress, and gained independence. After a

centuries-long interruption, in a small portion of Armenia, Armenian national statehood was reestablished.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation, as the primary actor in building the independent Armenian Republic. Based on its experience, it used the existing state of affairs as a point of departure, and adopted the goal of a Free, Independent, and United Armenia.

With the 1920 signing of the Treaty of Sevres, the Armenian nation's rightful ownership of its historic homeland received international recognition. However, the parts of this treaty applicable to Armenia were never implemented. Subjected to Soviet Russia's and Kemalist Turkey's joint attacks, the Republic of Armenia succumbed, acceding to Russia's ultimatum.

In 1923 the Great Powers tried to bury the Armenian Question through the Treaty of Lausanne.

The Armenian Diaspora, created as a result of the Genocide, gradually developed a structured life with attendant educational, cultural, religious, and sociopolitical institutions and organizations.

The ARF was the principal builder of these structures. It also waged an unyielding struggle against communism, totalitarianism, and their efforts to divide the Armenian people.

Simultaneously, it conducted multifaceted activities in pursuit of Hai Tahd-The Armenian Cause.

During the period of Soviet totalitarianism, the Armenian people, particularly the intelligentsia, were subjected to periodic persecution and exile. Meanwhile, Armenia was dismembered through the arbitrary separation of Artzakh, Nakhichevan, and Javakhk. Nevertheless, the people of

Soviet Armenia developed Armenian culture, arts, and science and kept its national consciousness alive. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Armenia regained independence.

The struggle for Artzakh has achieved unprecedented intensity since 1988, not only in Artzakh itself, but also among all Armenians. It clearly became a national liberation struggle in which the ARF participated with all the means at its disposal and contributed ideological perspective.

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At the present stage of Armenian history, the situation is as follows:

1- The Republic of Armenia includes but a small portion of the lands recognized by the Treaty of Sevres and delineated by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson.

2- Only a portion of the Armenian nation lives in the Republic of Armenia. An “internal” Diaspora exists comprised of Armenians living in Russia, former Soviet republics, and Armenian lands severed from Armenia. The remaining large numbers of Armenians constitute the Armenian Diaspora, composed primarily of the descendents of the inhabitants of Turkish occupied Armenian lands.

3- The Armenians of Artzakh are struggling to liberate themselves from the Azerbaijani yoke and gain international recognition for their right to self-determination.

4- The Genocide perpetrated by Turkey against the Armenian people has still not been recognized. The Genocide continues because Diasporan Armenians, deprived of the opportunity to live in their homeland, are subject to the threat of assimilation.

5- The ethnography of Turkish occupied Armenian lands continues to be altered. The historical monuments attesting to the Armenian belonging of those territories are being destroyed or severely distorted. Thus a unique civilization is being eradicated.

6- International Law, the United Nations' Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and especially the U.N.'s 1948 Genocide Convention pronounce genocide a crime against humanity and any territorial gains resulting from it illegal.

These international laws and agreements contain no statutes of limitations and are enforceable ex post facto, thus applying to all past and future cases. For the sake of humanity and world peace, they must be implemented in letter and spirit, first to do justice to the nations that have been victims of genocide, then to prevent future genocides and spare humanity new catastrophes.

7- The principle of national self-determination is included in the United Nations Charter and logically and juridically must be applied to the Armenian nation as well. Hai Tahd is not just the pursuit of justice through the recognition and punishment of the Genocide, but also a question of international rights based on the inviolable principle of national self-determination.

8- The present Republic of Armenia is the legal heir of the first Republic. As such, it is the legal owner of all occupied Armenian lands.

9- The Republic of Armenia, which is destined to become the cornerstone of the pursuit of Hai Tahd, at its current stage in the state building process faces the challenges of strengthening its independence, establishing democracy, forming a just and distinct socio-economic order, and securing the cultural progress of the Armenian people.

10- Hai Tahd has historical, ethical, legal, and political facets and foundations, as enunciated in the following points:

- a) The creation of an integral Armenia on the lands of Eastern and Western Armenia; the just resolution of the Artzakh issue is one of the stages of Hai Tahd;
- b) The return to and gathering upon their ancestral lands of the Armenians of the Diaspora;
- c) The creation of a Free, Independent and United Armenia.

## GOALS

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation's goals are:

- A- The creation of a Free, Independent, and United Armenia. The borders of United Armenia shall include all territories designated as Armenia by the Treaty of Sevres as well as the regions of Artzakh, Javakhk, and Nakhichevan.
- B- International condemnation of the as yet unpunished Genocide committed by Turkey against the Armenians, return of the occupied lands, and just reparations to the Armenian nation.
- C- The gathering of worldwide expatriate Armenians on the lands of United Armenia.
- D- Strengthening Armenia's statehood, institutionalization of democracy and the rule of law, securing the people's economic well being, and establishment of social justice.



# POLITICAL PROPOSITIONS

Based on the preceding goals, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation pursues the following political propositions.

- 1- Securing a victorious conclusion to the struggle for Artzakh as the foremost stage of Hai Tahd.
- 2- Giving a pivotal role to Hai Tahd in the development of Armenia's strategic considerations.
- 3- Strengthening the Diaspora's national identity and organizing and directing its political potential to strengthen Armenia's statehood and pursue Hai Tahd.
- 4- Guaranteeing every Armenian's right to become a citizen of Armenia.
- 5- Assuring the integration of the following fundamental principles in the laws of Armenia:
  - Equality under the law for all citizens.
  - Freedom of thought; speech; press, publication, and other means of expression; conscience; political and other organizational activity; assembly; and transportation.
  - The right to strike and demonstrate.
  - Security of person, home, property, and means of communication.
  - Respect for the rights of national minorities.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROPOSALS**

Based upon its ideological foundation and the developmental needs of Armenia, Artsakh, and the Armenian people; also, considering various global economic trends, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation plans to implement a socio-economic policy fully oriented toward social justice and toward a strong and growing economy in Armenia. This policy will be grounded in the following principles:

1. A productive, competitive, government-regulated, and socially just economic system based will be formed on the professional, cultural, and intellectual characteristics of the country.
2. The proposed economic system will be characterized by its fairness and will prevent socio-economic polarization of society. The economic aspects of social justice are the right to employment for all individuals and just distribution of income, bearing in mind the need for economic development of the entire society.
3. Government sponsorship and oversight are encouraged to promote strategically important fields of production, protect nature and the ecosystem, assure employment and provide the current amenities of life to the populace.
4. Participation will be promoted in those international economic processes that are pertinent to Armenia's development needs. Integration with regional and global economic structures must be realized in such a way that the national interest, cultural identity, and unique characteristics of the country are not compromised.

5. Effective usage of the worldwide Armenian population's potential is an important factor in the development of Armenia's economy and its distinct national identity.

6. The educational system, as well as the cultural and spiritual-moral development of the people is fundamentally government responsibilities. The Armenian Church' and the Armenian family's roles in maintaining Armenian national character should be supported.