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## THIS IS NOT YOUR WAR, KYIV - AZERBAIJAN HAS ITS OWN PATH

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*In the delicate calculus of geopolitics, true independence is measured not just by the allies one keeps — but by the battles one chooses to fight alone.*

Over the past week, Azerbaijani-Russian relations have entered an unprecedented phase of strain. Following the killing of Azerbaijani nationals by Russian police in Yekaterinburg, global reactions came swiftly. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to offer his condolences. The EU's ambassador to Baku voiced concern. Western commentators — some of whom had never before spoken up for Azerbaijan — joined the chorus of criticism aimed at Moscow.

But amid this flurry of support, one fact stands out: Baku never asked for it.

Azerbaijan has long maintained a posture of strategic self-restraint, even in the face of provocation. And while expressions of solidarity may seem welcome on the surface, many of those currently offering their sympathy were nowhere to be found during the darkest years of Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani lands. That silence is not forgotten — nor is the selective outrage on display today.

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