Azerbaijan launches renewed massive attack with thousands of mercenary-terrorists against Artsakh

The Azerbaijani military continues grossly violating the humanitarian ceasefire and has launched a renewed massive attack from the morning of October 13 at the entire length of the frontline, Artsakh presidential spokesperson Vahram Poghosyan said.

“The Azerbaijani military are also shelling peaceful settlements with artillery fire. Several thousands of mercenary-terrorists are fighting together with the Azerbaijani army in their offensive operations. The Artsakh Defense Army is waging fierce battles, attempting to neutralize the enemy attack. We must make all efforts to inflict heavy losses to the enemy that is armed to the teeth and to secure victory in this patriotic war,” Poghosyan said.
Azerbaijan’s airstrikes at Armenian church a challenge to the whole civilized humanity – MFA

On October 8, the armed forces of Azerbaijan launched airstrikes at the masterpiece of the Armenian architecture – the Holy Savior Ghazanchetsots Cathedral located in the cultural capital of Artsakh, Shushi, causing significant damages.

“This is another crime of the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan, which reveals its inhuman essence. Nevertheless, this action fully fits into its policy of Armenophobia developed for decades,” the Armenian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

“Azerbaijan, which has completely annihilated the Armenian cultural heritage in Nakhichevan and in other parts of the historical homeland of the Armenian people, now throughout the ongoing military aggression against Artsakh is trying to deprive Armenians of Artsakh of their homeland and historical memory,” the statement reads.

According to the Foreign Ministry, “with these actions Azerbaijan replicates behavior of its newly acquired allies – the infamous international terrorist organizations, who are responsible for destruction of the numerous historical-cultural monuments in the Middle East.”

“We condemn in the strongest way this heinous crime of Azerbaijan, which also poses a challenge to the whole civilized humanity,” the Ministry stated.

“In this regard, we remind the Azerbaijani military-political authorities that targeting religious worship sites and cultural monuments is war crime as enshrined in international humanitarian law, the responsibility for which has no statute of limitations,” it concluded.

Azerbaijan keeps attacking the peaceful population despite the agreement on ceasefire – MFA

Despite the agreement on a ceasefire for humanitarian purposes for the exchange of prisoners of war and bodies of the dead, reached in Moscow on 9-10 October 2020, with the mediation of the Russian Federation, the Azerbaijani army, being under the command and control of Turkey, continues its aggressive actions and shelling of the territory of the Republic of Artsakh, including attacks on peaceful population and civilian objects, Artsakh’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

“The humanitarian truce was broken by the Azerbaijani side just minutes after the announcement of a ceasefire by the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh. In parallel with the incessant rocket and artillery shelling, the Azerbaijani-Turkish forces are undertaking attacks in various parts of the front,” the Ministry said.

“As a result of the aggressive actions of the triple alliance of Turkey, Azerbaijan and international terrorists, including a sabotage attack in the direction of Hadrut after the announcement of the humanitarian truce, four civilians have been killed,” it added.

“The actual refusal by the Azerbaijani-Turkish forces to cease fire clearly indicates that Turkey, which has not achieved its goals and therefore is not interested in establishing a lasting peace in the region, seeks by all means to prevent the realization of the agreement on humanitarian truce with the mediation of the Russian Federation. Turkey does not leave attempts to achieve its expansionist geopolitical objectives in the South Caucasus through the hands of Azerbaijan and international terrorists,” the Ministry noted.

“At a time when one side, represented by Turkey, Azerbaijan and international terrorists, is strongly opposed to the establishment of peace, the international community must take decisive measures, including coercive measures, to restore peace in the region. An important step in this direction is also the international recognition of the independence of the Republic of Artsakh,” the Ministry concluded.

Armenia condemns deliberate targeting of journalists by Azerbaijani forces

The targeting of journalists on their professional duty is a deliberate act aimed at hindering the recording of the war crimes conducted by the Azerbaijani army and their presentation to the international community, Spokesperson for the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Anna Naghdalyan said in a statement.

The comments come after the armed forces of Azerbaijan once again shelled the Holy Savior Ghazanchetsots Cathedral located in the center of Shushi, as a result of which foreign journalists Yuri Kotyevnok, Levon Arzanov, as well as their guide Hrant Baladyan got injured while covering on the ground the consequences of the first bombardment of the same cathedral earlier today.

Naghdalyan wished a speedy recovery to the wounded journalists and strongly condemned this war crime conducted by Azerbaijan.

“At the same time, we call the attention of the whole international community, the human rights organizations and those advocating for freedom of speech to this fact of gross violation of the right to access to information,” the Spokesperson stated.
Azerbaijan has become hotbed of international terrorism in region’ – Armenian FM says in Moscow

Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan emphasizes the need to stop the military operations unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh, which, he said, are being carried out by Turkey’s direct interference and through armed terrorists brought from Syria and Libya to Azerbaijan.

During a press conference in Moscow, following the meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the Armenian FM said Azerbaijan has become a hotbed of international terrorism in the region.

“The situation has already become a serious security threat for the whole region. What our compatriots in Nagorno Karabakh have faced today is the embodiment of an existential threat. Since September 27 the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan is conducting a large-scale aggression against the people of Nagorno Karabakh, with this showing its goal – to solve the Nagorno Karabakh conflict with military means and eliminate the people of Artsakh. This aggression is different in a sense that Turkey is directly interfered, there are also armed terrorists in Azerbaijan from Syria and Libya which Turkey uses for the interests of its military-political leadership. Azerbaijan has become a hotbed of international terrorism in the region. Today we need to stop the military operations, and Russia’s role on the matter is quite important”, the Armenian FM said.

