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**MFA: ARMENIA'S ATTEMPTS TO PRESENT 'ELECTIONS' IN AZERBAIJAN'S OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS INDICATOR OF DEMOCRACY DO NOT STAND UP TO CRITICISM**

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Armenia, instead of trying to create a false appearance of "exporting democracy" in Karabakh, should think about the pressing problems of its own citizens, Spokesperson of the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry Leyla Abdullayeva told Trend.

She was commenting on the Armenian media reports that on August 22 the Armenian government "for the first time allocated funds to foreign NGOs to monitor the elections in unrecognized Karabakh".

"Regarding this information of the Armenian media, it should be recalled that Armenia, which has occupied the territories of Azerbaijan, is not the first time organizing various kinds of shows there, which it calls "elections" or "referendum". According to their results, the entire international community invariably declares its principled position regarding support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, non-recognition of the illegal regime, as well as any "elections" held by it", she said.

Abdullayeva noted that allocating funds for monitoring the elections in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the Armenian government once again acknowledges its effective control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the surrounding districts, thus confirming the relevant conclusion of the ECHR contained in its 2015 judgement in the case of "Chiragov and Others v. Armenia".

"And finally, attempts to present the so-called "local government elections" in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan as an indicator of democracy do not stand up to criticism. The entire international community condemns the acts of mass destruction of the Azerbaijani population, ethnic cleansing and violation of the fundamental rights of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons. Armenia, which is responsible for all these international torts, can in no way claim the status of an exporter of democracy", Abdullayeva said.

She noted that the Armenian government, instead of hopeless attempts to create a false appearance of "exporting democracy" to Karabakh occupied by it, should think about the urgent problems of their own citizens.

"In addition, its actions should not run counter to the logic of advancing the negotiation process to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and serve to preserve the status quo based on the illegal occupation of internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan," she added.

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/karabakh/3108166.html>

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