
HAWAII HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HEAD APOLOGIZES TO AZERBAIJAN

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Trend

Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives has apologized to Azerbaijan for the resolution adopted by the House, said Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles Apr. 1.

Joseph M. Souki, the Hawaii House of Representatives speaker signed a memorandum expressing regret over the resolution adopted March 29 on the unrecognized regime created in Azerbaijan's occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region and apologized to the Azerbaijani government and people.

In the memorandum, which was sent to Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles, Souki notes that whereas every resolution involving foreign affairs should be sent to a committee to receive public input, the said resolution was presented as a floor presentation – a purely ceremonial event meant to congratulate individuals and organizations.

Therefore I sincerely apologize for the fact that the resolution did not have a chance to be vetted by our committee process before action was taken on it, and I intend to adjust our internal policies to prevent a similar occurrence, he said.

Souki also noted that the resolution does not have the effect of law in any way.

The conflict between the two South Caucasus countries began in 1988 when Armenia made territorial claims against Azerbaijan. As a result of the ensuing war, in 1992 Armenian armed forces occupied 20 percent of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts.

The two countries signed a ceasefire agreement in 1994. The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, Russia, France and the US are currently holding peace negotiations.

Armenia has not yet implemented the UN Security Council's four resolutions on withdrawal of its armed forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding districts.