



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No.1444 Vienna, 28 September 2023

#### **EU Statement in response to the Current Issue to be raised by the US**

Further to our statement from last week, the European Union would like to make the following points:

1. Nagorno-Karabakh is currently emptying of its Armenian population. To date [September 28], reportedly more than 65,000 people, more than half of the population, has found refuge in Armenia. This exodus is taking place in dramatic humanitarian conditions, as shown by the heavy toll from the explosion of a gas station in Stepanakert on the evening of September 25. On that occasion, we express our condolences to the victims of this terrible explosion. We reiterate our call on Azerbaijan to ensure the rights and security of the Karabakh Armenians. Forced displacement of the civilian population through military or other means is not acceptable.
2. We took note of President Aliyev's commitment to live in peace with the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh and preserve their rights. This also entails Azerbaijan's responsibility for the fate of the population. Tangible, action-based guarantees need to be provided.
3. In this situation, the priority is to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access to those in need in Nagorno-Karabakh. The EU and its Member States stand ready to provide urgent humanitarian assistance. The European Commission announced on Tuesday an assistance package of EUR 5 million.
4. International access to Nagorno-Karabakh is key in order to provide much needed assistance and ensure an independent monitoring of the situation on the ground.

5. The EU reiterates its support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia. We call on Azerbaijan to reaffirm its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of Armenia, in line with the 1991 Almaty Declaration.
6. The EU remains committed to facilitating dialogue between all sides in order to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable peace for the benefit of all the people of the region.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA\*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

\* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.