

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003248/26
to the Commission
Marina Mesure (The Left)
(10 August 2026)**

Subject: Contradiction of strengthening the trade partnership with Baku while Armenian hostages and prisoners continue to be detained in Azerbaijan

On 1 July 2026, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen visited Baku to ‘deepen the EU-Azerbaijan partnership’ and boost energy cooperation and investment in the South Caucasus. Shortly thereafter, on 6 August 2026, Azerbaijan’s Court of Appeal ruled that it would uphold the harsh sentences given to Armenian prisoners and hostages in sham trials.

This arbitrary detention is in direct contradiction with the position of the European Parliament, which called in its resolution of 13 March 2025 for the 2022 memorandum of understanding in the field of energy to be suspended and insisted that any future partnership agreement with Baku be conditional on the release of Armenian prisoners and hostages.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission justify strengthening trade and energy partnerships with Azerbaijan when this approach directly contradicts the position adopted by the European Parliament?
2. What specific measures will it take to ensure that international law is observed and the Armenian prisoners and hostages are immediately and unconditionally released?

Submitted: 10.8.2026

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(17 September 2026)**

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

Moreover, the EU is committed to phasing out its energy dependency on Russia, including through efforts to diversify the supply of energy imports. Azerbaijan plays an important role in these diversification efforts.

The EU has closely followed the trials of Karabakh Armenians in Azerbaijan and has emphasised the importance of ensuring due process, the right to a fair trial and adequate detention conditions, in line with Azerbaijan’s international obligations.

The EU has also encouraged Armenia and Azerbaijan to address all outstanding humanitarian issues in the context of their bilateral normalisation process, including through confidence-building measures.

Following the initialling of the bilateral peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan on 8 August 2025, the parties have made important progress towards achieving lasting peace.

This progress has already resulted in several tangible steps to the benefit of both counties, including the release of detainees and the lifting of trade and transit restrictions. The EU strongly supports this process and remains ready to continue assisting both parties in their efforts.
