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*Plenary sitting*

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**B10-0139/2024**

21.10.2024

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 136(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Azerbaijan, violation of human rights and international law  
and relations with Armenia  
(2024/2890(RSP))

**Nathalie Loiseau, Petras Auštrevičius, Helmut Brandstätter, Benoit  
Cassart, Olivier Chastel, Veronika Cifrová Ostrihoňová, Bernard Guetta,  
Karin Karlsbro, Ľubica Karvašová, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann,  
Hilde Vautmans, Lucia Yar, Dainius Žalimas**  
on behalf of the Renew Group

**B10-0139/2024**

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Azerbaijan, violation of human rights and international law and relations with Armenia (2024/2890(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Azerbaijan and on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh,
  - having regard to the relevant documents and international agreements, including but not limited to the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Alma-Ata Declaration of 21 December 1991,
  - having regard to the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions of the Election Observation Mission to the Early Presidential elections held on 7 February 2024 and to the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission of the Early Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan held on 1 September 2024,
  - having regard to the report of 29 March 2023 by the Council of Europe’s European Commission against Racism and Intolerance on Azerbaijan and to the memorandum of 21 October 2021 by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights on the humanitarian and human rights consequences following the 2020 outbreak of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh,
  - having regard to the orders of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) of 22 February 2023, of 6 July 2023 and of 17 November 2023 on the request for the indication of provisional measures for the application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (*Armenia v Azerbaijan*),
  - having regard to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,
  - having regard to Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the choice of Azerbaijan’s capital Baku as the venue for the 29th United Nations Climate Change conference (COP29), scheduled to take place from 11 to 22 November 2024, has sparked controversy, notably owing to Azerbaijan’s worsening human rights record, as well as recent and blatant violations of international law, including aggressive behaviour towards its neighbour Armenia; whereas in the lead-up to this major international conference, the Azerbaijani authorities have intensified their repression of civil society organisations, activists, opposition politicians and the remaining independent media through detentions and judicial harassment;
- B. whereas civil society organisations list over 300 political prisoners in Azerbaijan, including Gubad Ibadoghlu, Anar Mammadli, Bakhtiyar Hajiyev, Tofiq Yagublu, Ilhamiz Guliyev, Aziz Orujov, Bahruz Samadov and Akif Gurbanov; whereas there are credible reports of violations of prisoners’ human rights, including detention in inhumane conditions, torture and refusal of adequate medical care;

- C. whereas in recent years, the Azerbaijani authorities have imposed increasingly stringent restrictions on civil society organisations; whereas activists, journalists, political opponents and others have been imprisoned on fabricated and politically motivated charges;
- D. whereas Gubad Ibadoghlu, a political economist, opposition figure and one of the finalists for the 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, was arrested by Azerbaijani authorities in July 2023 and remained in detention until 22 April 2024, when he was transferred to house arrest; whereas his health has deteriorated significantly since his arrest, as a result of torture, inhumane detention conditions and refusal of adequate medical care, thus endangering his life; whereas the health of Gubad Ibadoghlu's wife, Irada Bayramova, continues to deteriorate as a result of the physical violence she suffered during her detention by the Azerbaijani authorities;
- E. whereas the Azerbaijani regime appears to extend its repressive actions beyond its borders; whereas, since 2020, Mahammad Mirzali, an Azerbaijani dissident blogger, has been the target of several assassination attempts in France; whereas, on 29 September 2024, Vidadi Isgandarli, a critic of the Azerbaijani regime living as a political refugee in France, was attacked in his home and succumbed to his injuries two days later; whereas the Azerbaijani authorities have also engaged in politically motivated prosecutions of EU citizens, as seen in the case of Théo Clerc, prompting at least one Member State to formally warn its citizens against travelling to Azerbaijan owing to the risk of arbitrary detention;
- F. whereas according to the Election Observation Mission led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), the early presidential election held on 7 February 2024 took place in a restrictive environment and was marked by the stifling of critical voices and the absence of political alternatives; whereas Azerbaijan held early parliamentary elections on 1 September 2024 in what the OSCE/ODIHR-led International Election Observation Mission described as a restrictive political and legal environment that did not enable genuine pluralism and resulted in a contest devoid of competition; whereas in the period leading up to the parliamentary elections, several government critics were detained;
- G. whereas according to Reporters Without Borders, virtually the entire media sector in Azerbaijan is under official control, with no independent television or radio broadcasts from within the country, and all critical print newspapers shut down; whereas the authorities continue to suppress the last remaining independent media and repress journalists who reject self-censorship;
- H. whereas media legislation in Azerbaijan has become increasingly repressive, with the February 2022 media law effectively legalising censorship; whereas several other laws affecting the media also violate the country's international obligations with regard to freedom of expression and press freedom; whereas public criticism of the authorities is subject to severe penalties;
- I. whereas in September 2023, after months of the illegal blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan launched a pre-planned, unjustified military attack on the territory, forcing

over 100 000 ethnic Armenians to flee to Armenia, which amounts to ethnic cleansing; whereas as a result, Nagorno-Karabakh has been almost entirely emptied of its Armenian population, who had been living there for centuries; whereas this attack represents a gross violation of human rights and international law, a clear breach of the trilateral ceasefire statement of 9 November 2020 and a failure to uphold commitments made during EU-mediated negotiations;

- J. whereas the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh lost their property and belongings while fleeing the Azerbaijani military push in 2023 and have been unable to recover them since; whereas actions amounting to ethnic cleansing have continued since then; whereas the EU has provided humanitarian aid to people displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh; whereas credible reports confirm the organised destruction of Armenian cultural and religious heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh; whereas Azerbaijani leaders and officials repeatedly use hate speech against Armenians;
- K. whereas both Azerbaijan and Armenia are bound by international humanitarian law and the Third Geneva Convention protects prisoners of war from all forms of torture and cruel treatment; whereas reports indicate that 23 Armenian prisoners are currently being held in Azerbaijani prisons, including eight former leaders of the unrecognised Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, some of whom have received long prison sentences;
- L. whereas in February 2023, the EU deployed the European Union Mission in Armenia (EUMA) to observe developments at the international border with Azerbaijan; whereas Azerbaijan has refused to cooperate with EUMA and the mission has been the target of disinformation by Azerbaijani authorities and government-controlled media; whereas Azerbaijan occupies territories internationally recognised as Armenian;
- M. whereas Armenia and Azerbaijan have engaged in negotiations on a peace treaty, the normalisation of their relations and border delimitation, both before and after the 2023 attack on Nagorno-Karabakh; whereas, despite mediation efforts by the EU and others, no peace agreement has been signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia; whereas, although both governments have stated that they are close to an agreement, recent remarks by the Azerbaijani President indicate that Baku is not eager to conclude the negotiations;
- N. whereas the EU fully supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia and actively supports efforts towards a sustainable peace agreement between the two countries, achieved by peaceful means and respecting the rights of the population concerned;
- O. whereas since Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Azerbaijan has deepened its relations with Russia, including political and economic ties, as well as increased cooperation between their intelligence services; whereas Russia has openly backed Azerbaijan in its aggressive behaviour towards Armenia; whereas there are worrying reports of Russian gas being rebranded as Azerbaijani for sale in the EU;
- P. whereas Azerbaijani leaders have engaged in anti-EU and anti-Western rhetoric; whereas Azerbaijan has intensified its disinformation campaigns targeting the EU and its Member States, with a specific focus on France; whereas Azerbaijan has actively interfered in European politics under the guise of 'anti-colonialism', notably in overseas

countries and territories such as New Caledonia;

