Resolution on prisoners of war in the aftermath of the most recent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan

2021/2693(RSP) - 20/05/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 607 votes to 27, with 54, a resolution on prisoners of war in the aftermath of the most recent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and the Left groups.

The most recent armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan dates from 27 September to 10 November 2020 which took the lives of more than 5 000 soldiers, injured and killed hundreds and displaced thousands of civilians. Hostilities ended after 44 days following an agreement on a complete ceasefire in and around Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia, which was signed on 9 November 2020 and entered into force on 10 November 2020.

According to worrying reports, approximately 200 Armenians are being held in Azerbaijani captivity. Parliament urged the Azerbaijan Government to provide exhaustive lists of all persons held in its captivity in connection with the armed conflict and to provide information about their whereabouts and health, including of those who have died in captivity.

Parliament demands the immediate and unconditional release of all Armenian prisoners, both military and civilian, detained during and after the conflict, and that Azerbaijan refrain from making arbitrary detentions in the future.

Highlighting the urgent need to ensure that humanitarian assistance can reach those in need, the Azerbaijan government is called on to guarantee free and unimpeded access to prisoners for relevant international organisations.

All necessary assistance to both Armenia and Azerbaijan should be offered to consolidate the ceasefire, and support any efforts leading to stability, reconstruction, confidence building and post-war rehabilitation, as well as to closely follow the implementation of the provisions of the ceasefire, especially with regard to its monitoring mechanism. Increased support should be given to civil society and human rights defenders, in particular in relation to restrictions on their work.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to continue supporting the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance and the work of international organisations in this area and on the protection of cultural and religious heritage, as well as to support civil society organisations in Armenia and Azerbaijan that genuinely contribute to reconciliation.