



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council 1406 Vienna, 17 January 2023

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

1. The European Union warmly welcomes Foreign Minister Mirzoyan to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his address and his personal engagement in this forum.
2. As a key reform partner and the largest donor, the EU is committed to a stable, democratic and prosperous Armenia. The EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) provides the framework to further strengthen our relations in a wide range of areas and to support Armenia's important reform efforts, including in the judicial and legal sector and in the fight against corruption. EU budget support programmes for the implementation of justice reform and the mitigation of the socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are recent examples of successful cooperation between the EU and the Government of Armenia. The EU welcomes Armenia's commitment to the CEPA implementation, positively appreciates the reforms undertaken to date, notes that further progress to the benefit of the Armenian citizens is still needed and, to this end, assures of the EU's full support.
3. The EU and Armenia share a joint commitment to human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democratic principles. The EU-Armenia Human Rights Dialogue held last November in Brussels took positive note of the developments related to the human rights situation in the country despite the tense security situation, in particular the new law on the rights of persons with disabilities and improvements in the media environment. The EU is committed to continue working

together with Armenia to strengthen human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

4. The EU encourages continued positive engagement of Armenia with the OSCE in all three dimensions, and a constructive approach and flexibility on the necessary decisions to ensure the well-functioning of our Organisation.
5. The EU has been following with concern the developments around the Lachin corridor since the beginning of December 2022, and reiterates its call on the Azerbaijani authorities to fully restore freedom and security of movement along the corridor, in line with the commitments deriving from the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020. Restrictions to such freedom of movement are causing significant distress among the local population. The EU is increasingly alarmed about the negative humanitarian impact resulting from the lack of food, medicine and other essential goods and medical services, in addition to disruptions to energy supplies and telecommunications. The situation is not sustainable and creates tensions that run contrary to much-needed confidence-building efforts. The EU reiterates that all concerns can and should be addressed through dialogue and consultations with the parties involved and calls for a return to negotiations. The EU stands ready to contribute to all efforts to build confidence and to address concerns through dialogue, including through a CSDP mission in Armenia, currently under consideration.
6. In conclusion, Minister Mirzoyan, let me reiterate the EU's continued support to Armenia and its citizens.

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

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