

Dozens Killed During Weekend Fighting in Disputed Nagorno-Karabakh

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An Armenian covers his ears while a howitzer fires at an artillery position of the self-defense army of Nagorno-Karabakh near Martakert, Azerbaijan, April 3, 2016.

At least 33 people have been killed and more than 200 injured during recent fighting in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

“On April 2, large-scale cease-fire violations took place along the Line of Contact in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, leading to at least 33 fatalities,” the United Nations office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported. Of the 33 fatalities, three are believed to be civilian.

According to the OCHA report, most of the fighting between Armenian and Azeri forces occurred near the villages of Agdere, Khojavend and Hadrut, where a total of 14,400 people live. The number of injured persons is yet to be confirmed by official sources.

“The two governments report that the fighting is the most significant [outbreak of violence] since the cease-fire agreement in 1994,” the report revealed. Despite the violence, both

governments have stated they do not need international humanitarian assistance.

The conflict began when the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region announced its independence from Azerbaijan in February 1988. In September 1991, the disputed region declared itself the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and, over the course of the enduring conflict, Azerbaijan subsequently lost control of the region.

In 1994, a Russian-brokered cease-fire was signed and peace talks have been held since, mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and international leaders have expressed concern over the recent violence in Nagorno-Karabakh and urge all parties to adhere to cease-fire agreements.

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