

OSCE should prevent Azerbaijan from deviating and damaging the negotiation process



2010 OSCE Review Conference
in Astana
26 – 28 November 2010
Reinforced Plenary Session

RC.NGO/237/10
28 November 2010

ENGLISH only

The ceasefire signed by Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh in 1994 has been frequently violated recently. The absence of a peace agreement is one of the main obstacles to security and sustainability in the region.

Early in March, this year, Serge Sargsyan, the President of Armenia called on Azerbaijan to sign an agreement on the non-use of force which would "instill trust in the Armenian people of Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia." However, Azerbaijani President refused it and put questionable preconditions.

The mood of "not getting a foot in the door" is apt to this settlement process. Azerbaijan continues to move the Karabakh issue to the UN GA, thus demaging the Minsk format of mediation. Since 1994, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship has been serving as the mediatory power in Karabakh conflict settlement. The policy of moving of the issue to other formats, like the UN, would harm the negotiation process in the framework of OSCE.

Another example: Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh support sniper withdrawal from its border, while Azerbaijan rejects it. Doing so, Azerbaijan derides the concerns of the OSCE Chairman-in-office and the OSCE MG Co-Chairmen and tries to miscarry the efforts of international community for the viable peace in the region.

Besides the aforementioned, Azerbaijan continues violating the ceasefire regime, which causes deaths and casualties.

This aggressive behavior of Azerbaijan is associated with the belligerent statements addressed against the people in NKR. The experience of the armed conflict has shown that the warlike rhetoric could get out of hand if precautionary measures are not taken.

However, the OSCE has been reluctant to openly condemn the muscle-flexing and actual military buildup of Azerbaijan. They should put more efforts to prevent the renewal of hostilities the likelihood of which has increased in last months.

In this context, the OSCE MG Co-Chairs should put the initiative of Armenian President on peace agreement to the negotiation table. The OSCE Summit, Astana, 2010 could serve as a good platform for it.

November 27, 2010
Astana, Kazakhstan

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