
AZERBAIJAN SAYS RUSSIA HAS PROVIDED MILITARY GOODS TO ARMENIA SINCE DEADLY BORDER CLASHES

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Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has expressed concern that Russia has provided military supplies to Armenia in the weeks following deadly clashes along the border between the two South Caucasus countries in July.

According to a statement issued by Aliyev's press service on August 13, Aliyev called Russian President Vladimir Putin the previous day to seek clarification of this issue.

Baku claimed that more than 400 tons of military goods have been provided by Russia to Armenia via the airspace of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran since the clashes erupted.

At least five Armenian servicemen and 12 Azerbaijani servicemen, including a general, were killed during several days of fighting that erupted along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border on July 12 and involved the use of heavy artillery and drones.

The Kremlin also issued a statement on the August 12 telephone conversation between Putin and Aliyev, but it did not mention the discussion of the issue of military supplies.

The presidents discussed regional issues within the context of the tension along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border in July. The Russian side stressed the inadmissibility of any action that would lead to the escalation of the situation, the Kremlin said in its statement.

Armenian officials have not commented on the Azerbaijani president's statement.

In the wake of the clashes, the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in which Russia acts as a co-chair along with the United States and France, urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to restart peace talks aimed at resolving the decades-long conflict involving ethnic Armenian separatists over Azerbaijan's breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia hosts a Russian military base and is a member of the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organization, which entitles it to receive discounted armaments from Russia.

It is believed that since 2011 Azerbaijan has purchased up to \$4 billion worth of arms from Russia.

Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar and a delegation of high-ranking military officials arrived in Baku on August 12 to observe the final part of a joint live-fire military exercise involving Turkish

and Azerbaijani land and air forces.

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