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**WARLICK: KARABAKH'S FINAL STATUS TO BE DETERMINED IN CONTEXT OF RETURN OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES TO AZERBAIJAN'S CONTROL**

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By Anakhanum Idayatova - Trend

Nagorno-Karabakh's final status will be determined in the context of a comprehensive settlement, which would include the return of the occupied territories to Azerbaijan's control, the OSCE Minsk Group's US co-chair James Warlick told Trend May 10.

He was commenting on the reports about the possible recognition of the "independence" of Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region by Armenia.

"No country recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh," he said. "We continue to urge the sides to come to the negotiating table in good faith in order to reach a lasting settlement."

Armenia's Foreign Ministry made a statement on May 5 saying that the rumors about the decision of the Armenian government regarding two MPs' initiative to recognize the "independence" of Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region are groundless.

The statement read that the government's decision doesn't mean approval of that initiative.

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.

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Kaynak/Source: