



Plenary sitting

B9-0404/2023

2.10.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijan's attack and the
continuing threats against Armenia
(2023/2879(RSP))

**Anna Fotyga, Alexandr Vondra, Veronika Vrecionová, Assita Kanko,
Adam Bielan, Waldemar Tomaszewski, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Anna
Zalewska, Elżbieta Kruk, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Andželika Anna
Możdżanowska**
on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijan's attack and the continuing threats against Armenia (2023/2879(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Armenia and Azerbaijan, in particular that of 19 January 2023 on the humanitarian consequences of the blockade in Nagorno-Karabakh¹, of 15 March 2023 on EU-Armenia relations² and of 15 March 2023 on EU-Azerbaijan relations³,
- having regard to the statement of 29 September 2023 by the spokesperson for the European External Action Service on the displacement of people from Nagorno-Karabakh,
- having regard to the statement of 21 September 2023 by the EU High Representative on developments in Nagorno-Karabakh,
- having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 19 September 2023 Azerbaijan launched a large-scale military offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh, following a weeks-long blockade of the Lachin corridor, the only road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia and the outside world; whereas Azerbaijan demanded a complete withdrawal of the ethnic Armenian forces known as the Nagorno-Karabakh Defence Army from the region, forcing them to capitulate after a 24-hour military campaign;
- B. whereas the blockade has led to a severe humanitarian crisis, significantly affecting the most vulnerable population groups, with a serious lack of access to essential goods and services, including food, fuel and medication, for the 120 000 Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh
- C. whereas the offensive ended with a ceasefire agreement on 20 September 2023, with the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and military pledging to disarm and enter 'reintegration' talks;
- D. whereas the Azerbaijani Government stated that it would guarantee the rights of the civilian population, including educational rights, cultural rights, religious rights and municipal electoral rights, but did not decide to give the region autonomous status; whereas, due to years of tensions, the Armenian population does not consider these promises credible, fearing reprisals or the loss of the freedom to use their language and practise their religion and customs;
- E. whereas over 100 000 people – more than three quarters of the population of Nagorno-

¹ OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, p. 104.

² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0081.

³ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0082.

Karabakh – have already fled to Armenia after Azerbaijan allowed them to leave the territory, all of which constitutes a mass exodus of nearly the entire Armenian population and may result in an end to hundreds of years of Armenian presence on this land;

- F. whereas the people who have decided to stay are mostly elderly, with others saying that they might return if they see that it is safe for ethnic Armenians to live under Azerbaijani rule;
- G. whereas on 27 September 2023 Ruben Vardanyan, a Russian-Armenian billionaire businessman, former State Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh and founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, was detained by Azerbaijani forces while crossing the border from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia;
- H. whereas on 28 September 2023 the leader of Nagorno-Karabakh, Samvel Shahramanyan, issued a decree stating that Nagorno-Karabakh would cease to exist on 1 January 2024 and calling on the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, including people located outside the republic, to familiarise themselves with the reintegration conditions presented by Azerbaijan;
- I. whereas the Azerbaijani authorities announced the launch of a process to register Armenian residents through a dedicated portal;
- J. whereas numerous churches, mosques, cross-stones and cemeteries are located in Nagorno-Karabakh; whereas after considerable deliberate damage was caused by Azerbaijan to Armenian cultural heritage during the 2020 war, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) indicated, in its Order of 7 December 2021⁴, that Azerbaijan must ‘take all necessary measures to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration affecting Armenian cultural heritage, including but not limited to churches and other places of worship, monuments, landmarks, cemeteries and artefacts’;
- K. whereas on 26 September 2023 the Commission announced that it would increase its humanitarian funding by EUR 5 million in response to the increasing needs resulting from the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis;
- L. whereas the EU and the US have facilitated several rounds of peace talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan; whereas Armenia has officially submitted a statement of claim against Azerbaijan to the ICJ, requesting the application of temporary measures under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- 1. Calls on the Azerbaijani authorities to refrain from further hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh and in the region; highlights that Azerbaijan’s forceful regaining of control over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh took place in the context of a major humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh, following Azerbaijan’s blockade of the Lachin corridor for the preceding nine months, in violation of Azerbaijan’s

