

Question for written answer E-002165/2025

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 144

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Subject: Joint military exercise between Azerbaijan and IRGC in Nagorno-Karabakh and implications for EU sanctions policy

Between 12 and 21 May 2025, Azerbaijani special forces and the ground forces of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) held a joint military exercise called 'Aras-2025' in Nagorno-Karabakh, a region from which the Armenian population was forcibly expelled in September 2023.

The IRGC is under European Union sanctions due to serious human rights violations as well as its involvement in supporting the Russian Federation in its aggressive war against Ukraine. According to reports, IRGC units entered Azerbaijani territory through the Bileh Savar border crossing.

This military cooperation between a country designated by the EU as a strategic partner and an organisation subject to sanctions raises serious concerns about the credibility and coherence of the Union's external activities, including the sanctions regime.

1. How does the High Representative/Vice-President assess the impact of this military cooperation on the effectiveness and credibility of European sanctions policy?
2. Is the European Commission considering a review of the Strategic Partnership with Azerbaijan, including the Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Energy?

Submitted: 29.5.2025