
AZERBAIJANI FM PRAISES TURKEY'S FRIENDSHIP IN DIFFICULT TIMES

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Support messages from Turkish authorities against Armenia's attacks are examples of Turkey's friendship with Azerbaijan in difficult times, Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov said Thursday.

Bayramov's comments came after an attack on July 12, when the Armenian army violated a cease-fire and attacked Azerbaijani positions with artillery fire toward the Tovuz border district, withdrawing after losses following retaliation from Azerbaijani's army.

Armenia killed 12 Azerbaijani soldiers, including high-ranking officers and one civilian, and wounded four troops.

"When we look deep into the attack, it is clear that this attack is a planned provocation. Numerous states and international organizations supported Azerbaijan," said Bayramov. "Statements of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, foreign and defense ministers are clear examples of the brotherly Turkish people's pro-Azerbaijan stance during hard times," he said while receiving Turkey's Ambassador in Baku, Erkan Özoral.

There is a high level of cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in all areas, he said and emphasized that cooperation would continue to develop going forward.

Recent attacks were carried out by Armenians on diplomatic representatives of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis who organized civil demonstrations in the U.S. and European countries, said Bayramov, and he noted in accordance with the Vienna Convention, countries are obliged to ensure the safety of diplomatic representatives' buildings and diplomats.

Radical Armenian groups abroad have become more active recently and there is a possibility of new provocations to Azerbaijani representatives' offices, he said.

Since 1991, the Armenian military has illegally occupied the Nagorno-Karabakh region, an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan.

The U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday had called for "immediate and full de-escalation" and "a return to negotiations" between Azerbaijan and Armenia after recent clashes.

Guterres spoke by telephone separately with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, a U.N. spokesman said.

He expressed his concern to them after the recent fighting and asked them to refrain "from provocative rhetoric," the spokesman added.

Guterres also expressed his "full support" for the efforts of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to ease tensions between the two countries.

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