



Statement

Of the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center

On the targeting of civilian population and objects

during the clashes between Azerbaijanian and Armenian armed forces.

On September 27, new clashes broke out in the line of contact in the Nagorno Karabakh and surrounding territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenian armed forces after the ceasefire was violated. Notably, the current clashes are first of its kind for its insensitivity and the long period of continuation since the ceasefire sides reached in 1994 and already cost thousands of personnel and damages to civilians.

Despite the military operations take place in Nagorno Karabakh and surrounding areas, Armenian armed forces target the civilian people and objects in districts out of the line of contact with more than 300 artillery and missile attacks.

According to official numbers, Armenian armed forces targeted civilian objects and population in more than 20 districts of Azerbaijan using heavy artillery strikes, missiles and large-calibre machine guns. As a result, 69 civilians died, 322 people wounded whereas 2430 residential building and homes alongside 415 civilian objects have been damaged and rendered useless.

EMDS strongly condemns the Armenian armed forces for targeting the civilian settlements outside the conflict zone and regards the attacks as a gross violation of the principles of inadmissibility of targeting non-military, civilian objects in the international humanitarian law. Based on expert reviews, EMDS, regretfully notes that Armenian armed forces targeted densely populated civilian settlement by using banned cluster munitions and ballistic missiles and other weapons with insufficient precision.

EMDS reiterates that the usage of weapons with insufficient precision for hitting the target in areas where civilians are populated is a gross violation of the principles of distinction, proportionality and the rule of precautions in attacks of the international humanitarian law.

EMDS is concerned of the potential risk of the humanitarian disaster in the case of displacement of thousands of people due to the more than 300 attacks to the civilian settlements and deems it necessary for professional human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International among others to assess the developments. Thus, EMDS appreciates the move by the Government of Azerbaijan to invite the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, among others, to the country to deploy fact-finding missions on the ground.

EMDS notes that it will be participating in the efforts alongside local human rights activists in the assisting the people whose human rights have been violated due to the attacks of Armenian armed forces on the preparation of applications to the European Court of Human Rights.

Lastly, EMDS restates that the Nagorno Karabakh and 7 adjacent districts have been occupied due to the military aggression of the Armenian military groups in 1992-4 which caused the forced displacement of more than 600 thousand locals and the relevant 4 resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations in 1993 on the conflict have not been executed since.

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