

Erdogan: Azerbaijan to Regain Nagorno-Karabakh Region

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan

Turkish President Recep Erdogan predicted that the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh will one day return to its “original owner” — Azerbaijan, Agence France-Presse reported Monday.

Amid continuing deadly clashes in the region between Armenian separatists and Azerbaijan's forces, Erdogan said his country — which shares close ethnic and cultural ties with Azerbaijan — is “standing side-by-side with our brothers,” AFP reported.

“This persecution will not continue forever,” he was quoted as saying in remarks broadcast on Turkish television. “Karabakh will one day return to its original owner. It will be Azerbaijan's.”

Meanwhile, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan warned that his country could officially

recognize the region as an independent state if the conflict escalates, Reuters reported Monday.

Azerbaijan has resorted to an “unprecedented provocation along the entire perimeter of the contact line” with Nagorno-Karabakh, Sargsyan was quoted as saying at a meeting with ambassadors from nations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Nagorno-Karabakh, a predominantly ethnic-Armenian enclave in Azerbaijan, suffered a six-year war that ended in 1994 between Armenia-backed separatists and Azeri forces. Sporadic clashes continued after the 1994 cease-fire.

The worst violence in decades came this weekend, when dozens of people were reportedly killed.

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