



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Ad Hoc Communiqué by the Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence

Armenia and Azerbaijan For a peaceful settlement respectful of minority rights

Once again, a Council of Europe member state has wilfully disregarded the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, using military force and the policy of *fait accompli* to violate the human rights of an ethnic and religious minority on its territory, in order to "settle" a long-standing border dispute with another state, also a member of the Council of Europe.

The brutal invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh by the Azerbaijani army on September 27, 2023 had been foreseeable since the ceasefire of 2020. President Ilham Aliyev's public statements left no doubt as to his intentions and how he wished to treat the Armenian population of this territory. By blocking the Latchine corridor from December 2022, Azerbaijan has prevented the delivery of food and medicines essential to the survival of the Armenian population living in this territory, as a prelude to the occupation of the territory.

The Conference of INGOs deplors the passivity of the international community in the face of this blockade, and regrets that the European Union has, in this context, entered into an agreement with Azerbaijan to buy gas from it, some of which is undoubtedly Russian gas, while the human rights of the 120,000 Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh were being trampled underfoot by the organization of this blockade.

The Conference of INGOs also notes that the international community knew that the Russian "interposition force", in agreement with the Turkish authorities, would not intervene and would let the military forces of Azerbaijan invade the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh on September 27, 2023, sowing death and fear and carrying out a veritable "ethnic cleansing" operation, driving over 100,000 Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh onto the road.

Finally, the Conference of INGOs regrets that the Council of Europe, of which Armenia and Azerbaijan are members, was unable to impose a peaceful settlement respecting minority rights on the countries concerned.

The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe therefore urges the European authorities to restore the confidence of European citizens in the values which led to the creation of the Council of Europe and the construction of the European Union, and calls on them to take action.

The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe recalls that both Armenia and Azerbaijan undertook, when they joined the Council of Europe in January 2001, to use only peaceful means to settle the conflict, refraining from threatening to use force against their neighboring country. The Conference urges both governments to respect these commitments and to refrain from using armed force against each other, or from developing military actions. The Conference of INGOs of the

Council of Europe hopes that the Secretary General of the Council of Europe will urgently draw up an action and assistance plan for Armenia and Azerbaijan, focusing on reconciliation processes.

The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe also hopes that the various bodies of the Council of Europe will resume work on existing conflict resolution mechanisms within the Council of Europe, in particular the European Convention for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, in order to provide member states with mechanisms better suited to the peaceful resolution of bilateral conflicts, which can represent a threat to human rights, stability and peace.

The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe urges the European Union to send a greater number of civilian observers to Armenia, to monitor the country's borders and to denounce, if necessary, any violations of human rights.

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Finally, the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe considers that the member states of the Council of Europe and the European Union must clearly affirm their refusal to accept the policy of *fait accompli* and the violation of human rights, by significantly sanctioning the leaders of Azerbaijan, in particular President Aliiev and his family.