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THE SO-CALLED 'ELECTIONS' IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

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Following the Parliamentary elections held on 3 May 2015 in Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijans territory which is under occupation of Armenia for more than 20 years, local elections were held on 13 September 2015. Many countries and international organizations declared that they do not recognize the results of these elections.

Statements underlined Azerbaijans territorial integrity within its sovereignty and internationally recognized borders, and indicated that these elections were illegal.

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs also condemned these elections. The Ministrys statement on the latest local elections is as follows:[1]

> The above mentioned local elections, planned to be held within a short time following the Parliamentary elections held on 3 May 2015 in the said region, are a clear breach of the principles of international law, the UN Security Council resolutions and the principles of the OSCE. This and other similar actions impair the efforts to reach a peaceful and lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.
>
> Turkey condemns these elections which will constitute a new violation of Azerbaijans sovereignty and territorial integrity. These elections and its results, which we consider illegal shall not be recognized by Turkey.

In her statement, the spokeswoman for the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy the European Union said that the European Union does not recognize the constitutional and legal framework within which elections are being held in Nagorno-Karabakh.[2] A similar statement was made on the elections held on May 3.[3]

Spokesperson for the US Department of State also stated that the United States does not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent sovereign state, and they will not accept the results of the so-called elections on the 13th of September as affecting the legal status of the region.[4]

Furthermore, in addition to countries such as Germany, Ukraine, China, Pakistan and Indonesia, similar statements were made also by international organizations such as OSCE and Islamic Cooperation Organization.

The increasing number of countries and organizations day by day which emphasizes Azerbaijans territorial integrity and sovereignty is causing political disappointments for Armenia, which also took a major legal blow by ECHRs judgement on the Chiragov and Others v. Armenia.[5] It is seen that Armenias efforts to legitimize the republic in Nagorno-Karabakh through elections are fruitless. The obvious fact that Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding seven regions, which are internationally recognized as Azerbaijani territories, are occupied by Armenia is uttered more commonly.

Certainly, it is a known fact that some of the above-mentioned countries apply double standards on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. It is clear that these countries which took up a clear position on the Crimean issue are not as determined on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue which remains unresolved for more than 20 years. However, reactions to these elections and ECHRs final judgment are positive developments in terms of the violation of international law in Nagorno-Karabakh.

[1] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-250_-11-september-2015_-press-release-regarding-the-so_called-local-elections-planned-to-be-held-in-nagorno_karabakh-region-of-the-republic-of-azerbaijan.en.mfa

[2] http://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/karabakh/2430264.html

[3] http://eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_16403_en.htm

[4] http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2015/09/246791.htm

[5] For the detailed information on ECHRs judgement on the case of Chiragov and Others v. Armenia see. Turgut Tuncel, The Nagorno-Karabakh Issue from a Juridical Point of View: the Case of Chiragov and Others v. Armenia, *AVIM*, http://www.avim.org.tr/yorumnotlarduyurular/en/THE-NAGORNO-KARABAKH-ISSUE-FROM-A-JURIDICAL-POINT-OF-VIEW:-THE-CASE-OF-CHIRAGOV-AND-OTHERS-V--ARMENIA/4133

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