

Question for written answer E-011368/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Adrian Severin (NI)

Subject: VP/HR - Alternatives to signing an association agreement with Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan has an important regional role in the energy security, geoeconomic, geostrategic and cultural fields and, unlike Armenia or Belarus, is still open to a strategic partnership with a political ally prepared to help rehabilitate its territorial integrity and consolidate its geopolitical security, as its present neutrality cannot continue forever.

Moreover, the regions in which Azerbaijan plays a strategic role are of strategic importance not only for the EU, but also for other regional powers.

In this context, the EU's failure to finalise the negotiation of an association agreement with Azerbaijan, claiming that the promotion of the EU's strategic interests should wait until 'European values' have been adopted and implemented, will neither help the EU win the geostrategic game nor promote its values.

Accordingly, the VP/HR is kindly requested to answer the following:

1. In the absence of a finalised EU-Azerbaijan association agreement, is the EU prepared to propose and sign a protocol or framework agreement defining the basis of a strategic partnership with Azerbaijan, including a declaration of the EU's unequivocal support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, during the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius?
2. Is the EU prepared to sign a visa facilitation and readmission agreement with Azerbaijan, and is it committed to doing so?