

Urging Russian Federation to stop supply of Arms to Karabakh Conflict Zone Statement

We have repeatedly touched upon the inadmissibility of arms race in the Karabakh conflict zone, which contradicts the OSCE principles of peaceful conflict settlement.

According to our estimates, in the past 4 years, 2014-2017 at least 50% of the total deaths in the armed forces on the Armenian side only are caused by ceasefire violations. Moreover, after the ceasefire of May 12, 1994, unprecedented large-scale military actions occurred for the first time on April 2-5, 2016 which took by our estimates about 77 human lives of the Armenian armed forces. As for the data on the human losses in the Azerbaijani armed forces, they are not known because of their confidentiality.

The increased ceasefire violations were brought about by the unprecedented arms race by the states involved in the conflict in the same period and Russian Federation contributes and takes a direct part in such arms race.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) 2016 Report, in 2012-2016 Azerbaijan and Armenia purchased a large number of arms from the Russian Federation, though Armenia purchased 20 times less. Azerbaijan's main supplier is Russia which supplies 69% of the arms acquired by Azerbaijan.

In this context, Russian President Vladimir Putin's statement on US supply of arms to Ukraine at the press conference of September 5, 2017 summing up the BRICS summit results sounded quite extraordinary: "It's the sovereign decision of the United States to whom to sell arms or supply arms free and also the sovereign decision of the country that receives such assistance. We cannot influence this process. But there are some general international rules and approaches. Supplying arms to the conflict zone does not promote peace but only deepens the situation."

Thus, the Russian President realizes quite well the grave consequences of arms supply by his country to the Karabakh conflict zone but still continues the practice contradicting "the international rules and approaches" as he put it in his own words.

Thus, the Russian Federation, represented by its President V. V. Putin, shows a policy of double standards to various conflicts.

Being one of the co-chairing states in the OSCE Minsk Group engaged in peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Russian Federation implements a policy not only contradicting the principles of conflict settlement but also hindering peaceful conflict settlement.

It is obvious that the Russian Federation must refrain from such actions as it is one of the co-chairing states in the OSCE Minsk Group engaged in negotiations over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We condemn such a selective and anti-humanist approach of the Russian President and believe that the Russian Federation should:

- follow the international rules and approaches it points to;
- immediately stop supplying arms to the Karabakh conflict zone.

We believe that if no steps in the said directions are taken, the OSCE should start discussing the issue of stopping the engagement of Russian Federation in the OSCE Minsk Group.

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly-Vanadzor

Analytical Center for Globalization and Regional Cooperation

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