



To:

**Charles Michel**, President of the European Council

**Ursula von der Leyen**, President of the European Commission

**Josep Borrell**, Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

20 September 2023

After years of diplomatic neglect by the European Union, we welcome your growing role in seeking to bring peace and stability to the Southern Caucasus. At the same time we, the under-signed Members of the European Parliament, are increasingly concerned about Azerbaijan's continued attempts to thwart these objectives and thus work against the Union's interests.

Since December 2022, Azerbaijan continues to block access to Nagorno Karabakh through the Lachin Corridor. Despite your personal overtures and continued calls of the international community, the population of Nagorno Karabakh is on the verge of starvation and used as a hostage by the Aliyev regime. It continues to block the entry of food, medicine and other essential goods, while water and fuel are increasingly scarce, resulting in power blackouts, long queues for already scarce food, and hospitals struggling to treat patients. Now the regime has launched a new despicable wave of military aggression against Nagorno Karabakh, leading to further loss of innocent lives and destruction.

Furthermore, the relaunch of Russian gas supplies to Azerbaijan raises serious questions about the viability of the Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Partnership in the Field of Energy signed between the EU and Azerbaijan. Irrespective of whether Azerbaijan re-exports Russian gas to Europe via the Southern Corridor or uses it to supply its domestic market in order to free up gas and enable it to meet its MoU commitments, these steps contravene the political intention of the MoU, which was agreed specifically to boost the volumes of Azerbaijan gas flowing to Europe so as to help the EU reduce its dependence on Russian gas. Thus, while Azerbaijan provides humanitarian aid to Ukraine, it also cynically capitalises on Russian aggression.

We also cannot remain silent about the Aliyev regime's continued suppression of fundamental human rights of the Azerbaijani people, including arrests and detentions of opposition and human rights activists. Most recently, the economist and government critic Dr Gubad Ibadoghlu has been arrested on trumped up charges, subjected to excessive use of forced and denied medical care.

The regime not only continues to violate international law and fundamental human rights, engages in military aggression instead of contributing to conflict resolution, but



also contravenes existing agreements with the Union. We, therefore, urgently call on you to:

- i) Conduct immediate testing of gas reaching the European Union through the Southern Gas Corridor to determine whether Azerbaijan is re-exporting Russian gas to the EU
- ii) Impose sanctions as a consequence of Azerbaijan's military aggression
- iii) Temporarily suspend bilateral relations until Azerbaijan recommits, in both words and in deeds, to the pursuit of peace, respect for fundamental human rights, and the upholding of international law and agreements

We further call on you to provide all necessary support to the government of Armenia in pursuing lasting regional peace and security.

Signed:

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