

Kremlin-Led Karabakh Peace Talks Fail

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Medvedev hammering a horseshoe in Kazan on Saturday, a day after the failed Nagorno-Karabakh summit. **Dmitry Astakhov**

BAKU, Azerbaijan — Azeri President Ilham Aliyev promised to boost army spending and gain control of Nagorno-Karabakh during the biggest military parade in Baku since the Soviet collapse on Sunday, two days after Kremlin-led talks to reach an agreement on the disputed territory failed.

"I am completely sure that our territorial integrity will be resumed in any possible way," Aliyev said on state television at the parade to celebrate armed forces day. "Therefore, we should be even stronger."

Azerbaijan and Armenia, which fought a war over Nagorno-Karabakh that killed about 30,000 on both sides, concluded a cease-fire in 1994. Attempts by the United States, Russia and France to reconcile the two sides have fallen short.

"Nagorno-Karabakh is a native Azeri land. This is the way it always was, but it is temporarily under occupation, which cannot last forever," Aliyev said, adding that Baku would continue diplomatic efforts.

Armenia and Azerbaijan blamed each other over the weekend for failing to reach an agreement on a framework document that would set the stage for an end to their dispute during Friday talks hosted by President Dmitry Medvedev in Kazan.

"The Kazan summit did not achieve a breakthrough because Azerbaijan was not ready to accept the last version of the Basic Principles," Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said in a statement.

The two sides were under pressure from global powers to agree to the Basic Principles, a 14-point framework document that would set the stage for talks on a peace settlement.

The document would set guidelines on how to determine the final status of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, which has run its own affairs with Armenia's support since the war.

Baku was quick to respond to Yerevan's allegations that the Azeri side was responsible for the failure.

"Armenia's Foreign Ministry statement showed once again that the Armenian leadership had no intention of abandoning methods of dirty propaganda," Novruz Mamedov, head of the presidential administration's foreign relations department, told reporters.

"The unconstructive position of the Armenian side is to be blamed for absence of serious progress," he said.

At the same time, both sides pledged to continue talks.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Saturday called on both sides to continue peace efforts and pledged its support for the process.

Medvedev, Aliyev and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said Friday that the sides had reached "a mutual understanding on a range of issues whose resolution will help create conditions for an approval of the Basic Principles."

Speaking at the parade Sunday, Aliyev said Azerbaijan would boost military spending to \$3.3 billion this year, up from \$2.15 billion a year ago and just \$160 million in 2003.

Troops marched across Liberty Square in central Baku, along with convoys of infantry combat vehicles and Russian-made S-300 self-propelled anti-aircraft missile launchers. Warplanes, helicopters and drones cruised over the city, as television aired footage of battleships on duty off the Azeri Caspian coast.

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