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US EXPERT: AZERBAIJAN GAVE FAIR RESPONSE TO OCCUPATION OF ITS TERRITORIES

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By Elena Kosolapova - Trend.Az

Azerbaijan's response to the occupation of its legal territories was fair and expected, says Thomas Goltz, journalist, professor at the University of Montana.

"My position on Nagorno-Karabakh issue is well known," Goltz told Trend April 6. "I support the concept of territorial integrity of existing states. I have been waiting for an Azerbaijani response to the Armenian occupation."

Goltz said that it is not important who triggered the most recent incidents along the line of contact, the main point is that Nagorno-Karabakh has been under occupation for more than 20 years, and at a certain point push is going to come to shove.

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 1994 ceasefire agreement was followed by peace negotiations. Armenia has not yet implemented four UN Security Council resolutions on withdrawal of its armed forces from the Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding districts.

On the night of April 2, 2016, all the frontier positions of Azerbaijan were subjected to heavy fire from the Armenian side, which used large-caliber weapons, mortars and grenade launchers.

The armed clashes resulted in deaths and injuries among the Azerbaijani population. Azerbaijan responded with a counter-attack, which led to liberation of several strategic heights and settlements.

Kaynak/Source: