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# France Urges Russia to Resolve Karabakh Ceasefire 'Ambiguities'

By AFP

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Russia and Armenia are members of a collective defense pact. Russia did not militarily intervene in the conflict and has now deployed almost 2,000 peacekeepers to the conflict zone. **Kremlin.ru**

France on Tuesday urged Russia to clear up "ambiguities" over the ceasefire it brokered between Armenia and Azerbaijan to end fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh, notably regarding the role of Turkey and foreign fighters.

"We must remove the ambiguities over refugees, the delimitation of the ceasefire, the presence of Turkey, the return of fighters and on the start of negotiations on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told parliament.

Russian President Vladimir Putin brokered the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which allowed Azerbaijan to consolidate gains after several weeks of fighting.

But the talks did not involve France or any other Western country.

Le Drian added that these issues would be discussed by a meeting of diplomats in Moscow from the Minsk Group on Karabakh, which is co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States and leads efforts to find a solution to the conflict.

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Nagorno-Karabakh is a region of Azerbaijan populated by ethnic Armenians that broke away from Baku's control in a war that erupted as the Soviet Union collapsed.

Azerbaijan never hid its desire to regain control and six weeks of fighting ended earlier this month with large chunks of Karabakh and surrounding regions again held by Baku, under a deal widely seen as a major defeat for Armenia.

France has a large Armenian minority concentrated in several cities and has been hugely critical of Turkey's support of Baku in the conflict, which according to President Emmanuel Macron extended to sending Syrian fighters to the region.

It remains unclear if Turkey is planning to dispatch its own troops to play a role in the ceasefire deal.

"The departure of foreign fighters deployed in the conflict is a fundamental element for stability in the region," said a French diplomatic source, who asked not to be named.

Le Drian denied that France had been passive in the conflict by failing to support Armenia, saying "discussions have already begun" over the future status of Karabakh with Putin and the United States.

"The ceasefire was essential to save thousands of lives. But there are ambiguities," said Le Drian.

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