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Caspian states adopt declaration on repelling aggressors -2

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(Adds Ahmadinejad quotes in paras 10-14)

TEHRAN, October 16 (RIA Novosti) - The five Caspian Sea littoral states adopted a declaration at their second summit on Tuesday in Tehran, pledging to deny access to third countries who intend to use force against any Caspian state.

"The parties stress that they will not allow other countries to use their territories for acts of aggression or other military operations against any party," the declaration reads.

The signatories pledged efforts to build and enhance mutual confidence, regional security, and stability, and to refrain from the use of force in solving mutual problems.

Participants said in their joint declaration that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was vital to international stability and security.

The five countries - Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan - confirmed "the unassailable right of all signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to research, produce, and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination, and within the provisions of this treaty, and the safeguards of the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency]," the statement said.

The declaration also asserts the countries' "responsibility for damage inflicted on Caspian resources and to any Caspian state from the use of the Caspian Sea and development of its resources."

The five nations acknowledged that "Caspian resources, and the sea's sturgeon population, require the adoption of joint emergency action to prevent negative environmental consequences."

The summit participants said a future convention on the legal status of the sea should respect sovereign rights of Caspian states, and include environmental regulations, navigation norms and economic rules.

The declaration also spoke for "peaceful, just and stable solutions to conflicts in line with the United Nations charter, also taking into account sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of internationally recognized borders to ensure security, peace and stability in the region."

Summit host Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said the declaration was a strong response to those who seek to damage cooperation between Caspian nations.

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"Those opposed to peace and friendship among Caspian nations pursue their illegal interests, and the declaration by the heads of Caspian countries is a strong response to them," he said.

Ahmadinejad said agreements reached at the summit were a turning point in Caspian cooperation. "Besides signing the first political document [a joint declaration], we agreed to establish a Caspian economic partnership organization."

The president said that next summer would see an economic conference of Caspian states held under the chairmanship of the Russian president, which will be attended by premiers and economics ministers.

The Iranian leader said an agreement had been reached that the foreign ministers of the littoral states would meet twice each year, and the presidents once a year. "The next summit of Caspian nations will be held in Baku in October 2008 and hosted by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev," Ahmadinejad said.

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