



By: TA | AP Brief

Turkey and Armenia agree to simplify visa procedures to normalize ties



Turkey and Armenia have agreed to simplify visa procedures as part of efforts to **normalize ties**, Turkey's Foreign Ministry announced, making it easier for their citizens to travel between the two countries.

Relations between Turkey and Armenia have long been strained by historic grievances and Turkey's alliance with Azerbaijan.

The two neighboring countries have no formal diplomatic ties and their joint border has remained closed since the 1990s.

The two countries however, agreed to work toward normalization in 2021, appointing **special envoys** to explore steps toward reconciliation and reopening the frontier.

Those talks have progressed in parallel with efforts to ease tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Turkey supported Azerbaijan during its 2020 **conflict with Armenia** for control of the Karabakh region, known internationally as **Nagorno-Karabakh**, a territorial dispute that had lasted nearly four decades.

Electronic visas

The Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement posted on social platform X that Ankara and Yerevan agreed that holders of diplomatic, special and service passports from both countries would be able to obtain electronic visas free of charge as of Jan. 1.

"On this occasion, Turkey and Armenia reaffirm once again their commitment to continue the normalization process between the two countries with the goal of achieving full normalization without any preconditions," the ministry said.

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Turkey and Armenia also have a more than century-old dispute over the deaths of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians in massacres, deportations and forced marches that began in 1915 in Ottoman Turkey. Historians widely view the event as genocide.

Turkey denies the deaths constituted genocide, saying the toll has been inflated and those killed were victims of civil war and unrest. It has lobbied to prevent countries from officially recognizing the massacres as genocide.