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**MARD: TALKS SIGNIFICANT FOR KARABAKH CONFLICT SETTLEMENT**

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By Anakhanum Hidayatova - Trend

The European Union supports a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Malena Mard, the EU ambassador to Azerbaijan, told reporters while commenting on the Dec. 8 meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Hamburg.

The EU also supports the OSCE Minsk Groups mediatory activities, according to Mard.

The European Union believes that the meetings and talks between the conflict parties are significant for the progress in the conflicts resolution, she added.

Azerbaijans Foreign Ministry has earlier said that the 3+2 format meeting – three OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, plus Azerbaijani and Armenian FMs – on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in Hamburg didnt take place due to Armenias destructive policy and the attempts of the Armenian side to avoid negotiations.

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: