



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**EU-ARMENIA COOPERATION COUNCIL
TENTH MEETING, LUXEMBOURG, 26 OCTOBER 2009
Press Release**

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Armenia held its tenth meeting on Monday 26 October 2009. The meeting was chaired by Mr Edward Nalbandyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. The EU delegation was led by Mr Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden. Ms Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy represented the Commission and Mr Diego López Garrido, State Secretary for European Affairs represented the incoming Spanish Presidency. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Ambassador Peter Semneby also took part in the meeting.

The recent EU Foreign Ministers' Troika visit to Yerevan (20 July 2009) marked the continuing high level political dialogue between the EU and Armenia.

P R E S S

During the Cooperation Council, the parties discussed the implementation of the EU-Armenia European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan and issues connected with enhancing of EU-Armenia relations, including prospects for the negotiation of a new EU-Armenia Association Agreement within the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The Cooperation Council noted Armenia's strong commitment to the implementation of the ENP Action Plan, welcomed the progress made in some areas and agreed on the need to focus the efforts on further implementation, as reflected in the ENP Action Plan implementation Progress Report by the Commission, published in April 2009.

The Cooperation Council also provided a timely opportunity to take stock of developments in the South Caucasus, as well as the advancement of political and economic reforms in Armenia.

The EU underlined the importance of sufficient progress in democracy, rule of law and human rights, which belong to important conditions for the deepening of bilateral cooperation between the EU and Armenia within the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The EU further stressed that fundamental freedoms, as well as freedom of expression and freedom of the media are essential elements in the bilateral dialogue with Armenia. It reaffirmed its willingness to continue its support for the further development of democratic institutions in Armenia, including in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership.

The Cooperation Council also took note of the positive results of the first meetings of the multilateral thematic platforms of the Eastern Partnership, stressing the importance of a continuing positive attitude of all partners to this form of cooperation.

The Cooperation Council welcomed the signature by Armenia and Turkey of the two protocols relating to the establishment of diplomatic relations and the development of bilateral relations between the two countries, including the opening of the border. The Cooperation Council underlined that the full normalisation of bilateral relations between Armenia and Turkey would be an important contribution to security, stability and cooperation throughout this crucial region. The EU will continue to offer its political and technical support to this process.

The Cooperation Council explored the state of play concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU welcomed the intensified dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan within the OSCE Minsk Group, which has enabled to narrow the differences and indicated its willingness to support confidence building measures to facilitate the process of resolving the conflict.

The plenary meeting of the Cooperation Council was preceded by a joint ministerial working breakfast between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss Eastern Partnership and prospects for deeper cooperation between the EU and the three South Caucasian countries, as well as Conflict Resolution. Mr Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden represented the EU Presidency. He was accompanied by Mr Javier Solana, High Representative for CFSP, and by Mr Hugues Mingarelli, Deputy Director-General, Directorate General for External Relations, representing the Commission, as well as Mr Diego López Garrido, State Secretary for European Affairs, represented the incoming Spanish Presidency.