⁴ Order of the International Court of Justice of 7 December 2021 on the request for the indication of provisional measures for the application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (*Armenia v Azerbaijan*).

commitments under the ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020;

2. Stresses that Azerbaijan bears responsibility for guaranteeing the rights and security of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians, including their right to live in their homes without intimidation and discrimination, as well as the right to return for those who have been displaced; is deeply concerned about the consequences of Azerbaijan's actions for the civilian population, which is now leaving the region; emphasises that any forceful relocation of the ethnic Armenian population may constitute an act of ethnic cleansing, which should be met with a strong response from the international community; calls, therefore, on Baku to refrain from all actions directly or indirectly aimed at displacing the remaining ethnic Armenians from the region and calls for those who decide to return to be allowed to do so;
3. Expresses its sympathy with the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians who have to flee their ancestral lands; welcomes all efforts by the Government of Armenia to provide shelter and aid to the displaced Armenians; welcomes the humanitarian assistance provided by the EU for the conflict-affected population in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and calls for further assistance to address all humanitarian needs, in particular unhindered humanitarian access to the region, noting the significance of the region to the EU;
4. Notes that a UN mission arrived in Nagorno-Karabakh only on 1 October 2023, and that this is the first time that the world body has accessed the region in about 30 years; expects that an independent international mission will provide transparency, reassurance and confidence to the residents of Nagorno-Karabakh, focusing on humanitarian needs and protection;
5. Calls on the Government of Azerbaijan to commit to a broad amnesty for all former Nagorno-Karabakh officials who have been abducted and arrested and urges their immediate and unconditional release;
6. Underlines that humanitarian organisations and UN agencies must be granted immediate, free and unhindered access to Nagorno-Karabakh in order to provide the remaining local population with the necessary assistance and to monitor the situation;
7. Condemns the inaction of Russian 'peacekeepers' and the overall role played by Russia, which for decades has fuelled the conflict and used it for its own political gains;
8. Expresses deep concern for the preservation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh after the massive exodus of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians, bearing in mind the destruction of cultural, religious and historical heritage since the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; urges Azerbaijan to refrain from further destroying, neglecting or altering the origins of cultural, religious or historical heritage in the region and to instead strive to preserve, protect and promote this rich diversity in line with the ICJ Order of 7 December 2021; strongly insists that Azerbaijan enable UNESCO to have immediate access to the heritage sites in the territories under its control in order to take an inventory of them, and that Azerbaijan ensure their protection; urges Azerbaijan to ensure that no interventions are conducted on Armenian heritage sites prior to a UNESCO assessment mission, and that Armenian and international cultural heritage experts are consulted prior to, and closely involved in,

interventions on Armenian cultural heritage sites; calls for the full restoration of these and other demolished sites; suggests using the EU Satellite Centre (SatCen) to provide satellite images in order to help determine the external condition of endangered heritage in the region;

9. Welcomes the launch of the civilian European Union Mission in Armenia (EUMA) under the common security and defence policy, but stresses the need to increase the number of EUMA observers and outfit them with additional capabilities to better support the mission's objectives; welcomes Armenia's willingness to facilitate the mission on its territory and calls on Azerbaijan to allow EUMA's presence on its side of the border as well;
10. Reiterates its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia; calls on Azerbaijan to reaffirm its unequivocal commitment to Armenia's territorial integrity; expects that after regaining control over its internationally recognised borders, Azerbaijan will refrain from any aggressive and hostile actions against Armenia; calls, therefore, for EUMA to be strengthened so that it can continue closely monitoring developments on the ground in this regard;
11. Calls for stronger engagement by the EU in the region, in particular in seeking a 'Noah's Accord', which may normalise relations between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Türkiye and bring lasting peace to the region;
12. Calls for the EU to further support the democratically elected authorities of Armenia in developing resilience and stability and continuing democratic reforms in the country; is of the opinion that, with the consent of the Armenian authorities, EU-Armenia relations should be developed rapidly on the basis of a future association agreement and the possibility of accession to the EU;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the Government and President of Armenia, the Government and President of Azerbaijan, the Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, the Director-General of UNESCO, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.