The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Violence Escalates in Nagorno-Karabakh

June 08, 2012



The European Union has warned Armenia and Azerbaijan against escalating violence in the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region.

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said in a statement Friday that she is "very concerned" at reports of armed clashes earlier this week and called on both sides to respect the cease-fire and step up efforts to reach a peace agreement.

Azerbaijan and Armenia accused each other of triggering recent clashes that have killed up to nine people on both sides, according to news reports. The violence overshadowed a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, who also warned of an escalation.

Both countries fought a war in the early 1990s over the disputed territory, which was mainly inhabited by ethnic Armenians but situated within Azerbaijan. A cease-fire was signed in 1994, but efforts to broker a lasting peace have failed so far.

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