
TOP OFFICIAL: KARABAKH ISSUE MAIN OBSTACLE TO WHOLE REGION'S GROWTH

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Trend

The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the main obstacle for the development of not only Azerbaijan, but also the whole region, Novruz Mammadov, deputy head of Azerbaijani presidential administration, chief of the administration's foreign relations department, said in his article posted in the Azerbaijan newspaper.

Mammadov noted that the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and restoration of territorial integrity is the biggest challenge that Azerbaijan is facing today.

An integral part of Azerbaijan □ Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts are under Armenian occupation for more than 20 years, says the article, adding that as a result of Armenian military aggression, 20 percent of Azerbaijani territories was occupied and more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs.

Azerbaijans position is the conflicts peaceful settlement in accordance with international norms and principles and within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, said Mammadov in his article.

Unfortunately, the conflict still remains unresolved, he added.

No progress has been achieved so far during the negotiations held with the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group, noted the top official adding that Armenia isnt interested in the conflicts settlement and tries to keep the situation of no war and no peace.

He went on to add that the April events have once again shown that the freezing of the conflict can lead to war at any time.

Despite the support of international mediators to Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, the unequivocal position on the issue isn't expressed, said Mammadov.

Azerbaijan is waiting for concrete steps by the countries co-chairing the OSCE Minsk Group and the international community for the conflict's fair settlement, he noted adding that failure to comply with principles of justice draws not only the region, but also the whole world to a crisis.

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.

Kaynak/Source: