

Brussels, 28/06/2021
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To all MEPs signatory to the letter on the Armenian Cultural Heritage

Dear Honourable Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter, dated 2 June, regarding the protection of Armenian cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh.

I share your concerns regarding the protection of the cultural and religious heritage in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and, as you recalled in your letter, I underlined the importance of preserving and restoring this heritage in the declaration I made last 19 November on behalf of the European Union.¹ This message is regularly reiterated publicly and in our dialogue with both parties, together with the need to avoid any rhetoric or deeds that stand in the way of peace-building and reconciliation. The EU is strongly committed to protect cultural heritage worldwide as a driver for peace and security.

In this regard, we support a possible UNESCO mission to establish a first factual assessment of the cultural heritage in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict region in the framework of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. We also envisage to provide support to the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage through knowledge transfer and expertise.

We are currently discussing with both sides possible EU support to post-conflict rehabilitation and to peace-building. In this respect, preservation and restoration of cultural heritage remains an important goal. Any such initiative might also serve as an occasion of intercommunity dialogue and a small initial step in the reconciliation process.

The EU reiterates its full support to the international format of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group led by its Co-Chairs for the resumption of negotiations. We have also called for accountability for any violation of international law, recalling in this context also UN Security Council Resolution 2347 (2017) that recognizes that unlawful attacks against sites and buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, as well as historic monuments may constitute a war crime and perpetrators of such attacks must be brought to justice.

Let me assure you that the EEAS, the EU Delegations in Baku and Yerevan, and the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus continue to follow this issue very closely.

Yours faithfully,



Josep Borrell Fontelles

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/11/19/nagorno-karabakh-declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union/>