



Plenary sitting

B9-0151/2022

8.3.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the destruction of cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh
(2022/2582(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B9-0151/2022

**European Parliament resolution on the destruction of cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh
(2022/2582(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Nagorno – Karabkh conflict;
 - having regard to the statement of the European Council President following the trilateral meeting with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia of 14 December 2021,
 - having regard to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 17 October 2003,
 - having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols,
 - having regard to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,
 - having regard to rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. whereas after the last conflict, Azerbaijan controls around one-third of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, including the town of Susha, and controls again in full seven districts adjacent to Nagorno-Karabakh that Armenian forces had held since the conflict of 1991-1994; whereas Nagorno – Karabakh is an internationally recognised territory of Azerbaijan;
- B. whereas in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh numerous churches, mosques, cross-stones and cemeteries are located; whereas during the conflict damage was reported to heritage sites, including the aerial bombardment of the cathedral in the town Shushi/Shusha;
- C. whereas Armenia has stated that Azerbaijan has a deliberate policy of destroying Armenian heritage in the region, while Azerbaijan claims the Christian sites are not Armenian but rather Caucasian Albanian instead, which does not relieve the Azerbaijani side from preserving and safeguarding them;
- D. whereas on 7 December 2021, the International Court of Justice delivered its Orders in the cases between Armenia and Azerbaijan in a landmark decision on tangible cultural heritage; whereas the Court ordered Armenia and Azerbaijan to prevent the incitement and promotion of racial hatred against one another and for Azerbaijan to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration of Armenian cultural heritage sites on territory under its control;
- E. whereas UNESCO is planning to send a mission to Nagorno-Karabakh in order to draw

up an inventory of the most significant cultural assets as a prerequisite for effective protection of the region's heritage, which received the full support of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and the agreement in principle of the representatives of both Armenia and Azerbaijan;

1. Underlines the importance of rich cultural heritage of the region; stresses humanity's responsibility to preserve cultural and religious heritage sites for future generations and considers their importance for cultural diversity; calls on all states to take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage sites present in territory under its control; regrets that conflicts in Nagorno – Karabakh region led to destruction, pillage and looting of common cultural heritage which fuelled further distrust and animosities;
2. expresses grave concern about reported damage and destruction of Christian cultural monuments in Nagorno-Karabakh; underlines a high level of disinformation disseminated during the conflict and therefore welcomes UNESCO's intention to send an impartial mission to the region and looks forward to the mission's findings; is concerned with Azerbaijan's stalling of the mission, which puts in question the good will of Baku, and calls for immediate decision to greenlight it;
3. Notes the Orders of the International Court of Justice ordering Azerbaijan to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration of Armenian cultural heritage sites on territory under its control;
4. Underlines that any renewed escalation of tensions over Nagorno – Karabakh will be detrimental to the ongoing normalization talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Armenia and Turkey and will play into the hands of Russia;
5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the governments and parliaments of Azerbaijan, Armenia, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commission, UNESCO Director General, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the European Council.