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## **ARMENIA SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT OCCUPATION OF AZERBAIJANI LANDS CONDITIONS YEREVAN'S FAILURE: BAKU**

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Armenia's military dictatorship should recognize that aggressive Armenian separatism, which began in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, and the military occupation of Azerbaijani territories have conditioned Armenia's current strategic failure, spokesman of Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry, Hikmat Hajiyev told Trend Feb. 20.

He made the remarks commenting on the congratulatory message of the Armenian president to the separatist regime created in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

"The Armenian president's proudly quoting the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA member and the international terrorist, Monte Melkonian, who has been involved in murder of innocent people in terrorist attacks, in the letter addressed to the illegal regime proves the true essence of the Armenian government and the aggressive separatist movement that began in late 1980s in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan," he said.

He said the Armenian president, who started as a field commander together with the terrorist Monte Melkonyan and still adheres to this thinking, presents results of terror against Azerbaijan, military aggression, bloody ethnic cleansing, war crimes and criminal acts against humanity as "a success".

"Instead of deceiving itself and the Armenian people, the military dictatorship regime of Armenia must recognize that today's strategic failure of Armenia is conditioned by aggressive Armenian separatism that began in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and the military occupation of Azerbaijani territories," Hajiyev said.

The temporary and tactical occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia, which caused Armenia's geopolitical, geo-economic isolation and strategic defeat, left it aside from regional projects, and this exhausts the political, military, economic, social and demographic resources of that country, Hajiyev noted, adding that Armenia also put its existence as a sovereign state under a serious question.

Excluding Armenia, the entire international community recognizes and supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan within the internationally recognized borders, Hajiyev said.

This position is reflected in the well-known resolutions of the UN Security Council, statements,

resolutions and decisions of the OSCE, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Council of Europe, the EU, NATO, the Non-Aligned Movement and other international organizations, as well as in statements of other states and bilateral documents, he added.

Armenias attempts to legitimize the military occupation of Azerbaijani territories and present it as the right to self-determination failed, he noted.

The international community didnt recognize and will never recognize the consequences of the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia through military aggression with the use of force, Hajiyeve said.

The OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs and the entire international community consider the current status quo based on aggression unacceptable and require its change, he noted.

Changing the status quo primarily involves elimination of the fact of aggression, he said.

The political and legal bases for a phased settlement of the conflict are known to the entire international community, Hajiyeve noted. They include withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, ensuring the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan within the internationally recognized borders, the return of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons, including the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh region, to their native lands and the joint residence of the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorno-Karabakh region within Azerbaijans borders. This is based on the norms and principles of international law, well-known resolutions of the UN Security Council and the Helsinki Final Act.

As a result of exposure of Armenias aggression against Azerbaijan, the predatory policy and the policy of ethnic cleansing, as well as terror, military and criminal acts committed at the state level in Armenia and in the occupied territories against the peaceful Azerbaijani population, Armenian lies were demonstrated and moral principles as well as image of Armenia as a state were thoroughly undermined at the international level, Hajiyeve added.

Clear opinion was formed in the international community regarding the aggressive policy of Armenia and the Armenian lie, he said. The sooner the Armenian leadership understands this reality and puts an end to the occupation of Azerbaijani territories, the sooner peace and stability will be restored in the region, and the population of Armenia will be able to use the opportunities of regional cooperation.

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.

<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/2863456.html>