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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0166/2024**

8.3.2024

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

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

on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia  
(2024/2580(RSP))

**Nathalie Loiseau, Petras Auštrevičius, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Bernard Guetta, Karen Melchior, Dragoș Pîslaru, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Ramona Strugariu, Dragoș Tudorache, Hilde Vautmans**  
on behalf of the Renew Group

**B9-0166/2024**

**European Parliament resolution on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia (2024/2580(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Armenia, Azerbaijan and the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh,
  - having regard to the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Armenia, of the other part<sup>1</sup> (CEPA), which fully entered into force on 1 March 2021,
  - having regard to the statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 21 September 2023 on developments in Nagorno-Karabakh and to the statement by the European External Action Service Spokesperson of 29 September 2023 on the displacement of people from Nagorno-Karabakh,
  - having regard to the statement by the High Representative of 4 October 2023 on Armenia's ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,
  - having regard to the joint statement by the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia of 7 December 2023,
  - having regard to the statement following the meeting between Azerbaijani President Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan, French President Macron and European Council President Michel in Prague on 6 October 2022,
  - having regard to the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Alma-Ata Declaration of 21 December 1991,
  - having regard to the joint staff working document of 9 February 2024 entitled 'Partnership Implementation Report on Armenia' (SWD(2024)0041),
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Armenia has undergone significant political changes in recent years, with a government committed to both ensuring the functioning of democratic institutions and to using the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) as a blueprint for reforms to modernise the country, despite considerable challenges;
- B. whereas the EU and Armenia share a mutual interest and are committed to

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 23, 26.1.2018, p. 4.

strengthening and deepening their relations based on common values;

- C. whereas the Armenian Government has repeatedly expressed its interest in moving closer to the EU; whereas, in response, the European Council tasked the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission with exploring ways to strengthen all aspects of EU-Armenia relations;
- D. whereas the EU-Armenia Partnership Council met for the fifth time on 13 February 2024 and agreed on a new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda, establishing more ambitious joint priorities for cooperation across all areas;
- E. whereas the recently published partnership implementation report outlines the progress achieved by Armenia in implementing the CEPA, including on justice reform, the fight against corruption, the creation of a Ministry of Interior and the reform of the police service in Armenia, with EU support;
- F. whereas the EU remains the key reform partner and largest aid donor in Armenia;
- G. whereas Armenia performs well under the Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership, with close to EUR 500 million in investments already mobilised in sectors ranging from support to small and medium-sized enterprises to education;
- H. whereas in September 2023, following 9 months of an illegal blockade, Azerbaijan violently took over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in the forced displacement of 100 000 Armenians who fled to Armenia; whereas the EU provided humanitarian aid to people displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh and recently announced an additional EUR 5.5 million in humanitarian aid; whereas the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh ceased to exist on 1 January 2024, after its dissolution was agreed by its authorities under duress;
- I. whereas Azerbaijan still holds a number of Armenian soldiers and civilians in prison, including members of the government of the previously self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh; whereas there is evidence that Armenian cultural heritage is being destroyed and that Armenian cemeteries are being desecrated by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh;
- J. whereas Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh lost their properties and belongings while fleeing the military push by Azerbaijan and have not been able to recover them since then;
- K. whereas in February 2023, the EU deployed its Mission in Armenia (EUMA) with a mandate running until February 2025; whereas this mission is notably tasked with observing developments at the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, but can only do so on the Armenian side, as Azerbaijan refused the mission's deployment on its soil, despite EUMA being exclusively civilian and unarmed; whereas EUMA has been the target of disinformation by Azerbaijani authorities and government-controlled media; whereas in December 2023, the EU Foreign Affairs Council agreed to increase EUMA's presence on the ground from 138 staff to 209;