The Minister stated that Azerbaijan doesn’t implement the agreement reached during the talks of the Armenian, Russian and Azerbaijani FM on October 9, regarding the cessation of hostilities.

“Azerbaijan is not fulfilling its commitments on cessation of hostilities. With such genocidal steps Azerbaijan doesn’t put a difference between the military and the civilians. Moreover, it is more inclined to the targeting of the civilian population. During its military aggression Azerbaijan has targeted over 120 civilian settlements in Artsakh, including the capital Stepanakert, the city of Shushi, Hadrut, Martakert, Martuni towns. The absence of military facilities in the targeted civilian settlements once again carry and how much work awaits us in the future.”

Armenian Constitutional Court Chooses New Head

Armenia’s Constitutional Court elected its new chairman on October 12 more than three months after the passage of controversial constitutional amendments that led to the ouster of its previous head, Hrayer Tovmasyan.

Arman Dilanyan was backed by six of the court’s nine judges. “I will do everything to ensure that we have a Constitutional Court fully trusted by the people,” he told reporters.

The amendments passed by the Armenian parliament in June called for the gradual resignation of seven court justices who were locked in a standoff with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s political team. Three of them had to resign with immediate effect. The amendments also required

Tovmasyan to quit as court chairman but remain a judge.
Tovmasyan and the ousted judges consider their removal illegal and politically motivated. They have appealed to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to have them reinstated.
This did not stop the parliament controlled by Pashinyan’s My Step bloc from electing three new court judges last month. One of them, Yervand Khundkaryan, was the only candidate nominated for the post of court chairman later in September. Khundkaryan failed to get elected, however.
Dilanyan, who was appointed to the court in 2018, was the only candidate for the vacant position in the second Constitutional Court vote. He insisted as recently as two weeks ago that he does not want to succeed Tovmasyan as court chairman.

“I am still of the same opinion,” Dilanyan said on Monday. “As you can see, it’s not that I’m delighted with being elected Constitutional Court chairman because I can imagine how much responsibility [the post] carries and how much work awaits us in the future.”
**Artsakh’s Hadrut under full control of Defense Army – military**

Artsakh’s Hadrut city is under full control of the Defense Army of Artsakh, ARMENPRESS reports representative of the MoD Armenia Artsrun Hovhannisyan said in a press conference on October 12.

"The subversive-intelligence operations have been thwarted; the adversary has been repelled. Hadrut is under full control of Artsakh’s forces”, Hovhannisyan said.

He added that starting from early morning Azerbaijani armed forces resumed military operations.

"Azerbaijan did not implement and had no plans to implement the ceasefire agreement. The announcement of Azerbaijani leadership that they were ready to do that are a total lie", Hovhannisyan said.

Artsrun Hovhannisyan said that Azerbaijan resumed attacks in 3-4 directions. “Heavy artillery and combat UAVs were used in the direction of Martakert. Supported by the Turkish air forces, Azerbaijan carried out 36 combat flights, during which the Defense Army of Artsakh was able to down one SU-25 jet”, he said.

"Azerbaijan unleashed full-scale war against Artsakh on September 27, directly supported by Turkey and terrorist groups sent by Turkey to the conflict zone. Azerbaijani indiscriminately bombs cities and villages of Artsakh, killing and injuring numerous civilians, damaging infrastructures. So far Armenia has reported 525 military casualties. Azerbaijan keeps secret the number of casualties, but according to the Armenian side, Azerbaijan has suffered nearly 5000 casualties, including regular army servicemen and terrorists.

On October 10 Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan reached an agreement on humanitarian ceasefire in Moscow, but Azerbaijan started violation of the ceasefire immediately after it was declared. Particularly, it continued bombing cities and launching attacks in the north-eastern and southern directions of the front line. Right now fighting continues nearby Hadrut city of Artsakh.

The ICRC said they will not start any humanitarian mission until the ceasefire on Azerbaijan-Artsakh contact line is fully respected.

**CSTO could intervene in Karabakh conflict if Armenia gets attacked**

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) will provide military assistance to Armenia in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in the event of a real threat to its territorial integrity, or a direct military attack, CSTO Secretary General Stanislav Zas said.

He said the block will intervene in two cases. “The first is when real threats to security, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of any CSTO member state are created. Then it has the right to apply to the CSTO, the mechanism of interstate consultations, including emergency ones, is set in motion, and the necessary assistance or support is provided to this state at its request,” Zas told journalists on October 8.

“The second such case is in the case of aggression, that is, a military attack. This is considered an aggression against all our states, and in this case, at the request of our country, the object of aggression is immediately provided with all kinds of assistance, including military,” he explained.

Zas stressed that the CSTO charter provides for adequate measures to provide assistance to its participants in case of such a need. “Any CSTO member state has the right to count on help,” said the CSTO Secretary General.

Heavy fighting in the Karabakh conflict zone has been under way since September 27.

**Prime Minister meets with representatives of extra-parliamentary political forces**

The meeting was held behind the closed doors and Pashinyan made no public statements afterwards.

Pashinyan’s press office said he briefed them on diplomatic and other steps taken by the Armenian government in response to the “war unleashed by Azerbaijan with Turkey’s backing.” It said he also answered questions asked by the representatives of the HHK, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun), former President Levon Ter-Petrosyan’s Armenian National Congress and several other opposition parties not represented in the parliament.

“The representatives of the political forces presented their observations and proposals regarding the fight against the enemy and further actions,” the office added in a statement.

Participants of the meeting also gave few details.

“We made very clear what we think now,” Dashnaktsutyun’s Ishkhan Saghatelian told RFE/RL’s Armenian Service. “I just cannot publicize that given the martial law and things that cannot be disclosed at this point.”

