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**AMBASSADOR: EU STAYS WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW REGARDING KHOJALY AIRPORT ISSUE**

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23 January 2013 Trend The European Union wants to stay with international law regarding the issue of opening of an airport in Khojaly, EU Ambassador to Azerbaijan Roland Kobia told journalists on Wednesday. "The EU countries want to stay with international law and not to do anything that will add tension," he said. He said the EU would like to promote dialogue and activity. According to Kobia, it is important to avoid any steps that would create tension in the region. Armenian media reported on the commissioning of the airport in Khojaly in the near future. Commissioning the airport in Khojaly is an open violation of the Convention on International Civil Aviation [adopted on December 7, 1944 in Chicago], the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry reported earlier. In this regard, Azerbaijan will strengthen the legal level of the application of the Chicago convention. Azerbaijan has banned the use of the airspace of Nagorno-Karabakh occupied by Armenia, as no one can guarantee a safe air corridor in the area, the head of the Azerbaijani Civil Aviation Administration, Arif Mammadov said earlier. He said Armenia's steps directed towards use of Khojaly airport are attempts to violate international legal norms. That air space belongs to Azerbaijan; therefore its use by Armenia is illegal. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the European Civil Aviation Conference (ICAC) also support the position of Azerbaijan on this issue. The conflict between the two South Caucasus countries began in 1988 when Armenia made territorial claims against Azerbaijan. Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 per cent of Azerbaijan since 1992, including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts. Azerbaijan and Armenia signed a ceasefire agreement in 1994. The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group - Russia, France and the U.S. - are currently holding peace negotiations. Armenia has not yet implemented the U.N. Security Council's four resolutions on the liberation of the Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding regions.

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Kaynak/Source: