



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **OSCE Special Permanent Council No. 1433 Vienna, 20 July 2023**

#### **EU Statement in response to the address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes Foreign Minister Mirzoyan back to the Permanent Council.
2. Since your last visit to Vienna in January 2023, we have witnessed comprehensive and productive negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, thanks to the active involvement of the European Union and the complementary efforts of the United States of America, and despite a worrying increase in tensions on the ground over the past few months.
3. Following last week's latest Brussels trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev, President of the European Council Michel encouraged the two leaders to take further courageous steps to ensure decisive and irreversible progress on the normalisation track. In particular, the EU expects the Azerbaijani side to take concrete steps in providing clear reassurances for the rights and security of the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh. All outstanding issues should be resolved through negotiations, without the use or threat of force.
4. The EU has been repeatedly calling on the Azerbaijani authorities to fully ensure restoration of movement of goods and people along the Lachin corridor, in line with the ICJ Orders of February and July 2023, as well as unrestricted supplies of energy. Increased restrictions to such freedom of movement are causing significant distress among the local population. The EU is alarmed about the humanitarian impact

resulting from the lack of food, medicines and other essential goods, as a result of current restrictions. The ban on ICRC transports to and from the region by Azerbaijani authorities has been worrisome. The current situation is not sustainable and creates tensions that run contrary to much-needed confidence-building efforts.

5. The EU also recalls the importance of the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA) that aims at contributing to ensuring an environment conducive to the normalisation efforts supported by the EU.
6. We wish to reiterate our strong support to a stable, democratic, sovereign, and prosperous Armenia. We welcome Armenia's continued commitment to reforms in line with our common values, in spite of the difficult security context of the region. We will continue working together to strengthen human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and media freedom. In this respect, we would like to recall the importance of continuous improvement in the independence and efficiency of the judiciary and the fight against corruption in order to increase citizens' trust in public institutions, as well as in eliminating discrimination on all grounds. The EU stands ready to continue assisting Armenia in the implementation of our Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and in addressing socio-economic challenges.
7. In conclusion, Minister Mirzoyan, let me reiterate the EU's continued support to Armenia, its citizens and the normalisation of its relations with Azerbaijan. The EU stands ready to contribute to all efforts to build confidence and strengthen regional security.

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

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