- L. whereas Armenia and Azerbaijan engaged in negotiations on a peace treaty between the two countries, the normalisation of their relations and border delimitation both before and after Azerbaijan's military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh, which was contrary to the 2009 Madrid Principles of recognition of territorial integrity, respect for self-determination and renunciation of the use of force; whereas, as a gesture of good will, Armenia did not oppose the organisation of COP29 in Baku;
- M. whereas a meeting between Azerbaijani President Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan took place in Munich on 17 February 2024, hosted by German Chancellor Scholz, which led to additional steps in the peace negotiations being scheduled;
- N. whereas, however, the two sides have not yet reached a peace agreement and do not agree on a number of issues, including the opening of transport links and border delimitation and demarcation; whereas Azerbaijan demands a corridor through Armenia connecting mainland Azerbaijan with its Nakhchivan exclave, to be controlled by Russian border troops and without Armenian customs or border checks, therefore disregarding Armenia's sovereignty; whereas Armenia's proposed 'Crossroads of Peace' includes linkages between mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan with Armenian border and customs checks;
- O. whereas, in the meantime, the security situation remains tense, as exemplified by the 13 February 2024 incident in which four Armenian soldiers were killed and one wounded by Azerbaijani gunfire in Armenia's southern Syunik province; whereas on 15 February 2024, Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan declared that there is cause for concern around Azerbaijan's planned military actions seeking to escalate the conflict and risking a full-fledged war;
- P. whereas the Azerbaijani leadership continues to make irredentist statements with reference to the sovereign territory of Armenia; whereas on several occasions since May 2021, the Azerbaijani army has occupied various parts of the sovereign territory of Armenia, amounting to 170 km<sup>2</sup>, in violation of previous commitments and despite the ongoing peace negotiations; whereas it refuses to withdraw, citing the lack of demarcation of the borders as justification;
- Q. whereas destabilisation efforts originating in Russia and targeting Armenia have been ongoing for several years; whereas the Armenian Government has taken courageous steps, such as freezing Armenia's participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization and joining the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; whereas many Armenians demonstrated in memory of Alexei Navalny in Yerevan;
- R. whereas France has decided to increase its support to Armenia by providing military assistance to help Armenia reform its army and deter new military acts of aggression against its internationally recognised territory;
- S. whereas Armenia has repeatedly asked the EU to include the country among the beneficiaries of the European Peace Facility;
- T. whereas the EU is committed to promoting a South Caucasus region that is secure, stable, peaceful and prosperous, to the benefit of all people living there;

1. Warmly welcomes and encourages the new dynamic in EU-Armenia relations; calls for the sustained implementation of the newly agreed EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda, emphasising the need to actively pursue and achieve the ambitious joint priorities for cooperation; believes that a substantial partnership between the EU and Armenia is a logical outcome of Armenia's choice in favour of democracy, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and respect for the international rules-based order;
2. Welcomes Armenia's commitment to implementing CEPA and the progress it has made in implementing the CEPA roadmap; welcomes the fact that the Armenian Government recognises CEPA as a strategic blueprint for key reforms in Armenia; commends Armenia for the significant reforms and democratisation process it has undertaken in recent years and, thus, for becoming a leader in democracy and the fight against corruption in the region; calls on the EU-Armenia Partnership Council to continue working closely to advance Armenia's ongoing and future reforms;
3. Supports Armenia in its continuous efforts to implement reforms and strengthen democracy, the rule of law and good governance; calls on Armenia to continue cooperating with the EU in this regard and calls for the EU to increase support in these areas, in particular technical support and the exchange of expertise; encourages Armenia's active engagement in the Eastern Partnership policy as a means of fostering good neighbourly relations in the South Caucasus;
4. Is appreciative of the support expressed by Armenia towards EU candidate countries such as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia; considers that, should Armenia continue on its path of sustained reforms consolidating its democracy and the rule of law, this could set the stage for a transformative phase in EU-Armenia relations, should Armenia be interested;
5. Calls for the EU and its Member States to acknowledge the progress made by Armenia in recent years in implementing the agreements on visa facilitation and readmission, and to launch a visa liberalisation dialogue with Armenia to support people-to-people contacts and strengthen bilateral ties;
6. Notes that over the last 10 years, the volume of Armenia-EU bilateral trade has been increasing; encourages Armenia, the EU and its Member States, as well as European companies and investors, to take the necessary steps to further enhance their economic and trade relations; commends the success of the Economic and Investment Plan and encourages the EU and Armenia to continue leveraging both public and private investments to promote sustainable development in Armenia;
7. Underlines the important role of civil society in the shaping and implementation of key reforms; calls on the Armenian Government to further strengthen its cooperation with civil society organisations; calls on the EU Delegation to Armenia and Member State representations in Armenia to increase their support for civil society and human rights defenders' work;
8. Is concerned about the relentless Russian interference, including disinformation campaigns in Armenia, targeting the Armenian authorities and the EU and its Member States; calls for the EU and its Member States to work together with the Armenian authorities to fight foreign malicious interference, including disinformation;

