



EU-Armenia Parliamentary Partnership Committee

4th meeting

Yerevan, 25 February 2025

FINAL STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Pursuant to Article 365 of the EU-Armenia
Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA)*

The fourth meeting of the EU-Armenia Parliamentary Partnership Committee (PPC) was held in Yerevan on 25 February 2025, under the co-chairmanship of Mr Arman Yeghoyan, on behalf of the National Assembly of Armenia, and of Mr Nils Ušakovs, on behalf of the European Parliament.

Having considered the state of play of EU-Armenia relations, the Parliamentary Partnership Committee agreed upon the following final statement and recommendations.

The Parliamentary Partnership Committee:

1. Welcomes the fact that, since its 3rd meeting, EU-Armenia relations have further deepened and broadened considerably, developing dynamically in an expanding range of areas, underpinned by a strong partnership based on common values, including a common commitment to democracy, the rule of law, good governance and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
2. Welcomes the adoption, at first reading, by the National Assembly of Armenia of the draft law on initiating the process of Armenia's accession to the European Union, based on a citizens' initiative; invites the government of Armenia and the EU institutions to discuss a realistic plan of work towards this strategic objective for the country's future, in full respect of the will of the Armenian people and in compliance with the requirements set out in Article 49 TEU and the Copenhagen Criteria;
3. Emphasises that should Armenia decide to submit a formal application for EU membership, it will be crucial to ensure clear and honest communication explaining to the Armenian citizens the process, requirements and implications of EU accession, so as to ensure swift implementation of reforms on the ground and to create realistic expectations in this regard; points out the significant role of parliaments in this respect;
4. Stresses the fact that the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the EU and Armenia represents a solid basis for close Armenia-EU alignment in many areas; notes Armenia's progress in CEPA's implementation and appreciates that the agreement has served as a comprehensive guide for the country's internal

reforms; underlines that the full implementation of commitments under CEPA, including the adoption of the relevant laws and their rigorous application in practice, would be a strong signal of the seriousness of Armenia's European ambition;

5. Welcomes the negotiations on the new ambitious EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda which should reflect the mutual interest in deepening the bilateral ties in all their dimensions, including on security and defence matters, on enhancing Armenia's resilience, on the diversification of its economic, trade and energy relations, fostering people-to-people contacts, and numerous other issues;
6. Notes with satisfaction the opening of the visa liberalisation dialogue between the EU and Armenia in September 2024; acknowledges the good implementation by Armenia of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements; encourages EU member states to expand capacities of their Embassies in Armenia in order to ensure the fulfilment of obligations under the visa facilitation agreement; encourages the Armenian government to spare no effort in order to meet the EU benchmarks for visa-free travel as soon as possible and calls on the EU to provide related technical support; stresses that visa liberalisation would represent a major milestone in terms of Armenia's rapprochement with the EU and its benefits for all Armenian citizens;
7. Strongly welcomes the deepened EU-Armenia cooperation on security, which includes in particular the EU decision to provide non-lethal assistance under the European Peace Facility, the significant contribution to stability on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border provided by the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA) and the extension of its mandate until 2027, as well as the establishment of the high-level EU-Armenia Political and Security Dialogue; welcomes the readiness of Armenia to contribute to the EU CSDP crisis management operations; recognises the urgent need to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and Armenia in the field of security and defence;
8. Welcomes the ratification of the agreement on cooperation between Armenia and Eurojust, allowing for close judicial cooperation in criminal matters, and of the agreement on cooperation between Armenia and Europol, to combat cross-border criminal activities; hails also Armenia's ratification of the Rome Statute and its becoming the 124th State Party of the International Criminal Court;
9. Stresses the importance of efforts to increase Armenia's economic and trade diversification and reduce existing dependencies, such as in particular in the energy sector, in order to guarantee the country's resilience and security; appreciates the results of the April 2024 EU-US-Armenia High Level Meeting and the EU's allocation of EUR 270 million for Armenia for the period 2024-2027 under a "Resilience and Growth Plan"; is concerned that current figures do not indicate progress in trade diversification and reducing dependencies and encourages additional efforts as a matter of priority; underlines that gradual reorientation of trade flows would be needed to ensure the viability of any prospect of a possible future EU accession;
10. Notes the contribution of the EU's Economic and Investment Plan and Global Gateway to stimulate investments in projects of strategic importance for Armenia's socio-economic resilience, in particular as regards increasing connectivity and supporting the most vulnerable regions; highlights EU-Armenia cooperation on energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources as a contribution to the country's energy security; calls for continued EU support to promote nuclear safety and recalls the need

to prepare the replacement of the Metsamor nuclear power plant with a new one by the predetermined deadline;

