

Russia appeals for Azeri and Armenian forces to call halt to conflict over region



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia was monitoring the events and asked Azeri and ethnic Armenian forces to respect the ceasefire. Photo: Kremlin Pool/AP

Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces yesterday accused each other of launching new attacks in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, increasing strains on a two-day-old humanitarian ceasefire intended to end heavy fighting over the mountain enclave.

Russia appealed for both sides to respect it and Luxembourg reiterated EU calls for Turkey to do more to secure an end to hostilities that have killed hundreds of people.

The fighting, the deadliest over Nagorno-Karabakh in over 25 years, is being watched closely abroad.

The humanitarian ceasefire is meant to allow ethnic Armenian forces and Azerbaijan to swap prisoners and bodies of people killed in two weeks of fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but governed and populated by ethnic Armenians.

But the ceasefire has frayed quickly. Azerbaijan said on Sunday it launched airstrikes against an Armenian regiment, following what it said was an Armenian rocket attack on an apartment building.

Yesterday, Azerbaijan's defense ministry said Armenian forces had tried to attack its positions around the Aghdere-Aghdam and Fizuli-Jabrail regions.

Nagorno-Karabakh said its forces had inflicted losses on Azeri forces and that large-scale military operations were continuing.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia was monitoring the events and asked Azeri and ethnic Armenian forces to respect the ceasefire.

Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Armenia's foreign minister, met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Moscow. He accused Azerbaijan of acting to expand Turkey's influence in the region.

Accusing Azerbaijan of ceasefire violations, Mr. Mnatsakanyan said: "We want verification mechanisms on the ground, which will demonstrate the party that is not faithful to this ceasefire."

Luxembourg's foreign minister, Jean Asselborn, urged Turkey to do more to end the conflict.

"Turkey has not called for a truce yet, and I believe they are totally wrong with this position," Mr. Asselborn said.

Source:

<https://www.independent.ie/world-news/europe/russia-appeals-for-azeri-and-armenian-forces-to-call-halt-to-conflict-over-region-39617103.html>

[Disclaimer]