



Plenary sitting

B9-0405/2023

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))

Željana Zovko, Andrey Kovatchev, Michael Gahler, Rasa Juknevičienė, David McAllister, Paulo Rangel, Andrius Kubilius, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, François-Xavier Bellamy, Vladimír Bilčík, Loucas Furlas, Anja Haga, Andrzej Halicki, Sandra Kalniete, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Sven Simon, Michaela Šojdrová, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Tomáš Zdechovský
on behalf of the PPE 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 those 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 joint statement of 19 September 2023 by the Chair of its Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Chair of its Delegation for relations with the South Caucasus and its Standing Rapporteurs for Armenia and Azerbaijan on Azerbaijan's attack on Nagorno-Karabakh,
 - having regard to the statement of 29 September 2023 by the spokesperson for the European External Action Service (EEAS) 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 the statement of 26 July 2023 by the EU High Representative on Azerbaijan: the humanitarian situation on the ground,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 19 September 2023, Azerbaijan launched an unprovoked and unjustified military aggression, which it labelled as an 'anti-terrorist operation', against the self-defence forces of Nagorno-Karabakh, which it quickly overpowered; whereas by 20 September 2023, a ceasefire agreement had already been signed between the de facto authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan; whereas through this military assault, Azerbaijan gained control over the vast majority of the remaining parts of Nagorno-Karabakh which had not already fallen under its control during the 44 day war in 2020;
- B. whereas there are reports that during Azerbaijan's military operation against Nagorno-Karabakh, more than 350 Armenian civilians were killed and 400 wounded; whereas there are reports of people missing, which would equate to crimes against humanity;
- C. whereas in the ceasefire agreement with Azerbaijan, the de facto authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh agreed to dismantle their civilian institutions as well as to disarm the self-defence forces, surrender all weapons and withdraw from all combat positions and military posts; whereas Armenia was not a party to the negotiations on the ceasefire

¹ OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, p. 104.

² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0081.

³ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0082.

agreement;

- D. whereas on 28 September 2023, Samvel Shahramanyan, the de facto President of Nagorno-Karabakh, signed a decree dissolving all the structures and institutions of the republic as of 1 January 2024; whereas as of 1 January 2024, the unrecognised Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh will cease to exist;
- E. 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;
- F. whereas an exodus of up to 120 000 ethnic Armenian inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh began as soon as the fighting started; whereas there are reports that more than 100 000 Armenians have already made it to Armenia; whereas Nagorno-Karabakh will soon be deprived of its Armenian inhabitants, who have been living there for centuries; whereas Azerbaijan's commitments to respect the rights of the local population are not considered credible;
- G. whereas the EU has provided EUR 5 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross in humanitarian aid; whereas the funds will assist people displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and assist vulnerable people in Nagorno-Karabakh; whereas the EU has provided EUR 25.8 million in humanitarian aid since the end of the 44 day war in late 2020; whereas the Armenian Government has asked the EU for assistance to help deal with the influx of refugees arriving from Nagorno-Karabakh;
- H. whereas the Lachin corridor, the only road leading from Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh, was blocked as of 12 December 2022 by Azerbaijani 'ecological activists'; whereas during the blockade, the exclave was deprived of deliveries of essential services and goods, such as food and medicine, and was subject to electricity cuts; whereas the lives of the approximately 120 000 ethnic Armenian inhabitants were made unbearable, which led to a humanitarian crisis; whereas on 23 April 2023, Azerbaijan established an illegal checkpoint on the Lachin corridor, further tightening its control over the road;
- I. whereas on the basis of the Trilateral Statement of 9 November 2020, which brought an end to the 44 day war, the Lachin corridor was to remain under the control of Russian peacekeeping forces, while Azerbaijan was to guarantee the security of persons, vehicles and cargo moving along the Lachin corridor in both directions; whereas the Russian peacekeeping force played a passive role throughout the blockade of the Lachin corridor and made no effort to properly carry out its mission; whereas the blockade of the Lachin corridor was a breach by Azerbaijan of the Trilateral Statement;
- J. whereas the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict started during the decline of the Soviet Union in 1988; whereas the first Karabakh war ended in 1994 with control over the entire region and seven adjacent territories taken over by Armenia; whereas in 1992, Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence, which was not recognised by any country in the world;
- K. whereas the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast is an internationally recognised part of Azerbaijan dominated by ethnic Armenians; whereas on 22 May 2023, Nikol Pashinyan, the Prime Minister of Armenia expressed his country's

readiness to recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan including Nagorno-Karabakh, in return for security guarantees for the Armenian population of the region, as part of the peace process between the two countries;