1. Strongly condemns the domestic and extraterritorial repression by the Azerbaijani regime against activists, journalists, opposition leaders and others, including EU nationals, which has noticeably intensified ahead of COP29; urges the Azerbaijani authorities to release all persons arbitrarily detained or imprisoned on account of their political views, to drop all politically motivated charges, and to cease all forms of repression, both within and beyond Azerbaijan;
2. Reiterates its call for the Azerbaijani authorities to lift the travel ban and drop all charges against Dr Gubad Ibadoghlu; calls on Azerbaijan to ensure that he receives an independent medical examination by a doctor of his own choosing and to allow him to receive treatment abroad;
3. Expresses deep concern about the choice of Baku as the host city for COP29, given Azerbaijan's flagrant violations of fundamental rights, democracy and international law; considers that Azerbaijan's ongoing human rights abuses are incompatible with its hosting of COP29; urges the EU to use COP29 as an opportunity for the international community to remind Azerbaijan of its international obligations and to condemn and meaningfully address the country's human rights record in their interactions with the Azerbaijani authorities;
4. Demands that the organisers of COP29 ensure that human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully enshrined and guaranteed in the Host Country Agreement; calls for the EU and its Member States to do their utmost to ensure that United Nations Climate Change Conferences are not hosted in countries with poor human rights records;
5. Reminds the Azerbaijani authorities of their obligations to respect fundamental freedoms, and calls on them to repeal repressive legislation that drives independent non-governmental organisations and media to the margins of the law; reminds the Azerbaijani Government of its international obligations to safeguard the dignity and rights of detainees, ensuring that they receive adequate medical care, are detained in humane conditions and are protected from any mistreatment;
6. Reiterates its call for EU sanctions to be imposed under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime on Azerbaijani officials who have committed serious human rights violations;
7. Insists that any future partnership agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan be made conditional on the release of all political prisoners, the implementation of legal reforms, and the overall improvement of the human rights situation in the country;
8. Calls on the EU Special Representative for Human Rights to request meetings with political prisoners in Azerbaijan;
9. Reaffirms its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Azerbaijan and Armenia; reiterates its demand for the withdrawal of Azerbaijan's troops from the entirety of Armenia's sovereign territory; calls on Azerbaijan to unequivocally commit to respecting Armenia's territorial integrity;

10. Expresses its support for the activities of the European Union Mission in Armenia (EUMA) and underscores the important role it plays; reiterates its concern regarding the repeated smear campaigns originating from Azerbaijan against EUMA; calls on EUMA to continue to closely monitor the evolving security situation on the ground, provide transparent reporting to Parliament and actively contribute to conflict resolution efforts; calls for the EU and its Member States to strengthen EUMA's mandate, increase its size and extend its duration;
11. Urges Azerbaijan and Armenia to promptly sign a peace treaty – before COP29 – in order to resolve their long-lasting disputes; warns Azerbaijan that any military action against Armenia would be unacceptable and would have serious consequences for the partnership between Azerbaijan and the EU;
12. Calls for the full implementation of all orders issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including the 17 November 2023 order indicating provisional measures regarding the safe, unimpeded and expeditious return of people who fled Nagorno-Karabakh; recalls that the decision to host COP29 in Baku was made after Azerbaijan failed to comply with the abovementioned ICJ order as well as those of 7 December 2021 and of 22 February 2023; reiterates its call on the Azerbaijani authorities to allow the safe return of the Armenian population to Nagorno-Karabakh, to provide robust guarantees for the protection of their rights and to refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric that could incite discrimination against Armenians; urges the Azerbaijani authorities to release all 23 Armenian prisoners of war detained following Azerbaijan's retaking of the Nagorno-Karabakh region;
13. Reiterates its call for the EU institutions and the Member States to continue to offer assistance to Armenia to deal with the refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh;
14. Expresses deep concern regarding the preservation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh following the massive exodus of its Armenian population; urges Azerbaijan to refrain from further destruction, neglect or alteration of the origins of cultural, religious, or historical heritage in the region;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Armenia, the Director-General of UNESCO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations and the Council of Europe.