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International Press Service

Ressort: Politik

The Empire Is Dying in the Caucasus

The Netherlands, 02.07.2025 [ENA]

Rising Tensions Between Russia and Azerbaijan

In late June 2025, relations between Russia and Azerbaijan took a sharp turn for the worse. On June 27, Russian OMON forces stormed homes inhabited by Azerbaijanis in the city of Yekaterinburg. Reports indicate that two Azerbaijani brothers, Ziyaddin and Huseyn Safa-rov, were tortured and killed during the raid. Several others of Azerbaijani descent were ar-rested.

Baku Strikes Back
Azerbaijan condemned the incident as a deliberate and ethnically motivated act and swiftly responded. Soon after, Azerbaijani authorities conducted a security operation at the Baku office of Sputnik Azerbaijan, the local branch of Russia's state-run Rossiya Segodnya agency. The office’s executive director, Igor Kartavykh, and editor-in-chief, Yevgeny Belousov, were detained. Azerbaijani officials later revealed that both were allegedly agents of Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB).
Additionally, Baku announced the arrest of a Russian-linked criminal group operating within Azerbaijan and cancelled a number of cultural events scheduled in cooperation with Russian institutions.

Despite the escalation, neither President Ilham Aliyev nor President Vladimir Putin has pub-licly commented. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated, “At the moment, President Putin has no intention of holding a call with President Aliyev.”

Kremlin Points Fingers at Kyiv

In a statement published by Azerbaijani newspaper Adalet, Peskov suggested that Ukraine may be fueling the discord:
“Moscow sees Kyiv’s attempts to disrupt relations between Russia and Azerbaijan and pro-voke tensions. Ukraine is doing all it can to pour fuel on the fire and incite emotional reac-tions from Baku.”

Peskov also claimed the arrests in Yekaterinburg were part of a criminal investigation and were not ethnically motivated.

Is This Really About Yekaterinburg?

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Many analysts believe the root of the crisis lies deeper. The real issue appears to be Russia's waning influence in the South Caucasus. As Azerbaijan and Armenia move closer to signing a peace treaty, Moscow finds itself increasingly sidelined.
Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has publicly affirmed that Karabakh is historical-ly Azerbaijani territory and that Armenia will not pursue territorial claims. His recent visit to Turkey — and growing ties between Yerevan and Ankara — only added to Moscow's un-ease.
A potential peace deal between Azerbaijan and Armenia could spell the end of Russian lev-erage in the region.

Aliyev and Pashinyan's Firm Positions
President Ilham Aliyev is demonstrating a clear political will to resist Russian pressure and influence. For example, when Russia proposed opening a consulate in Khankendi (one of the cities liberated from occupation), Baku firmly rejected the proposal.
Azerbaijan's foreign policy is increasingly based on its strategic alliance with Turkey. Russia is well aware of the Ankara–Baku axis and, under the current circumstances, would not dare to challenge NATO's second-strongest army — Turkey.
Prime Minister Pashinyan also appears determined to keep Russia out of peace negotiations and has shown strong political will in this regard.

A New Geopolitical Reality

Both Azerbaijan and Armenia appear determined to limit — or eliminate — Russia's role in the Caucasus. President Putin's doctrine — "Where there is a Russian soldier, that land is ours" — no longer resonates in the region.
Today, both Baku and Yerevan seem resolute in preventing Russian military presence on their territories.

Conclusion: Let the Empire Collapse

Russia's recent provocations can be seen as desperate attempts to "test the strength" of Azerbaijan's resolve. But if Azerbaijan stands firm and finalizes a peace agreement with Armenia, Moscow's influence will be rendered obsolete.
The empire is dying in the Caucasus — and there is no need to stop it. On the contrary, by finalizing a peace treaty as soon as possible, the region can be freed from the final spasms of Russian imperialism.

Bericht online lesen: https://conncet.en-a.eu/politik/the_empire_is_dying_in_the_caucasus-91731/

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Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:
V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDStV: Vugar Abbasov

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