9. Commends the work of the civilian EU Mission in Armenia; welcomes Armenia's willingness to facilitate the mission on its territory; takes note of the continuous refusal by Azerbaijan to accept the presence of the EU mission on its side of the border and the permanent smear campaigns originating from Azerbaijan against EUMA; deplores the fact that Russian border guards stationed in Armenia blocked EUMA from reaching the village of Nerkin Hand where four Armenian soldiers were recently killed; calls for the EU and its Member States to further strengthen the mandate of EUMA, increase its size and extend its duration;
10. Condemns the inflammatory rhetoric deployed by Azerbaijani officials against the EU, its Member States, EUMA and the Armenian authorities; expects that, in such cases, the EU and its Member States summon the Azerbaijani ambassadors whose regular statements cannot be considered as acceptable diplomatic behaviour; strongly denounces recent attempts by Azerbaijan to interfere in the national politics of some EU Member States;
11. Calls for the EU to respond favourably to Armenia's request for support via the European Peace Facility and to provide support to the Armenian military; welcomes the actions undertaken by France to provide defensive military support to Armenia and urges Member States to consider similar initiatives;
12. Calls for the EU and its Member States to substantially increase their humanitarian and financial assistance to Armenia, which is hosting tens of thousands of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh; welcomes the additional EUR 5.5 million in humanitarian aid provided by the EU; reiterates its call for the EU to help establish and fund scholarships for pupils and students who arrived from Nagorno-Karabakh;
13. Encourages Armenia and Azerbaijan to take further constructive steps in their negotiations and to sign a comprehensive peace treaty as soon as possible, based on the recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the non-use of force; encourages and supports further progress in the activities of the Azerbaijani and Armenian border delimitation commissions in order to finalise the border delimitation process; calls on both sides to work together to complete the demining process;
14. Reiterates its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia; reiterates its demand for the withdrawal of Azerbaijan's troops from the entirety of the sovereign territory of Armenia; rejects and expresses its grave concern over the irredentist and inflammatory statements by Azerbaijani officials threatening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Armenia; calls on Azerbaijan to reaffirm its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of Armenia;
15. Considers that, should Azerbaijan refrain from liberating Armenian territory or engage in additional military action against Armenia, targeted sanctions should be immediately adopted by the EU against Azerbaijani decision makers, including visa bans, asset freezing and reconsidering gas imports from Azerbaijan;
16. Calls on Türkiye, Pakistan and other allies of Azerbaijan to refrain from fuelling bellicose behaviour from Baku and to exercise their influence in favour of a swift conclusion to the peace negotiations;

17. Strongly disagrees with the tone of some recent statements by leaders of the Commission and the European Council congratulating Azerbaijani President Aliyev for his re-election without mentioning the absence of democracy in Azerbaijan and misleadingly qualifying Azerbaijan as a reliable partner; affirms that these statements do not reflect the position of the European Union and should never have been made in the light of the ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh by Azerbaijan;
18. Calls on Azerbaijan to release and commit to a broad amnesty for all the inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh arrested since 19 September 2023, including the former officials from the region and all others who were arrested before and after 19 September 2023, as well as all other Armenian prisoners of war;
19. Expresses deep concern over the preservation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh after the massive exodus of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians; urges Azerbaijan to refrain from further destroying 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 UNESCO standards, the International Court of Justice Order of 7 December 2021 and Azerbaijan's international commitments; urges UNESCO to take immediate action to preserve and protect Armenian cultural heritage at risk in Nagorno-Karabakh; calls for the cooperation between Armenia and the EU to be reinforced concerning the monitoring of the systematic destruction of Armenian cultural heritage (churches, monasteries, cemeteries, monuments, palaces, etc.) by Azerbaijan, most notably through the involvement of the EU Satellite Centre;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the presidents, governments and parliaments of Armenia and Azerbaijan.