



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 12, 2020

The United States, as one of the three Minsk Group co-chairs, welcomes the apparent ceasefire and cessation of fighting in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. We have always said there is no military solution to this conflict, and we deeply regret the unnecessary loss of life, including many civilians, caused by the recent violence. As the situation continues to unfold and we learn more about the arrangement announced November 10, we will need to address the role of the international community and the OSCE itself in maintaining a transparent peace.

We are deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation on the ground. We reiterate our urgent calls for both sides to adhere to the humanitarian ceasefire from October 10, which they reaffirmed on October 17 and again on October 25. We also urge both parties to immediately undertake the steps agreed on in Geneva on October 29.

We call on the sides to protect civilians and civilian objects. The large-scale displacement of civilians, including vulnerable populations such as children and elderly, in the midst of a global pandemic and shortly before the onset of winter is almost certain to create a completely unnecessary humanitarian crisis.

We urge the sides to avoid actions that could result in the resumption of violence, to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric and actions, and to take advantage of the cessation of violence to build a lasting peace. We urge external parties to act responsibly and to avoid taking actions that could reignite violence or further exacerbate regional tensions.

Madam Chairperson, this conflict has gone on for far too long. The toll it has taken on people in the impacted area, and in the region, is far too high. We hope a lasting peace is within our sights. We're confident that the Minsk Group will stand ready to participate in bringing a lasting and permanent peace to the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.

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