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Armenia's compliance with the Council of Europe position on the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, including elections

Written question No 526 to the Committee of Ministers
presented by Ms Pashayeva

Armenia continues its policy of military occupation of 20% of the internationally-recognized territory of a fellow Council of Europe-member, the Republic of Azerbaijan. The territories occupied include, among others, the region of Nagorno-Karabakh where citizens of Azerbaijan of Armenian, Azerbaijani, and other ethnicities used to live prior to the ethnic cleansing pursued by the occupational forces.

Illegal "referendum" was conducted by the Armenian side as recently as in December of 2006, despite numerous warnings of various international organizations, including the Council of Europe, European Union, and OSCE that the poll would be unhelpful and even detrimental to the ongoing peace process, further complicating the fate of conflict's victims, including nearly 1 million refugees and displaced in Azerbaijan.

Armenian leadership has consciously chosen to ignore relevant decisions of the international community, including the PACE Resolution 1416, and impede the peace process. Now, with an evident purpose of further distorting the reality, yet again misleading the international community, and legalizing military occupation of NK, the Armenian side plans to proceed with another unconstitutional move, this time the "presidential election" in July 2007.

As is known, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs have on numerous occasions stated that "elections" carried out by the separatist regime in NK have no legal effect and can negatively affect the resolution process. This position, as well as declared approach of the CoE Committee of Ministers and the Council's leadership on both previous and upcoming polls in NK, continue to be ignored by the official Yerevan. This is especially troubling after the recent meeting between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in St.Petersburg, which can be defined as tense and complicated.

Considering all of these, Ganira Pashayeva asks the Committee of Ministers:

- What legal and political assessment can be given by the Committee of Ministers to the actions of the Armenian side?
- Which effective steps would the Committee of Ministers undertake through applying its mechanisms of influence on Armenia to prevent the illegal election from further hampering the fragile peace process?
- What steps can be undertaken by the Committee with regard to Armenia's continued non-compliance with CoE's known position on the conflict?

- Why does the Council of Ministers refrain from making use of effective mechanisms at its disposal to influence the Government of Armenia to abstain in the future from actions that prevent lasting peace in the region from being achieved, including its continued non-compliance with the PACE Resolution 1416 (2003)?

*Signed*¹:

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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group