Saghatelian said his party disagrees with Pashinyan’s Karabakh-related policy but declined to elaborate. “We have many concerns which we voiced in a very clear and direct way,” he said.

Pashinyan held a separate meeting on October 11 with senior lawmakers representing his My Step bloc and the two parliamentary opposition parties, Bright Armenia and Prosperous Armenia. Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan also attended it.

“It was an open conversation,” My Step’s Arman Yeghoyan said on Monday. “The prime minister answered all questions.”

“It’s a war and the situation is very difficult,” said Bright Armenia leader Edmon Marukyan. “The fate of our state and each of us is now being determined on the battlefield.”
Azerbaijan keeps targeting towns and villages in breach of agreement on ceasefire – Armenian FM

The Nagorno-Karabakh defense forces are absolutely resolute to continue their defense, Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said in an interview with Al Jazeera.

“They are defending this methodic, meticulous attack on the civilians, on the people of Nagorno-Karabakh,” he added.

The full text of the interview is provided below:

Question: We heard our correspondent Sinem telling us that an Azeri official is saying that it was clear the rockets that were fired in Ganja came from inside Armenia, and that Nagorno-Karabakh’s military officials have denied attacking the city. Is Armenia breaking the ceasefire?

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: That is a total lie that is coming out in batches from Baku. Armenia has not been doing that. And that has been rejected by the Ministry of Defense.

We have achieved an important statement yesterday night to establish a ceasefire for the humanitarian purposes and to start working on that. But a few hours later, in the early hours of the morning on Saturday, Azerbaijan has been continuing with its military operations in every direction, mostly in the south. Most appallingly, they have been continuously targeting and hitting the civilian settlements, towns and villages, the civilian infrastructure of Nagorno-Karabakh in a methodic way. This has been going on for the entire morning all the way to the afternoon. After 12 pm., when we were supposed to have the ceasefire established, these operations have been continuing on the Azerbaijani side. This is a premeditated attack on what we have been trying to achieve with this ceasefire.

Question: I want to clarify one thing with you sir. If Armenia is not responsible for the attacks on Ganja (another one happened on October 4), but if it is not responsible for this latest attack, who, do you think, did it?

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: The Nagorno-Karabakh defense forces are absolutely resolute to continue their defense, you have to understand. They are defending this methodic, meticulous attack on the civilians, on the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Question: Now, If I can understand you, let me interrupt you, because I really want to be clear on this. You are saying that these are not Armenian forces that are firing these missiles, these are forces from Nagorno-Karabakh, the defense forces there, who are defending Nagorno-Karabakh while the ceasefire is in place. Is that correct?

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: The ceasefire has been violated by Azerbaijani forces before 12 noon and specifically after 12 noon. They have been continuing their military operations and most appallingly they have been hitting the cities and towns. You must send your people to Stepanakert and to other towns and cities to register the way in which those towns and cities are raised to the ground, in which people have been spending two weeks in the shelters, in which there is a refugee flow, in which they are again doing what they have been doing in the 1990s — ethnic cleansing, erasing these people from the earth. That will not happen. Defense forces of Nagorno-Karabakh will continue to resolutely defend. And Armenia has been and remains a guarantor of their security.

Question: Armenia has been determined to bring in international support. It has been looking for support from foreign countries. Would that be easier to get if Armenia decided to stop any breach of the ceasefire and lay down its weapons to allow the humanitarian ceasefire to go ahead and exchange of prisoners and the exchange of bodies to go ahead?

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: Don’t shift the blame on Armenia or Nagorno-Karabakh. Nagorno-Karabakh is faithful. We have negotiated this statement in good faith. The Nagorno-Karabakh government, the president has absolutely, unequivocally supported the ceasefire. This is a very important function for the very minimum to do – the humanitarian function of this. There are many serious humanitarian issues that have to be resolved immediately. The return of the bodies, the return of the prisoners of war that has to be done. The ICRC is involved. The Armenian sides – Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia – are absolutely interested in that. And we have been in good faith with the ceasefire.

Question: To allow the process of the humanitarian work to go ahead, our correspondent Bernard Smith was telling us that no date had yet been said for that to begin because it was dependent on there being a ceasefire. Is there a way that Armenia can bring pressure on whoever it is that is firing rockets into Azerbaijan to stop doing that so that the humanitarian action can take place?

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: I am coming back to the same question: Armenia is faithful to its commitment; Nagorno-Karabakh is faithful to its commitment. I am just repeating myself again in a very unequivocal way: since morning yesterday, all the way to the very-very late hours of the night, Azerbaijan has been shelling, targeting Stepanakert and other towns and villages. They have inflicted enormous damage to the civilians, to the civilian infrastructure all over day, when the ceasefire was expired. They don’t apparently understand what the ceasefire is about. Ceasefire does not mandate them to kill civilians and to hit civilian settlements. That’s what was happening after 12 pm. Let’s be very clear about it.

This once again brings in a very important question: verification mechanisms. We want the ceasefire, we want verification mechanisms on the ground, which will indicate the perpetrator, which will demonstrate the party, which is not faithful to this ceasefire. We have been saying this for a long time and I repeat this again.
Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met with the heads of foreign diplomatic missions and international organizations accredited in the Republic of Armenia.

The Prime Minister gave details of the hostilities launched by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh, highlighting Turkey’s direct involvement in it.

Prime Minister Pashinyan’s full remarks are provided below:

“Good afternoon, dear Colleagues. Understandably, the occasion for our meeting today is the war happening in Artsakh, and I consider it very important to acknowledge a few facts at this stage.

