

Thursday 22 October 2020

## **CITY OF RYDE SHOWS SUPPORT FOR ARMENIAN-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY**

The City of Ryde has acknowledged its long connection with, representation of and advocacy for the local Armenian-Australian community following the resumption of hostilities in the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh.

As part of a Council resolution, the City of Ryde:

- Condemns the military aggression launched on 27 September 2020 by Azerbaijan and Turkey against the right of self-determination of the indigenous Armenian population of Artsakh, who have lived on those highlands for millennia;
- Condemns the indiscriminate shelling and missile attacks on the civilian population and infrastructure of Artsakh, including Ryde City's sister city in Artsakh, being the capital city Stepanakert, as well as the Holy Saviour Armenian Cathedral in Shushi, in complete violation of international law;
- Calls on the Australian Government unequivocally to join the City of Ryde in the above condemnation and to call on Azerbaijan and Turkey to respect the OSCE Minsk Group peace process for the Karabakh / Artsakh conflict, in particular the non-use of force and the right to self-determination;
- Notes that the international recognition of the Republic of Artsakh and its population's right to self-determination is the only permanent solution to the conflict, to avoid further attempts of such military aggression, and calls on the Australian Government to recognise the Republic of Artsakh.

The City of Ryde also called on the Federal Government to request an immediate ceasefire and end to the hostilities. Fighting has continued in Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh despite a Russian-brokered ceasefire coming into effect last Saturday.

Council also held a minute's silence in honour of those who have lost their lives in the conflict and resolved to donate \$5,000 to Himnadram.org for the purposes of humanitarian aid.

The latest resolution follows a unanimous decision by the City of Ryde in 2018 to recognise the right to self-determination of all peoples including those of the Republic of Artsakh.

In 2019, Council also unanimously resolved to form a Friendship City relationship with Stepanakert, which is the capital city of the Republic of Artsakh.

"The City of Ryde stands united with our local Armenian-Australian community," City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said.

"As a sister city of beautiful Stepanakert, the City of Ryde condemns what Turkey and Azerbaijan are doing and request that the Federal Government stand with us in condemnation of these actions.

"I would like to thank all councillors who supported this resolution, in particular Cllr Sarkis Yedelian OAM for all his work in representing the interests of the Armenian community in Ryde, and for raising awareness about the devastation that is being caused as a result of this unnecessary conflict."

Clr Yedelian OAM said: “The Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression against the indigenous Armenian population of Artsakh along with the loss of lives is an avoidable tragedy that has deeply impacted the Armenian community in the City of Ryde

“Turkish and Azerbaijani forces should immediately cease hostilities and work with Armenians towards self-determination for the Republic of Artsakh. I request that the Federal Government now stands with the City of Ryde in condemning the actions of Azerbaijan and Turkey.”

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