

Russian Peacekeepers Should Monitor Nagorno-Karabakh Ceasefire – Lavrov

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More than two weeks of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan rivals has left almost 600 dead, including 73 civilians. **EPA / Aziz Karimov / TASS**

Russian peacekeepers should be sent to Nagorno-Karabakh to observe a shaky Moscow-brokered ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov [said](#) Wednesday.

Russia's top diplomat made the proposal as new fighting erupted between the Caucasus rivals despite a truce that they reached in Moscow over the weekend.

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According to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency, Lavrov said that a peacekeeping force is needed to observe the ceasefire.

“Not even peacekeepers, but military observers would be enough,” Lavrov [told](#) Russian radio

stations in an interview, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

“We believe it would be absolutely correct if they were our [Russian] military observers” but the final decision would be up to Baku and Yerevan, he said.

Lavrov said he had sent signals to his Armenian and Azerbaijani colleagues that their militaries need to meet to agree on a mechanism to monitor and enforce the Moscow ceasefire agreement.

More than two weeks of fighting between the Caucasus rivals has left almost 600 dead, including 73 civilians, according to a tally based on partial tolls from both sides.

The Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, overwhelmingly populated by Armenians, has been controlled by Armenians since a 1990s war that erupted as the Soviet Union fell.

The latest fighting that broke out on Sept. 27 has been the most intense flare-up since a 1994 ceasefire ended the initial post-Soviet war.

The search for a long-term solution to the conflict, one of the most enduring problems left after the fall of the Soviet Union, is in the hands of the Minsk Group of regional powers chaired by France, Russia and the United States.

AFP contributed reporting.

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