



The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Serbia's Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić expressed concern at recent developments on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and the Line of Contact. "I would like to urge the sides to ensure a full ceasefire and cessation of hostilities as stipulated in the May 1994 agreement," he said. "I deplore the upsurge in acts of violence resulting in loss of lives, and I call on the sides to demonstrate responsibility and avoid steps that would lead to further escalation.

"Direct contact, not only between presidents but also at other levels, remains central to progress, and must be underpinned by a full ceasefire and cessation of hostilities. The meetings in 2014 between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Sochi, Newport and Paris were positive steps in the right direction. The OSCE continues to facilitate direct contacts, but it is the parties alone who can and must enforce a ceasefire from the top of the chain of command to the bottom.

"I reaffirm my support for my Personal Representative, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, who is charged with encouraging direct contact, and with helping the parties develop and implement more and much needed confidence-building measures. I also strongly support the joint efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, especially those aiming at strengthening the ceasefire and developing a common basis for negotiations. I encourage the parties to make full use of the OSCE toolbox and to take measurable steps towards a peaceful and lasting settlement."

Secretary General Lamberto Zannier expressed full support for the Chairman-in-Office's statement and called on both sides to re-engage in the political process led by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs.

*Photo by: OSCE/Micky Kroell*