EC/Armenia agreement: partnership and cooperation agreement

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Following the endorsement by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements between the EU and its Member States on the one part and the Transcaucasian Republic - Armenia on the other part, the Committee on External Economic Relations (Chair: Ms Luciana CASTELLINA (GUE/NGL,I)) delivered a positive assessment of the economic and commercial aspects of the agreement with Armenia (consultation procedure; Rapporteur: Peter KITTELMANN (EPP, D)). The committee beleives that it is urgent and essential for the European Union to step up its presence in the Transcaucasian region and contribute to the political stabilisation and economic development of the region and of Armenia in particular. The motion for a resolution that accompanies the report acknowledges the progress made by Armenia as far as the respect for the principles of a free market economy is concerned and calls upon the Armenian government to fight corruption and the organised criminal cartels that might hamper further progress. It expresses concern for the irregularities identified by international observers during the presidential elections of last September, but welcomes the constructive response of the Armenian authorities. The European Commission is called upon to ensure the smooth transition from relief to structural aid (TACIS). The Agreement confirms the EU·s commitment to support Armenia·s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The committee is calling for the immediate termination of the occupation of part of Azerbaijan·s national territory by Armenia as well as of the economic blockade imposed on Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan.