
MOSCOW: POPOV CONTINUES ACTING AS OSCE MG CO-CHAIR

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The Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts settlement, continues acting as Minsk Group co-chair, Maria Zakharova, spokesperson for Russias Foreign Ministry, told APA on Nov. 24. Asked about Russias plan to change Igor Popov, who has been working as Minsk Group co-chair since 2010, Zakharova said that the decision to change the US and French co-chairs is a routine rotation.

This is a routine rotation of ambassador. We dont see any political components here, she said, adding. With regard to Igor Popov, as we know, he continues to deal with the issue of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts settlement.

Earlier, France had changed its OSCE Minsk Group co-chair. Stéphane Visconti has become the new co-chair, succeeding Pierre Andrieu.

The US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, James Warlick, tweeted on Nov. 21 that he will step down as Minsk Group co-chair.

It has been an honor to serve in the US Department of State for more than 30 years, Warlick tweeted.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict entered its modern phase when the Armenian SRR made territorial claims against the Azerbaijani SSR in 1988.

A fierce war broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. As a result of the war, Armenian armed forces occupied some 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory which includes Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent districts (Lachin, Kalbajar, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Gubadli and Zangilan), and over a million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced people.

The military operations finally came to an end when Azerbaijan and Armenia signed a ceasefire agreement in Bishkek in 1994.

Dealing with the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the OSCE Minsk Group, which was created after the meeting of the CSCE (OSCE after the Budapest summit held in Dec.1994) Ministerial Council in Helsinki on 24 March 1992. The Groups members include Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, the United States, France, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Belarus, Finland and Sweden.

Besides, the OSCE Minsk Group has a co-chairmanship institution, comprised of Russian, the US and French co-chairs, which began operating in 1996.

Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 of the UN Security Council, which were passed in short intervals in 1993, and other resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly, PACE, OSCE, OIC, and other organizations require Armenia to unconditionally withdraw its troops from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Kaynak/Source: