

Resolution on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia

2024/2580(RSP) - 13/03/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 504 votes to 4, with 32 abstentions, a resolution 2024 on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

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

The Armenian economy is still largely dependent on Russia, which accounts for around 35 % of Armenia's foreign trade, and its dependence is particularly pronounced in the strategic energy sector. Russia continues to access restricted EU goods through supply chains running through third countries, including Armenia. Following the introduction of EU sanctions on Russia, exports from Armenia to Russia tripled in 2022 and doubled between January and August 2023.

On 19 September 2023, after a nine month illegal blockade of the Lachin Corridor, disregarding its commitments included in the November 2020 ceasefire agreement and International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling, Azerbaijan launched an offensive on the remaining parts of the Nagorno-Karabakh not already under its control. More than 100 000 Armenians had to flee the territory, resulting in Nagorno-Karabakh being almost entirely deprived of its Armenian population, who had been living there for centuries.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have engaged in **direct negotiations** toward a possible peace agreement, which could open a new chapter in bilateral relations. However, disagreement persists on matters related to delimitation and demarcation of the border.

Parliament recognised and welcomed the fact that Armenia has strongly emphasised its desire to enhance and prioritise relations with the European Union. It believes that the European Union should respond positively and take full advantage of this potential geopolitical shift and help Armenia anchor itself more strongly in the community of democracies. Members believe that, should Armenia be interested in applying for candidate status, this could set the stage for a transformative phase in EU-Armenia relations. Both the Commission and the Council are called on to actively support Armenia's desire for increased cooperation with the EU, not only in the area of economic partnership but also in political dialogue, people-to-people contacts, sectoral integration and security cooperation.

The Commission and the Member States are encouraged to start working on a **roadmap to achieve an ambitious upgrade to the EU's relations with Armenia**. Parliament also encouraged Armenia's active engagement in the Eastern Partnership policy as a means of fostering good neighbourly relations in the South Caucasus.

While recognising that Russia's influence on the Armenian economy remains high, Armenia is encouraged to exert vigilance on possible EU sanctions circumvention taking place in the country. The EU needs to be ready to provide rapid assistance to Armenia to mitigate the negative consequences of any such unfriendly steps.

Over the last 10 years, the volume of Armenia-EU bilateral trade has been increasing. In this regard, Parliament encouraged 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.

The resolution called 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. Moreover, Parliament called for the progress achieved by Armenia in implementing the agreements on **visa facilitation and readmission** to be acknowledged and believes that it is time to launch a **visa liberalisation dialogue** with Armenia. Members also welcomed the conclusion of the agreement between the EU and Armenia, which will enable the transfer of operational personal data between Eurojust and Armenia's competent authorities as part of judicial cooperation in criminal matters. They underlined the importance of continuing to deepen the cooperation between the EU and Armenia in fighting crime and terrorism and protecting the security of the Union for mutual benefit.

Members expressed support for the activities of the civilian EU Mission in Armenia (**EUMA**) and called for its mandate to be extended beyond 2025 and its staffing to be further increased. Parliament underscored that the EU should be ready to impose **sanctions** on any individuals and entities that threaten the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Armenia.

Parliament reiterated its condemnation of the Azerbaijani military incursions into the internationally recognised territory of Armenia and expressed support for the resumption of talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan on all pending issues, with the aim of concluding a peace treaty.

Türkiye and other allies of Azerbaijan are urged to refrain from fuelling bellicose behaviour from Baku and to exert their influence in favour of a swift conclusion to the peace negotiations.

The resolution expressed serious concern about the failure to safeguard the cultural, religious and historical heritage of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh.