

Brussels, 18/11/2020
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To all MEPs signatory to the letter on the situation in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh

Honourable Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for the letter of 5 October 2020 expressing your utmost concern regarding the humanitarian toll taken by the conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.

The EU has consistently supported efforts toward a fair and lasting peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in accordance with international law and principles. There can be no military solution to this conflict; the only way forward is for the sides to recommit to a lasting ceasefire and to return to the negotiating table to seek a peaceful settlement of the conflict under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-chairs, which the EU fully supports. Any external interference that may lead to further casualties and increase the risks for the region should be avoided. This position has also been reiterated by the EU Heads of State and Government at the European Council on 1 October.

The EU continues to be actively engaged in efforts to de-escalate the situation. Armenia and Azerbaijan have at their disposal their mechanism for direct communication, the offices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, as well as the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

EU has made it clear that international humanitarian law must be respected and the protection of civilian life and infrastructure ensured. To address the needs of the civilian population affected by the conflict, we have also allocated emergency aid that will help our humanitarian partners, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, to provide immediate relief.

Since the conflict was reignited, I have been in constant contact with both Ministers and met the Armenian President. I have been calling upon them – and will continue to do so – to seize all opportunities for a ceasefire and the launch of a political engagement in view of solving the conflict. I have also been sending constant public messages and repeatedly condemning attacks on civilians. I have been in touch with all three Minsk co-chairs and I continue to lend active support to their work and efforts.

The cease-fire that was agreed by the sides on 9 November has stopped the fighting but more efforts are needed towards a lasting solution to the conflict. I will continue efforts in support of the established framework for addressing the unresolved issues, notably the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, and provide any assistance that can be helpful in facilitating a negotiated, comprehensive and sustainable settlement acceptable to all and providing for lasting reconciliation, peace and prosperity.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Josep Borrell Fontelles