11. Recognises the fact that Armenia has established itself as a full-fledged democracy and a regional leader in good governance; notes the challenges, however, linked to the high degree of polarisation in politics and the media, including challenges created or fuelled by foreign interference aiming at the destabilisation of the country's democratic institutions; stresses the importance of including Armenia as a priority country for the European Parliament's democracy support programmes and looks forward to the cooperation between the National Assembly and the European Parliament on these activities;
12. Encourages further progress and continued EU support in the implementation of Armenia's national strategy for judicial and legal reforms; highlights the need to ensure transparency of decisions of the Supreme Judicial Council and enhance the accountability of the appointments in the judiciary, including through the publication of integrity check conclusions; stresses the importance of sustained implementation of Armenia's national anti-corruption strategy and of ensuring the independence and adequate capacities of the specialised anti-corruption institutions;
13. Notes the continuation of the ambitious process of police reforms that began with the establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2023, with important EU support; welcomes the Armenian government's decision to take due account of serious privacy concerns of data protection experts and to withdraw the controversial bill on mandatory CCTV cameras; stresses in this context the importance of broad and inclusive consultations with expert bodies and civil society organisations in the process of preparation of draft laws;
14. Recognises Armenia's good human rights record overall; points out that more effort is needed to increase gender equality, improve the situation of vulnerable and marginalised groups and that of minorities, and combat discrimination; recognises Armenia's human rights record while noting the necessity for continued vigilance in safeguarding fundamental freedoms and ensuring judicial independence;
15. Acknowledges the overall respect of the freedom of expression, press freedom and internet freedom in Armenia, as also attested by the country's rankings in independent evaluations by leading international NGOs; notes, however, persistent media polarisation reinforcing social divisions; is concerned by the spreading of disinformation campaigns and propaganda, orchestrated by third countries, aiming at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Armenia, subverting its democratic order, or targeting the EU and the West in general; encourages the Armenian government to address this issue;
16. Welcomes the gradual strengthening of the capacities of Armenia's border guard troops and the fact that Armenia has resumed responsibility for the management of all its international border crossings; encourages EU support in establishment of integrated border management and further building of the border guard's capacities as it increases its presence at additional sections of the borders;
17. Encourages further progress in negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the peace treaty and the normalisation of their relations; appreciates the constructive

approach of the Armenian government in the negotiations; calls on Azerbaijan to abandon its maximalist positions and refrain from raising new pre-conditions which raise doubts about its genuine intentions to achieve sustainable peace;

18. Regrets Azerbaijan's decision to reject the EU's mediation and discontinue the Brussels process, as well as its refusal to cooperate with the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA) and condemns its repeated disinformation attacks against the mission; stresses the key contribution of the unarmed civilian EUMA mission in terms of preventing border incidents and monitoring the situation along the Armenian side of the border; welcomes and supports the Armenian government's repeated proposal to establish a joint verification mechanism with Azerbaijan to investigate allegations of border incidents as well as arms control mechanism and is concerned by Azerbaijan's lack of response;
19. Recalls that EUMA's presence is the consequence of the large-scale military aggression by Azerbaijan in September 2022 against the territory of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the military incursions into Armenian territory since May 2021; calls on Azerbaijan to immediately withdraw from all parts of the territory of Armenia; calls on Azerbaijan to unequivocally commit to respecting Armenia's territorial integrity; reiterates its position that the EU should be ready to impose sanctions on any individuals and entities that threaten the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Armenia and calls for the suspension of the 2022 EU-Azerbaijan memorandum of understanding on the strategic partnership in the field of energy;
20. Welcomes the landmark agreement on the delimitation of the first sections of the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and the signing and ratification of the regulation on the joint activity of the border delimitation commissions; looks forward to the further work of the border commissions; stresses the importance of the mutual recognition of territorial integrity of both countries, in line with the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1991;
21. Strongly condemns Azerbaijan's September 2023 military attack against Nagorno-Karabakh leading to the forced displacement of the entire Armenian population of the region amounting to ethnic cleansing, which was preceded by a 9-months long illegal blockade of the region's lifeline, the Lachin Corridor, in blatant violation of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020 and of binding orders of the International Court of Justice; deplores also Russia's manifest failure to fulfil its obligations under the trilateral statement;
22. Strongly condemns recurrent threats and inflammatory statements from the Azerbaijani leadership, including threats against the EUMA mission; reiterates its demand to refrain from such aggressive rhetoric as it can in no way contribute to the atmosphere conducive to peace; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to react to such statements in order to prevent that a lack of reaction is interpreted as greenlight for further escalation by the Azerbaijani side; insists on making any future partnership agreement conditional on the release of all political prisoners, POWs and the improvement of the overall human rights situation in the country;
23. Recognises the challenges faced by Armenia in terms of coping with the influx of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh; takes the view that additional efforts from the Armenian authorities are needed to facilitate their integration; appreciates the EU support provided and calls for sustained EU and Member States assistance;

24. Deplores the violation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians' property rights by Azerbaijan, the destruction of their property, as well as the destruction or altering the origins of Armenian heritage sites in and around Nagorno-Karabakh; stresses that the right to return of the displaced population must be guaranteed, under conditions ensuring the respect of their rights and security; recalls the key principles of the Helsinki Final Act of non-use of force, territorial integrity, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as well as the OSCE Minsk Group's 2009 Basic Principles and elements, and condemns the fact of their flagrant violation; calls on Azerbaijan to release all Armenian prisoners of war and detainees and end their prosecution; denounces the ongoing unfair trials of prisoners from Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan; calls on the EU Special Representative for Human Rights to conduct meetings with them in Azerbaijan and calls for targeted EU sanctions under its Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against Azerbaijani officials responsible for severe human rights violations;
25. Welcomes Armenia's Crossroads of Peace project aimed at the opening of transport connections in the region, in line with Armenia's and Azerbaijan's earlier commitments; stresses the key principles of the project in terms of full respect of the sovereignty and national legislation/jurisdiction of the respective countries, as well as reciprocity; stresses the EU's readiness to support increased connectivity and urges Azerbaijan to agree to these fundamental principles in order to unblock the communications for the benefit of the whole region; is seriously concerned by Azerbaijan's unlawful demands that would violate Armenia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and by related threats of the use of force;
26. Welcomes Armenia's readiness to proceed in the process of normalisation of relations with Türkiye initiated in 2021 and work towards the objective of reopening of the common border; encourages Türkiye to recommit to the process, build on its achievements and implement the outstanding agreements; stresses the positive effects of such steps for the entire South Caucasus region in terms of security as well as socio-economic development and the interest of the EU to support this process;
27. Appreciates Armenia's principled position with regard to the territorial integrity of Ukraine, based inter alia on the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1991; underlines that the EU and Armenia have an overarching shared interest in upholding rules-based international order and defending democracy and sovereignty against autocracy and aggression.