



**Speech by MEP Marina KALJURAND,
Chair of the Delegation for relations with the South Caucasus,
at the plenary debate on**

**"Closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a
peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia"**

Strasbourg, 27 February 2024

President, Commissioner, Colleagues,

Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan was very clear when he spoke in this hemicycle in October last year – Armenia has turned to Europe and looks for closer cooperation with the European Union.

This is not only a choice of economic convenience, but also a choice based on the country's commitment to key European values and the difficult security situation.

I strongly welcome the role of the EU monitoring mission ensuring the security of the border and the inclusion of Armenia into the European Peace Facility programme.

I also think that it is the right time to start the visa liberalisation dialogue and to better engage Armenia with regional connectivity and other projects.

At the same time, Armenia has to do its homework. I am referring to the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization), Eurasian Economic Union, Armenia's high dependency on Russia, including trade, and also a Russian military base in Armenia.

Finally, after more than 30 years of insecurity and suffering, Armenian and Azerbaijani people deserve to live in peace and security. Therefore, I call on the Azerbaijani leadership to commit to peace and sign a comprehensive peace agreement based on the recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the non-use of force.

Thank you!