
AZERBAIJANI COMMUNITY ISSUES STATEMENT ON ELECTION IN COUNTRY'S OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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The Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan issued a statement in connection with the "election to the local self-government bodies" held on September 8 in the occupied Azerbaijani territories, Trendreports on Sept. 9.

'Another political show called 'election to the self-government bodies' was organized in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan on September 8,' the Azerbaijani community said. 'This step taken by Armenia and the criminal junta, which completely lost sense of reality, is illegal and has no legal grounds. It is a real insult to the concept of democracy and election.'

'According to the document, the desire of hiding behind the democracy of the 'leaders' of the illegal junta, namely, Bako Sahakyan, Ashot Gulyan and other 'fighters for democracy' is derisive,' the Azerbaijani community added. 'The results of this 'election' held in the conditions of the occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia and ethnic cleansing committed by Armenia are not recognized by the international community and are a show that once again exposes the aggressor.'

'By holding such 'election', Armenia and its puppet regime in Nagorno-Karabakh are deceiving themselves, rather than the international community,' the Azerbaijani community added. 'The fake 'election' once again openly demonstrated the clashes between the Armenian authorities and the illegal regime. As a result, not only the Azerbaijani community but also the Armenian community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan suffer.'

In conclusion, in its statement, the Azerbaijani community expresses confidence that the Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh after the restoration of the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan, together with returning Azerbaijanis, will participate in the legal election to the local self-government bodies, to be held in accordance with the Azerbaijani constitution and laws on municipalities.

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, 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 Nagorno-

Karabakh and the surrounding districts.

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