

Address at the plenary session of the National Assembly of Armenia

Mr Speaker,

Esteemed parliamentarians,

Dear friends,

It is a great honour and privilege to stand before you today, representing Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies. This visit carries immense symbolism and significance. It marks the second time within the span of a year that our parliament has travelled to Yerevan, highlighting the strength and depth of our relations. I was here a year ago as a member of our delegation. As a new President of the Luxembourgish Parliament, I had to come back, especially because of what happened in the region since then.

I address you with a heavy heart, acutely aware of the tragic events that have shaken the region of Nagorno-Karabakh. The forced exodus of over one hundred thousand Armenians, resulting from the unjustified military operation launched by Azerbaijan on 19th September 2023, is a glaring wound in the fabric of humanity. As guardians of humanitarian values and fundamental rights, we cannot remain indifferent to this suffering.

This event not only caused a massive exodus but also threatens a rich and ancient Armenian cultural heritage. Churches, ancient monasteries, and tombstones are at risk of degradation or destruction. We cannot remain indifferent to the erasure of Armenian identity and history.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Memory and the recognition of historical truth are essential factors in building the future. In 2015, on the centenary of the Armenian genocide, our Chamber of Deputies officially recognised the atrocities committed by the Ottoman Empire as genocide. This recognition was in our eyes an important gesture for justice and reconciliation.

During the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, in October 2020, the Luxembourg parliament endorsed a motion strongly condemning the military initiative breaking with the 1994 ceasefire and expressing deep concern at the resumption of hostilities. The parliamentarians unequivocally denounced external interference, specifically highlighting the Turkish military support for Azerbaijan. By taking this firm stance, we reaffirmed our dedication to fostering stability and protecting the rights and dignity of all affected communities.

In December of that same year, the Chamber of Deputies resolutely reiterated its position, emphasizing the critical importance of initiating a comprehensive political process aimed at establishing a definitive status for Nagorno-Karabakh. We underscored the necessity of ensuring continued access for humanitarian organisations to deliver swift and adequate aid to the affected populations. Moreover, we fervently called for strict compliance with the ceasefire agreement brokered in November 2020 between Armenia and Azerbaijan, then under the aegis of Russia.

Allow me to assure you that our support for the Armenian people remains unwavering and resolute!

It was in this spirit that last week the Luxembourg Parliament passed a third motion on the situation in Armenia. Our unanimous vote is a powerful testimonial to the strength of our shared values and our determination to stand together in the pursuit of peace and justice.

We wish to emphasize our unwavering commitment to the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1991, through which Armenia and Azerbaijan mutually recognised each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. This mutual recognition serves as a cornerstone for peace and stability in the region.

Luxembourg and Armenia share a rich tapestry of common interests and fundamental values. In a significant stride towards justice and international cooperation, Armenia ratified the Rome Statute in November 2023, thereby joining the International Criminal Court. We warmly applaud this momentous achievement and look forward to a future of even closer collaboration.

International law must be upheld at all costs!

The ruling of the International Court of Justice dated 17th November 2023 is binding and final and should be fully implemented.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Luxembourg is devoted to supporting the European Union Civilian Mission in Armenia (EUMA) and stands ready to further strengthen this mission in the interest of both parties. We back the establishment of a new EU partnership program aimed at enhancing our cooperation across all dimensions. Furthermore, we pledge that the EU will actively continue to assume the role

of mediator in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, to bring the peace process to a successful conclusion.

I cherish the hope that the peace negotiations will succeed!

This aspiration is rooted in a profound belief in the power of dialogue and diplomacy to overcome even the most entrenched conflicts.

However, before achieving a just and lasting peace, it is essential that we create an environment where open, honest, and constructive dialogue can flourish.

Barriers still need to be dismantled!

Let us strive to eliminate all hindrances!

That is why we urgently demand that Baku immediately release all Armenian prisoners of war and provide comprehensive information on missing persons of Armenian origin. Justice and humanity call for these individuals to regain their freedom without delay, and it is imperative that their families receive the answers they deserve.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Luxembourg Parliament is profoundly committed to deepening the bilateral economic relations between Luxembourg and Armenia, as well as enhancing the bonds between the EU and Armenia. Our dedication extends to expanding cooperation across vital sectors such as trade, investment, science, and education.

By fostering robust economic ties, we aim to catalyse mutual growth and prosperity, establishing a resilient foundation for a dynamic and thriving partnership. Our shared vision is one where innovation, commerce, and academic exchange flourish, driving both our nations toward a brighter, more interconnected future.

Armenia stands at a critical juncture. You are at the “crossroad for peace”. The decisions made today will shape the trajectory of tomorrow.

While grappling with the complex challenges stemming from the conflict with Azerbaijan, the influx of refugees, shifting diplomatic dynamics, and continuous pursuit of democratic stability,

Armenia also faces unprecedented opportunities for peace, regional cooperation, and democratic advancement.

By navigating these obstacles with prudence, perseverance, and a commitment to dialogue and compromise, Armenia has the opportunity of becoming a resilient nation, fostering peace, prosperity, and democratic ideals in the Caucasus region and beyond.

On this way, you will find us at your side.

Thank you for your attention.

