(English version)

Question for written answer E-002524/24
to the Commission
Barbara Bonte (PfE)
(13 November 2024)

Subject: Baku Climate Conference

On 11 November 2024, the United Nations Climate Conference got underway in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan invaded the unconquered part of Nagorno-Karabakh on 19 September 2023. Then, following the armistice on 20 September 2023, Artsakh was practically ethnically cleansed by Azerbaijan. Since this war of aggression, Azerbaijan has been doing everything in its power to destroy all traces of Armenian culture.

Azerbaijan ranked 134th out of 167 countries in the Economist Intelligence Unit's democracy index 2022. According to the EU's latest annual report on human rights and democracy in the world, published in July 2023, the situation in Azerbaijan regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as respect for the rule of law, remains worrying.

The European Commission is clearly applying double standards when it comes to condemnation and partnerships with third countries, as Azerbaijan remains one of the EU's favoured energy partners.

1. Has the Commission raised objections with the UN about the choice of Baku as the venue for the climate conference?

2. Does the Commission intend to raise the issue of the Nagorno-Karabakh ethnic cleansing at the conference?

Submitted: 13.11.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(5 February 2025)

The Conference of the Parties (COP) Presidency traditionally rotates between regional groups of the United Nations (UN). Regional group members hold consultations to determine which country from their region would be nominated to preside the conference.

Once agreed, the country selected by the regional group sends through its regional group its nomination formally to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat.

Following that process, Azerbaijan was nominated by the Eastern European Group (EEG) during the COP28 as the President of COP29. At its final plenary, the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC endorsed Azerbaijan as President of COP29 ([1]).

The EU is not a member of any UN regional group. As such, it did not have a role in the decision of the EEG to nominate Azerbaijan as the President of COP29.

The primary focus of COP29 held in Baku was to address the challenges of climate change. It was recalled in the statements made in September 2023 on Azerbaijan's military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh ([2]) and on the displacement of people from Nagorno-Karabakh ([3]). The EU is fully committed to achieving lasting peace and stability in the region through dialogue.

The EU has been actively engaged in facilitating the normalisation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan, notably under the President of the European Council's auspices.

The EU stands ready to lend its continued support, including through the new EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia and through economic support for peace dividends, in order to establish long-lasting peace to the benefit of all people in the region.

([1]) https://unfccc.int/documents/637071
([2]) https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-high-representative-developments-nagorno-karabakh_en
([3]) https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-displacement-people-nagorno-karabakh_en