First of all, it is Azerbaijan which attacked in the direction of Nagorno-Karabakh, despite the principle that use of force or the threat of force is unacceptable in the context of the resolution of the Karabakh issue, even though it is one of the internationally recognized principles viewed as a basis for resolution of the conflict.

Next, it is obvious this war would not begin had there not been full readiness shown by and full engagement of Turkey. I would like to draw everyone’s attention to the fact that the hostilities began as a continuation of the Turkish-Azerbaijani joined military exercise. And that Turkey’s engagement in and encouragements of the war, I believe, is public, it is happening publicly, although there were Turkish officials who posted in the social media, as I was informed, they later deleted some of their posts. But it is quite obvious and I think that is backed by not only the evidence which we have shared with our colleagues. It is also proven by public statements to date: Turkey continues to remain engaged in the hostilities, in the fighting.

Thirdly, Turkey in Syria recruited mercenaries and members of terrorists groups, using its own air transport. A hundred years later, why is Turkey in the South Caucasus? Why has it come to the South Caucasus? It is our assessment that Turkey has come to the South Caucasus to continue the policy of Genocide of the Armenian people. I want to emphasize once again—the purpose of that policy is not emotional or one in the context of historical retaliation. It is a very practical one.

It is quite obvious to me that this is a part of Turkey’s expansionist policies, because the Armenians in the South Caucasus are the last remaining obstacle on Turkey’s path towards the East, the North and the South-East. And at least to me, it is quite obvious that what is happening must be viewed in the context of what is happening in the Mediterranean, in Syria, in Iraq, as well as the relationship with Greece, with Cyprus. It is a part of the context of Turkey’s policies in the mentioned areas. This is clearly a policy of reinstating the Turkish Empire.

The hostilities and their nature once again have demonstrated that the Armenian people, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh are facing an existential threat, and the policy of shelling towns and villages in Nagorno-Karabakh is compared to the hate policy which for fifteen years has been promoted in Azerbaijan.

It becomes obvious that Azerbaijan’s official political objective is to annihilate the Armenians, at least in Nagorno-Karabakh. And I think the most important symbol of this is the Ramil Safarov case, which I hope all of you know details of, so I will spare you the details of that case.

In the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, we are very close to a humanitarian crisis or perhaps we are already facing a humanitarian crisis. Our assessment is that this humanitarian crisis can be prevented in only one effective way: if the international community officially acknowledges the aforementioned facts and eventually recognizes the right of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination, to the point of even recognizing the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh.

I wish also to turn to the Azerbaijani side’s claims that the Armenian side is allegedly targeting civilian infrastructure in Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination, to the point of even recognizing the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh.

I wish also to turn to the Azerbaijani side’s claims that the Armenian side is allegedly targeting civilians in Azerbaijan, etc.

The Defense Army of Nagorno-Karabakh took any decision to act in the direction of any town or village after it became obvious that it was impossible in any other way to stop the rocket attacks on Stepanakert and on other towns and vil-
Let us watch a video which shows what attacks had been launched since the beginning of the war on Stepanakert, the capital city of Nagorno-Karabakh. But before turning to the video, I would like to highlight a fact that you all may be aware of: that is, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin made a public appeal, after which the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia took part in the adoption of the statement on ceasefire. But the ceasefire has not so far been respected by Azerbaijan.

The ceasefire was supposed to enter into effect at noon, 12 o’clock p.m., but before the de jure entry into force of the ceasefire agreement up to the point, there were intensive hostilities by Azerbaijan which is contrary to the logic of the ceasefire agreement. At 12:05, Azerbaijan started an attack, an offensive on the territory of the Autonomous District of Nagorno-Karabakh and attempted to conquer the town of Hadrut. Right now, there are military operations in the vicinity of Hadrut. The situation is tense, especially in the southern segment; we actually didn’t manage to achieve a ceasefire, although the Armenian side is ready to comply with the ceasefire.

We signed to conform to our intention, and we are committed to our intention – point one, point two – on the ceasefire, on humanitarian actions, and on the start of negotiations with the unchanged format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs.”

During the meeting, the heads of foreign diplomatic missions and international organizations were shown a video on the military operations carried out by Azerbaijan against peaceful settlements and civilian infrastructure in Nagorno-Karabakh.

After watching the video footages, the Armenian Prime Minister called the attendees’ attention to the fact that the video featured neither military infrastructure nor any military personnel on the ground, which evidences that this was a clearly deliberate strike against peaceful settlements and civilian infrastructure.

“My assessment is unequivocal: The Armenians are trying to quell the threat of genocide faced in this war,” Nikol Pashinyan said.

The Premier thanked RF President Vladimir Putin and French President Emmanuel Macron as the leaders of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairing nations who are making every effort to halt violence. Nikol Pashinyan also thanked the U.S. administration and President Donald Trump for urging an end to hostilities.

“We expect the co-chairing nations to continue their efforts. We are prepared to be constructive in this process. But we think that the resumption of the negotiation process should take place in accordance with the logic formulated in the Moscow statement,” Nikol Pashinyan emphasized.

The Prime Minister also thanked German Chancellor Angela Merkel, President of the European Council Charles Michel, Austria’s Chancellor, and the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with whom he had a telephone conversation and exchanged views on the situation.

The Premier highly valued the positions expressed by the Prime Ministers of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus during the EAEU Intergovernmental Council meeting, which was held in Yerevan on October 9. He hailed the fact of their coming to Yerevan and attending the scheduled meeting in this difficult situation.

In conclusion, Nikol Pashinyan thanked all our partners who have shown keen interest in establishing peace and stability in the region.

