

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000694/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(13 February 2025)

Subject: Business-as-usual with Azerbaijan

On 24 October, the European Parliament adopted the resolution ‘on situation in Azerbaijan, violation of human rights and international law and relations with Armenia’, in which MEPs unilaterally rejected the idea of business-as-usual with the Aliyev dictatorship regime.

However, on 4 December, the newly-elected Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas met with Azerbaijan’s Foreign Affairs Minister, Jeyhun Bayramov, in the margins of the 31st OSCE Ministerial Council. The EU representative later posted that the meeting had been ‘good’ and that the two sides discussed the EU-Azerbaijan partnership.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy answer the following:

1. What was so ‘good’ about the meeting? Did the Aliyev regime’s foreign affairs minister commit to release more than 320 political prisoners, repatriate Armenian hostages and give assurances about a dignified return of Armenians to Artsakh, in line with the legally binding rulings of the International Court of Justice?
2. Why can’t the EU do away with the policy of appeasement when dealing with dictatorial states like Azerbaijan?
3. Will the VP/HR continue to work with Azerbaijan’s dictatorship regime as normal?

Submitted: 13.2.2025

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

Human rights and the rule of law in Azerbaijan remain a priority for the EU and are at the core of the EU-Azerbaijan bilateral relations.

The EU has repeatedly voiced concerns regarding the unsettling rise of arrests of independent journalists, human rights defenders, and political activists ⁽¹⁾.

The EU has called on the Azerbaijani authorities to ensure that their actions adhere to the relevant obligations under domestic and international law.

In this context, the EU has consistently called for the release of all persons imprisoned for exercising their fundamental rights. These messages have been conveyed publicly and bilaterally at all levels, including at the level of the High Representative/Vice-President.

EU engagement with Azerbaijan remains instrumental in order to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the South Caucasus through regional cooperation, including in the context of the normalisation process between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The HRVP has welcomed the recent finalisation of negotiations between the two countries on a bilateral peace treaty and has called on them to keep this momentum and ensure the smooth completion of this process ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-human-rights-situation_en; https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-10-22-ITM-020_EN.html; https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-12-18-ITM-019-03_EN.html

⁽²⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/t%C3%BCrkiye/armeniaazerbaijan-statement-high-representativevice-president-regarding-finalisation-negotiations_en?s=230