

Agreed on Armistice in Nagorno Karabakh? Brokered by Moscow

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Since Azerbaijan forces attacked Armenian ones in Nagorno Karabakh (NK below) on September 27, both sides breached agreed on ceasefires three times.

Is this time different?

According to Russia's Izvestia on November 10, "Moscow has brokered an armistice in" the enclave "to end the hostilities."

Russian, Armenian and Azeri leaders "signed a statement declaring a complete ceasefire in the unrecognized republic starting at midnight Moscow time on November 10."

They agreed to hold their current positions. Armenia will return Azeri territory to Baku.

Yerevan will maintain control over the Lachin corridor that connects Armenia to NK.

Russian peacekeepers on their way to the enclave will be guarantors of the armistice agreement — to be headquartered at a "peacekeeping center."

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees will be involved to help displaced enclave residents return home.

According to Russia's Defense Ministry, 1,960 peacekeepers and 470 pieces of equipment were sent to NK.

Military historian **Dmitry Boltenkov** said the following:

"From the military standpoint, the conflict has ended with a resounding victory for Azerbaijan," adding:

"The country has regained the areas it lost 25 years ago, including those it did not have the time to retake during military activities."

"It has also received transport corridors, including the most important one, the route leading to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic."

"Azerbaijani troops will remain in the Nagorno-Karabkh region, particularly in the city of Shushi located a dozen kilometers from the capital Stepanakert."

"Now only Russian peacekeepers will guarantee the existence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic."

"It will be Russian border guards who will ensure the safety of transport

corridors. As a result, our country's influence in the region will grow."

Armenian **Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan** said he "signed a statement with the presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan on ending the Karabakh war..."

"The text of the published statement is inexpressibly sensitive for me personally and for our people."

"I made the decision after a deep analysis of the military situation and the assessment by people who know it better than anyone, what he called "a very and very hard decision."

"This step is based on a conviction that this is the best possible solution in the current situation."

He'll have more to say on the agreement in the coming days, adding:

"This is not victory, but there won't be a defeat unless you recognize yourself as a loser."

"We will never recognize ourselves as losers and this should usher in our era of national unification and revival."

Both warring sides agreed that Russian peacekeepers will remain in the enclave for five years, another five-year period to follow unless Yerevan or Baku objects six months prior to the expiration of the current deployment.

Yerevan and Baku agreed to exchange prisoners and return bodies of dead soldiers and civilians.

After weeks of heavy fighting, both sides likely sustaining significant loss of lives and equipment, along with destruction in areas of conflict, perhaps their leadership wants resolution at this time even if issues between both sides remain unresolved.

Before conflict erupted, Turkey provided arms to Azerbaijan and trained its forces.

President Erdogan also sent jihadists to aid Azeri forces on the ground.

He'll likely want a say on what happens going forward — perhaps an arrangement similar to what he and Putin agreed to in Syria that was far less than ideal.

According to Putin spokesman **Dmitry Peskov**, the armistice agreement includes nothing about involving Turkish peacekeepers.

His remark followed Turkish **Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu**, saying that his government "continue to be one nation, one spirit with our Azeri brothers," adding:

Ankara continues to monitor what's ongoing in NK.

"We are now discussing how (the armistice) will be observed and controlled. But the whole process will be overseen jointly" with Azerbaijan.

On Monday, Russia's Foreign Ministry said its country's peacekeepers alone will be deployed to NK.

While Azeris gained over Armenia from weeks of fighting, it came at a high cost to both sides.

Russia has gone all-out end conflict since it began.

Perhaps after three failed ceasefires, the current agreement will hold — even if uneasily.

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