Funds raised by Hayastan Fund exceed $100 million

As of October 12, more than $100 million has been raised within the framework of the “We Are Our Borders” fundraising campaign initiated by the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund.

As a result of the nationwide unique mobilization, hundreds of donations are made every minute on the Fund’s website.

Below are the ways to make a donation:
- You can join the Foundation’s online fundraising campaign at www.himnadram.org, as well as by making international transfers through the accounts listed on the website
- Donate 1,000 AMD by sending an SMS to 8000 short number, which is valid for the subscribers of all operators in Armenia
- Via TelCell, EasyPay, iDram, ACBA-Credit Agricole Bank online, ACBA-Credit Agricole Bank online systems
- Paypal to info@armeniamfund.org payment address.

French doctors to head for Artsakh to help the wounded

A team of French doctors has arrived in Armenia. The medical team will head for Artsakh to help the servicemen and civilians wounded during the war with Azerbaijan. The team has worked in different military zones and has a huge experience of humanitarian mission.
Turkey is now the decision-maker in Azerbaijan – Armenian PM

The Armenians in the South Caucasus are the last impediment on Turkey’s way to expanding its imperial policy, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in an interview with the German Der Spiegel. The full text of the interview is presented below:

Der Spiegel – Mr. Prime Minister, you have just returned from Nagorno-Karabakh. What is the situation up there? What did you see in Stepanakert?

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – I saw a town under heavy shelling with apartment buildings and civilian infrastructure targeted by rocket-propelled grenade launchers. I believe that while delivering such strikes the Azeries are well aware that they are targeting houses, civil infrastructure, schools, kindergartens, but that would not stop them at all, and no wonder as it is now an internationally established fact that cross-border terrorist group members are involved in this war as allies of Azerbaijan’s armed forces. Turkey is transporting them to Azerbaijan. This is the complete picture of the situation at hand.

Der Spiegel – How did this war start for you personally? The attack began on Sunday, September 27, at 08:00 a.m.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – The President of the Artsakh Republic called me and said that an offensive had been launched. After that, I called the Chief of General Staff of Armenia’s Armed Forces to verify the information. He confirmed the information. After that, we convened a meeting of the Security Council and declared martial law and nationwide mobilization in the country, because we predicted not without good reason that there was an immediate threat of attack against the Republic of Armenia. In the following days we witnessed that settlements came under shelling and bombing in Armenia; we had casualties among the civilian population. Enemy drones flew over Yerevan and nearby cities.

Der Spiegel – There were clashes and shootings in Karabakh and on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border in 2016, 2018, July 2020. But this time the clashes are much more intense than the ones we witnessed for the past few decades. Why?

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – Yes, you are right. Our military experts say that such a large-scale war with the use of so many troops, equipment and weapons had not been seen anywhere in the 21st century or at least had not happened frequently.

Der Spiegel – Could you please clarify? Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – Turkey is back to the South Caucasus after a break of 100 years to continue its policy of genocide. You know that in 1915, during the rule of the Young Turks, the first genocide of the 20th century was committed in the Ottoman Empire, which claimed the lives of 1.5 million Armenians. But emotions or hatred towards Armenians is not the only objective behind this genocidal policy.

The Armenians in the South Caucasus are the last impediment on Turkey’s way to expanding its imperial policy. We must look at it in the context of the general policy pursued by Turkey in the Mediterranean region. This policy implies use of terrorists and mercenaries.

The international community, especially Europe, must take this fact very seriously. If Europe fails to do so, you will have to meet Turkey in Vienna.

Der Spiegel – You are in fact claiming that Turkey is not interested in Nagorno-Karabakh, but that Turkey wants to create a corridor through Armenian territory.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – Yes. And we see that the Azerbaijani statehood is being absorbed by Turkey. Azerbaijan has no longer control of its destiny; Turkey is now the decision-maker in Azerbaijan.

Der Spiegel – The Azerbaijani army is basically advancing to the south along the border with Iran. Almost every day, President Aliyev is announcing the capture of settlements over there. Why do you not just leave those villages to them? That area is not populated. Roughly speaking, it does not belong to Nagorno-Karabakh; it is located within the security zone, which was formed by the Armenians around the disputed area many years ago.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – I think it is too early for Azerbaijan to make such statements. The Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army is implementing anti-terrorist operations, and it still remains to see what is happening on the ground.

The safety zone was not just set up for a whim. It was meant to protect the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, keeping their towns and villages safe from shelling and bombing. Today’s events show that the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, as they were, continue to face an existential threat from Azerbaijan.

Der Spiegel – Have you applied to Russia for military assistance?

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – Armenia, Russia are allies in the field of security; we are bound by specific contractual relations. I am convinced that Russia will honor its commitments in appropriate situations.

Der Spiegel – You mean when there is an attack on the territory of Armenia?

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – It is subject to some estimates: I mean the size and the potential of the threat. We have a developed set of contractual mechanisms. You may know that the 102nd Russian military base is located in Armenia. Russian border troops are guarding Armenia’s borders with Turkey and Iran.

Der Spiegel – According to Kremlin’s press service, Vladimir Putin did not even call the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – I cannot comment on that, I can only say that self-serving calls are almost never made on such a high level. The Head of Russia’s foreign intelligence service officially stated that Turkey-backed international terrorist groups are fighting against Karabakh and Armenia. Russia is not the first country to mention or at least hint at it. France and Iran spoke about it, too. This is a war between different civilizations in some sense; Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh are in fact at the forefront of a civilization-driven standoff. We are fighting against Turkey’s expansionist policy and international terrorism.

Der Spiegel – Do you see the possibility of a compromise, for example, the return of part of the security zone?