- L. whereas European Council President Charles Michel established one of the three strands of peace negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and is to host the next high-level meeting with the two leaders on 5 October 2023 in Granada, on the margins of the European Political Community;
 - M. whereas the blocking of communication and road links connecting western Azerbaijan with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic is an outstanding issue referred to in the Trilateral Statement; whereas Armenia's unblocking of all economic and transport connections in the region would guarantee the security of transport connections between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and allow for the unobstructed movement of persons, vehicles and cargo in both directions; whereas Azerbaijan demands that the corridor should have an extraterritorial character, which is unacceptable for the Armenian side; whereas this road link, the Zangezur corridor, is located at the border of Armenia with Iran;
1. Condemns the pre-planned and unjustified military attack by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh; highlights that this attack was additionally unnecessary as Azerbaijan, having consolidated its position after the 44 day war of 2020, was on a clear path to re-establish its control over Nagorno-Karabakh through diplomatic negotiations; deplores the fact that the Azerbaijani offensive seriously undermines its ongoing EU-mediated peace process with Armenia;
 2. Recalls that the attack took place in the context of a major humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh, following Azerbaijan's blockade of the Lachin corridor for the past nine months, in violation of Baku's commitments under the ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020 and of the legally binding orders of the International Court of Justice;
 3. Expresses solidarity with the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh; calls for the EU institutions and the Member States to immediately offer all necessary assistance to Armenia to deal with the influx of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh and the resulting humanitarian crisis, as well as their reintegration into Armenia; commends the Armenian authorities for their efforts to provide aid and shelter to the growing number of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh;
 4. Reiterates its concern about the consequences of the Azerbaijani military offensive for the civilian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which has now been forced to leave the region;
 5. Calls for an international independent investigation into the alleged war crimes committed by the Azerbaijani authorities against ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh as of 19 September 2023, to bring to justice and impose sanctions against all those responsible;
 6. 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;

7. Calls on the Government of Azerbaijan to immediately and unconditionally release and repatriate all former Nagorno-Karabakh officials, including former State Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh Mr Ruben Vardanyan, Advisor to the President Mr Davit Babayan and all others who were illegally arrested before and after 20 September 2023;
8. Welcomes the establishment of an international presence in Nagorno-Karabakh under the auspices of the UN to monitor the situation on the ground and to provide assistance to the remaining local population; calls on the EEAS to substantially increase the number of monitors operating within the European Union Mission in Armenia and also to locate them along the border with Türkiye and to demand their presence on the Azerbaijani side of the border with Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh;
9. Recalls that Azerbaijan is fully responsible for respecting the rights and security of all members of the ethnic Armenian community who decide to stay in Nagorno-Karabakh; demands the protection of their cultural, historical and religious heritage in line with UNESCO standards and Azerbaijan's international commitments; insists that Azerbaijan allow a UNESCO mission to Nagorno-Karabakh and give it the necessary access to heritage sites to establish a record of their current state and proceed with inventory; demands that the properties of those members of the Armenian community who have decided to leave be safeguarded and a solution be developed with Armenia to provide compensation for property left behind in Nagorno-Karabakh; demands that Azerbaijan make every effort to allow the safe return of the ethnic Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, without intimidation and under international supervision;
10. Warns Azerbaijan against any potential military adventurism against the state of Armenia, such as that which took place in September 2022, with the aim of forcefully taking control of the southern part of Armenia or any other parts of the Syunik province; whereas any such actions would be considered as a basis for re-evaluating the EU's relationship with Azerbaijan, by suspending negotiations on the agreement with Azerbaijan, enforcing a price cap on Azerbaijani oil and gas, suspending the memorandum of understanding on the strategic partnership in the field of energy, suspending Azerbaijan's participation in the Eastern Partnership, imposing personal targeted sanctions against all those in the Azerbaijani authorities who took and carried out those decisions, in line with the EU's Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, lobbying for the suspension of Azerbaijan from international organisations and sports federations, and banning Azerbaijani participants from international cultural and sports events; calls on Türkiye to restrain its ally Azerbaijan from undertaking any such irresponsible actions;
11. Supports the ongoing peace talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which were volatile from the outset, but have now been seriously hampered by the recent military operation against Nagorno-Karabakh; recalls that relations between the two countries have been seriously damaged by the over thirty-year-long conflict which was fuelled and drawn out by the interference of Russia; believes that once the rights and security of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh as well as the right of return for those who have already fled are internationally guaranteed, this issue will no longer be the focus and both countries will be able to establish good neighbourly relations, embark on a long path of reconciliation and not succumb to external interference; highlights that a dignified and durable regional peace that maintains sovereignty, independence and

territorial integrity for both countries is the prerequisite for stability in the neighbourhood;

12. Calls for the EU to express strong support for the democratically elected authorities of Armenia and their ambition to develop the resilience, security, democratic reforms and will to reduce their dependency on the security guarantees of the Russian Federation; believes that the EU must seize the opportunity of a potential geopolitical vacuum and provide Armenia with an ambitious plan for cooperation by upgrading the current Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, anchoring Armenia more strongly in the community of western democracies and helping it unlock relations with its neighbours, in particular Türkiye;
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.