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## **AZERBAIJANI, ARMENIAN FMS MAY MEET IN SEPTEMBER**

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Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov said he may meet with the Armenian FM in September.

An agreement was reached to hold the next meeting in September, he said at a joint press conference with his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu on July 24.

Mammadyarov noted that it was proposed to hold the meeting within the UN General Assembly or earlier.

I expressed my readiness for this meeting from the Azerbaijani side, and said the main thing is that the talks should be fruitful, the Azerbaijani FM said.

As for a high-level meeting, Mammadyarov noted that the Armenian side asked for time for that.

The last meeting between Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers was held in Brussels on July 11 under the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs Igor Popov of Russia, Stephane Visconti of France and Andrew Schofer of the U.S. The meeting was also attended by the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk. It is noteworthy that this was Mammadyarovs first meeting with the new Armenian FM.

During the meeting, the ministers exchanged views regarding the situation on the ground and discussed next steps and parameters for re-engaging in substantive negotiations. They agreed to meet again in the near future under the auspices of the co-chairs.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict 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 regions. More than 20,000 Azerbaijanis were killed and over 1 million were displaced as a result of the large-scale hostilities. The 1994 ceasefire agreement was followed by peace negotiations.

Until now, Armenia controls fifth part of Azerbaijan territory and rejects implementing four UN Security Council resolutions on withdrawal of its armed forces from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding regions.

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