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan – It is not up to me to return land; the Government of Nagorno-Karabakh is the one to decide on the matter. And if so, who will guarantee the security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh?
Deliberate destruction of cultural and religious sites characteristic of terrorist organizations – Artsakh MFA

The Artsakh Defense Ministry has strongly condemned the attack by the Azerbaijani armed forces on the Armenian Church of the Holy All-Savior (Ghazanchetsots), located in the city of Shushi of the Republic of Artsakh.

“We remind the Azerbaijani side that making historic monuments, works of art or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples the object of attack manifests serious violation of both treaty and customary international humanitarian law, and destruction of cultural monuments as part of the conduct of hostilities constitutes a war crime,” the Ministry said.

“The deliberate destruction of historical, cultural and religious sites is a characteristic and notorious signature of international terrorist organizations. Suffice it to recall the destruction of the Buddha statues of Bamyan by the Taliban, as well as the destruction of the Monumental Arch in Palmyra and the Armenian Church of Holy Martyrs in Deir ez-Zor by ISIS fighters in Syria,” it added.

“The attack on the Church of the Holy All-Savior in the city of Shushi demonstrates that the criminal triple alliance of Azerbaijan, Turkey and terrorist organizations, which unleashed an aggression against the Republic of Artsakh, are united not only by common goals, but also by a common system of values and criminal methods of warfare,” the statement reads. “We reiterate, that the preservation of the cultural heritage is of great importance for all peoples of the world and damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind. Along with adoption of numerous international conventions on the protection of cultural and historical heritage, the issue was also addressed at the level of the UN Security Council, which in its Resolution (No. 2347) on the inadmissibility of destruction of cultural property in the event of armed conflicts, notably by terrorist groups, called on all States to make collective and coordinated efforts to combat such practices,” the Foreign Ministry stated.

It once again emphasized that under the circumstances of Azerbaijan’s open denial of the principles of humanity and universal values, the international recognition of the independence of the Republic of Artsakh is the most effective way to ensure the security of the people of Artsakh, the realization of their fundamental rights and the preservation of Artsakh’s cultural heritage.
We are prepared to recognize Artsakh, Rep. Schiff tells Armenia’s Ambassador

The United States should make clear to Azerbaijan and Turkey that if they persist in this violence instead of embracing a peaceful settlement of the conflict, we are prepared to recognize the Republic of Artsakh as an independent nation, Rep. Adam Schiff said during a conversation with Armenia’s Ambassador to the US Varuzhan Nersisyan today.

The two discussed Azerbaijan’s ongoing military campaign, aided and abetted by Turkey and the foreign fighters it is bringing in from Syria, and which has killed hundreds and displaced up to half of the civilian population of Artsakh. They also discussed Azerbaijan’s deliberate bombing of a historic Armenian Church, the Ghazanchetsots Cathedral, in the city of Shushi.

“For decades, through the OSCE Minsk Group, the United States has supported a peaceful, democratic, and negotiated resolution to the dispute surrounding Nagorno Karabakh. We have persisted in this policy even as Azerbaijan launched countless assaults and as their leadership frequently threatened war to redraw the line of contact by force,” Schiff said in a statement.

“Today, it appears that Azerbaijan and Turkey are determined to make good on those threats, and our policy must adjust accordingly. I believe the United States should make clear to Azerbaijan and Turkey that if they persist in this violence instead of embracing a peaceful settlement of the conflict, we are prepared to recognize the Republic of Artsakh as an independent nation, and to work with the International Community to achieve the same,” he added.

“Presidents Aliyev and Erdogan must understand that they cannot resolve a decades long border dispute though the indiscriminate use of force against civilians, and the United States will not stand idly by as they attempt to do so. The only resolution of this dispute can be through negotiations, not raining artillery and bombs on Armenian civilians,” said Schiff.

Facebook removes 589 Azerbaijani accounts, 7,906 Pages involved in coordinated inauthentic behavior

Facebook has removed 589 Facebook accounts, 7,906 Pages and 447 accounts on Instagram that were involved in coordinated inauthentic behavior. This network originated in Azerbaijan and focused primarily on domestic audiences.

While the individuals behind this activity used fake accounts — some of which had been already detected and disabled by our automated systems, they primarily relied on authentic accounts to create Pages designed to look like user profiles — using false names and stock images — to comment and artificially boost the popularity of particular pro-government content. This network appeared to engage individuals in Azerbaijan to manage Pages with the sole purpose of leaving supportive and critical commentary on Pages of international and local media, public figures including opposition and the ruling party of Azerbaijan, to create a perception of widespread criticism of some views and widespread support of others.

“From what we’ve seen, it appears that most of the engagement these comments received were from within this network of Pages themselves. Our analysis shows that these comments were posted in what appears to be regular shifts during working hours in Azerbaijan on weekdays,” Facebook said.

This network posted primarily in Azerbaijani, and also in Russian and English. Their comments frequently touched on local and regional news and events, politics, government policies, tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Armenia’s actions during past escalations in Nagorno-Karabakh, praise of President Ilham Aliyev and the New Azerbaijani Party, criticism of the opposition party and leaders accusing them of treason, and denials of human rights abuse allegations in Azerbaijan.

“We identified this network through an internal investigation into suspected fake engagement activity in the region. Our investigation linked this activity to the Youth Union of New Azerbaijani Party,” Facebook stated.
Kim Kardashian uses star power to pressure US on Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict – The Hill

Reality television star and criminal justice reform advocate Kim Kardashian West is pushing for President Trump to do more to support Armenia amid an outbreak of fierce fighting with its neighbor and decades-old adversary Azerbaijan, The Hill writes.

The influential celebrity, who is of Armenian descent, is broadcasting to her hundreds of millions of social media followers to demand Congress condemn Azerbaijan as the instigator of the recent fighting and denounce Turkey for interfering in the conflict.

Kardashian West, who has a direct line to Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner, has the potential to push the administration to take a more active stance.

Behind her efforts is the L.A.-based gastroenterologist, Emmy-nominated film producer and human rights advocate Eric Esrailian, who has been drafting statements for Kardashian West, her famous family members and other high-profile celebrities of Armenian descent calling for more support to Yerevan, the capital of Armenia.

“The situation currently with a lack of appropriate international attention is frustrating for a lot of people,” Esrailian, who was a producer on the 2017 film “The Promise,” about the Armenian genocide, said in an interview with The Hill.

“What I’ve done with my friends, like Kim Kardashian, her family, her siblings, and other friends like Cher, Serj Tankian, Alexis Ohanian, all of us — obviously they have a bigger platform than I do, but I have the ability to pull everybody together … and I feel honored that everybody cares and they basically say, ‘what can I do?’ “

“I would not ask all of my friends, in all of our positions, to use the language that we’ve been using if there was even a one percent chance that Armenia had started these hostilities,” said Esrailian, who is leading the celebrity advocacy campaign.

One social media post by Kardashian West called on the public to urge Congress and the White House to pressure Baku to cease hostilities, cut off all U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan being used against Armenians and warn Turkey to stop sending arms and fighters to Baku.

Kardashian West’s position on this issue lends a highly influential voice. On Sept. 29 she shared on social media a link to the advocacy group the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), nearly overloading their systems.

“We may operate on any given day in the tens of thousands, or maybe hundreds of thousands [of web visitors],” said Aram Hamparian, the executive director of ANCA. “But she had us into the tens of hundreds of millions, it was a good problem.”

By Oct. 1, bipartisan House lawmakers had introduced a resolution condemning Azerbaijan for the aggression of hostilities and denouncing Turkey’s interference.

The resolution was accompanied by a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo from House lawmakers that condemned Azerbaijan as the aggressor and called for leveraging U.S. military aid to Baku to achieve a cease-fire.

Kardashian West’s relationship with Trump and Kushner goes back to 2018 when she successfully lobbied the president to commute the sentence of Alice Johnson, a mother and grandmother who was serving a life sentence for a first-time, nonviolent drug offense.

It’s unclear if Kardashian West has been in direct contact with the White House recently over the issue with Armenia and Azerbaijan. The White House did not respond to a request for comment from The Hill.

A representative for Kardashian West said the star would continue to post her comments and messaging about the situation in Armenia on social media.

“Allowing people to behave with impunity, particularly committing human rights violations attacking civilians, using cluster munitions, using foreign mercenaries, there’s a lot of things at play,” Esrailian said.

“We’re just getting started. If this doesn’t resolve quickly then I guarantee we’re going to make it a world story,” he added.
Turkey with dictator Erdoğan threat for Armenia, Israel Charny distressed by his country’s ugly role

Executive-Director of Jerusalem’s Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, Co-founder and former Chairman of the International Association of Genocide Scholars Israel Charny is confident that the majority of Israelis stand with Armenia and is distressed by the ugly role of his country for selling arms to Azerbaijan. Israel Charny gave an interview for ARMENPRESS.

‘Hello and thank you for your questions. My reply today is unfortunately a sad one. Our intellectual community and especially genocide scholars have taken a clear public stand. See for example Haaretz of two days ago for our statement calling on Israel to CEASE sales of arms to Azerbaijan. However, in the present chaotic and corrupt state of government in Israel, the normal lines of good influence we had at times in the past are shut down, and we are not genuinely hopeful we can influence this irresponsible and destructive government. For example, in the past we have had considerable support from our now President Rivlin who is strongly on the side of recognition of the Armenian Genocide, but paradoxically in his illustrious position as president has less influence on the political process than he had as Speaker of the Knesset.

Turkey under the dictator Erdogan, is clearly a SERIOUS threat to the Armenian people and in my judgment also to Israel whom he threatens ominously with his rhetoric about Jerusalem (and who continues his evil persecution of the Kurds in Syria--for he is clearly a killer).

I should like to hope and believe that Israel will yet correct itself. I have no doubt that the natural majority of Israelis are with Armenia and deeply distressed by our ugly role in not limiting any arms sold to Azerbaijan from being used in any way against Armenia”, he said in answer to the questions of ARMENPRESS.

Armenian officials have voiced several times about the use of Israeli-made UAVs and long-range missiles by Azerbaijan, including against civilians. Armenia has recalled its Ambassador from Israel for consultations amid the ongoing arms sales by Israel to Azerbaijan.

EU calls on all actors, including external parties, to refrain from any actions that may lead to further casualties in Karabakh

The EU has welcomed the agreement reached on 10 October on a humanitarian ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The EU urges the sides to strictly abide by this agreement and calls on all actors, including external parties, to refrain from any actions that may lead to further casualties. “In this respect, we note with extreme concern the reports of continued military activities, including against civilian targets, as well as civilian casualties and urge the sides to ensure full respect of the agreement on the ground,” High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell said in a statement.

“The EU calls upon the sides to engage in substantive negotiations without delay under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, without preconditions and on the basis of the agreed upon principles,” he said.

The EU continues to support the work of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs in seeking a negotiated political solution to the conflict and will remain engaged in efforts towards lasting peace in the region.
Images of Artsakh projected on Turkish Consulate building in Los Angeles

Images of Artsakh were displayed on the building of the Turkish Consulate in Los Angeles, as hundreds of thousand protested the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression against Artsakh.

The Los Angeles Police Department’s Wilshire Station estimated that the number of demonstrators reached 100,000.

Since fighting broke out in the region Sept. 27, thousands of Armenian Americans and supporters have taken to the streets of Los Angeles to protest the hostilities more than 7,000 miles away, blocking major freeways and demanding that politicians back their cause. Some have left to fight on the front for their homeland or aid in the humanitarian side of the war effort.

The demonstrators have focused their opposition on Turkey, which has expressed support for Azerbaijan, in part because of the two nations’ strong ethnic ties.

It is time for the United States to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state – Rep. Schiff

America should stand with the fledgling democracy in Stepanakert, not with the autocratic Aliyev regime, Congressman Adam Schiff said, addressing a pro-Armenian rally in Los Angeles.

“In the weeks since the first Azerbaijani bombs fell on the people of Artsakh, hundreds have been killed or injured and thousands have been displaced from their homes, sleeping out in the open for fear of drones or artillery or bombs,” Rep. Schiff said.

“Historic churches and cities have been bombarded and destroyed. Militants from Syria have been deployed as a mercenary fighting force by Azerbaijan and its Turkish sponsors,” he added.

“Despite this illegal war, the people of Artsakh are still standing. The people of Armenia are still standing. And we will continue to stand with them,” he stated.

According to Rep. Schiff, this war did not happen overnight. “It is the result of a corrupt regime in Baku offering its people a violent ethno-nationalism instead of peace, prosperity and freedom, which they cannot deliver.”

“But it is also the result of United States’ policy towards Azerbaijan and Turkey that has failed spectacularly. For too long, the United States has espoused a false equivalency between Azerbaijan, as it launches attack after attack, and Armenia and Artsakh, as they defend their lives and homes,” the Congressman said.

“Presidents Aliyev and Erdogan must understand that they cannot resolve a decades-long dispute through the indiscriminate use of force against civilians, and the United States must not stand idly by as they attempt to do so,” he added.

“The only resolution of this dispute can be through negotiations, not raining artillery and bombs on Armenian civilians. America should stand with the fledgling democracy in Stepanakert, not with the autocratic Aliyev regime. And if Turkey and Azerbaijan are not interested in negotiating the issues involving Artsakh, it is time for the United States to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state,” Rep. Schiff stated.
Israeli High Court rejects ban on arms sales to Azerbaijan as lacking evidence

The High Court of Justice on October 12 rejected a petition to ban arms sales to Azerbaijan as lacking evidence to justify a hearing on whether they have been used for war crimes against Armenia, The Jerusalem Post reports.

Human-rights lawyer Itay Mack is quoted as saying that he was calling on Israel to cease arms sales to Azerbaijan as a moral matter, but he lacked sufficient evidence to file a petition.

It was filed by activist Elie Joseph, who has been on hunger strike over the issue.

Joseph presented news reports that 60% of Azerbaijan arms come from Israel and evidence of a potential airlift of weapons to Azerbaijan days before its current conflict with Armenia erupted.

He also presented news reports and a report by Amnesty International with evidence that Azerbaijan is using Israeli drones to kill Armenians.

Mack said even if he did not think there was enough evidence to go to the High Court, he appealed directly to the government to cease any sales to Azerbaijan based on more general evidence from Azerbaijani officials.

 Volunteer militia units to be involved in the defense of Artsakh Republic

Artsakh’s President Arayik Harutyunyan has signed the draft bill amending the Law on Defense of the Republic of Artsakh, which was unanimously adopted by the Parliament today.

“Arayik Harutyunyan said: “The need for the adoption of the law stems from the current war situation, and aims to further strengthen the protection of our borders together with the Defense Army. Both Turkey and thousands of mercenary terrorists are taking part in the war unleashed against us by the enemy,””

It was submitted to the National Assembly on the President’s initiative and will regulate the participation of the volunteer militia units in the active defense of the Republic.

“Arayik Harutyunyan said: “At this crucial moment of the war for our homeland, I once again call on our people to unite and make every effort to achieve a final victory. The participation of each individual is crucial to breaking the Azerbaijani backbone and pushing them back beyond our borders,””

“Make no mistake about it: We will win! we will ensure a future for the next generations in peace and security in our homeland. Let’s get to work,” he added.
The Noyan Tapan Highlights www.nt.am 4 February #4 (1225)

In Armenia. They and Der Rustamyan, Arsen Hambardzumyan, are the new top decision-making holders -- have not been reappointed.

The reappointed Defense Minister Davit Toomajian, Servaaz, said that there has long been accepted format for the OSCE Minsk Group has been effective in ensuring stability and peace in the region, but added that the intergovernmental “Intergovernmental” team could only deal with bilateral issues.

The Armenian Prime Minister stressed the importance of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship as the only entity having the international mandate to deal with this issue.

“Your visit to Armenia became an important milestone for the development of Armenian-German cooperation. I can state with joy and pride that we are striving to lay the foundation for a more profound and targeted cooperation with Germany as one of the most significant development of Armenian-German cooperation. I can state with joy and pride that we are striving to lay the foundation for a more profound and targeted cooperation with Germany as one of the most significant developments of Armenian-German relations. The interlocutors next referred to the liberalization of the visa regime.

The interlocutors discussed a wide range of issues on the agenda of the two countries, including the implementation of economic programs, environmental protection and other areas, as well as the prospects for new initiatives. Both sides emphasized that the implementation of such programs might help strengthen ties between the two friendly nations.

The government is now set to implement an economic development of Armenian-German cooperation. I can state with joy and pride that we are striving to lay the foundation for a more profound and targeted cooperation with Germany as one of the most significant developments of Armenian-German relations.
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