
ARMENIA READY TO RETURN SEVERAL OCCUPIED REGIONS TO AZERBAIJAN, SAYS HEAD OF IZBORSK CLUB

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By Rashid Shirinov

Today the situation is that Armenia is ready to return back several regions around Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan, a Russian writer believes.

But Armenia is afraid that after the transfer of these regions the military status quo will be violated and Azerbaijan will establish military facilities in the transferred territories, Alexander Prokhanov, who is the chairman of the Izborsk Club expert group, told the Moscow-Baku portal on November 20.

The writer noted that Russia does and will do everything to bring closer the positions of Azerbaijan and Armenia on the settlement of the conflict and to serve as an intermediary.

This is reflected in the visits of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to Baku and then to Yerevan. Russia is aimed at resolving [the conflict], he said, noting that peace in the region is very important for Russia and the country is interested in the early end of the conflict.

While meeting with President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on November 19, Lavrov noted that Russia, as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, is interested in helping in every possible way to seek solutions and ensure the movement towards the settlement of the conflict. He also said that diplomacy can help move the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from a dead point.

Prokhanov said that the Izborsk Club intends to visit Baku and the territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict soon to hold meetings and study the nature of the conflict.

The most important task for us now is to hold a round table of Russian and Azerbaijani intellectuals there, in the area of where bullets are still flying and danger exists. We want to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh problem there, the writer concluded.

Azerbaijan and Armenia fought a lengthy war that ended with signing of a fragile ceasefire in 1994. Since the war, Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding regions. More than 20,000 Azerbaijanis were killed and over 1 million were displaced as a result of the large-scale hostilities.

While the OSCE Minsk Group acted as the only mediator in resolution of the conflict, the occupation of the territory of the sovereign state with its internationally recognized boundaries has been left out of due attention of the international community for years.

Until now, Armenia ignores four UN Security Council resolutions on immediate withdrawal from the occupied territory of Azerbaijan, thus keeping tension high in the region.

Kaynak/Source: