

Question for written answer E-006794/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Escalation in tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan

This summer has seen an alarming rise in hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan along the line of contact. On 3 September 2014 the European External Action Service (EEAS) issued a statement in which it calls for both sides to 'continue peaceful efforts' towards finding a resolution.

President Aliyev of Azerbaijan recently stated on social media that Azerbaijan 'will restore our territorial integrity by peaceful or military means. We are ready for both'. He later highlighted developments in the country's defence capabilities, which have been bolstered by an increase in Azerbaijan's defence budget from USD 177 million to USD 3.4 billion between 2003 and 2013.

In the context of the fourth meeting of the foreign affairs ministers of Eastern Partnership countries which took place on 9 September 2014:

1. what representations will the EEAS make at the aforementioned meeting to the Azerbaijani administration regarding President Aliyev's recent comments?
2. how has the European Union Special Representative to the South Caucasus assessed the current situation?
3. what does the VP/HR believe will be the implications of the situation regarding the EU's continued negotiations with Azerbaijan towards the conclusion of an association agreement?