



Issue 6  
April 2024

# ARMENIA

in Brussels / Luxembourg



Nuclear Energy Summit  
Conference: Armenian  
Prisoners of War in Azerbaijan  
Culture & Tourism

**Armenia-EU-US high  
level meeting in  
Brussels**

# Press release on the joint Armenia-EU-US high level meeting in Brussels in support of Armenia's resilience

5 April, 2024

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, EU High Representative/Vice-President, Josep Borrell, Secretary of State of the United States of America, Antony Blinken, USAID Administrator Samantha Power, and Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, met today, April 5, 2024 in Brussels to reaffirm support for Armenia's sovereignty, democracy, territorial integrity, and socio-economic resilience.

The European Union and the United States support a stable, peaceful, secure, democratic, and prosperous future for Armenia and the region. In this context, we aim to expand cooperation to strengthen Armenia's resilience, including in key sectors such political reforms, economic development and humanitarian support. We will look to expand our partnerships, for example, in mobility, governance, law enforcement, trade, connectivity, agriculture, energy, and technology. The European Union and the United States envisage stronger cooperation with Armenia to support these key sectors.



The European Union and the United States acknowledged the substantial progress Armenia has made since 2018 on democratic and justice reforms and the fight against corruption, and expressed a commitment to continue partnering with and supporting Armenia as it further strengthens its democracy and the rule of law, in line with our shared values and principles.

The EU will continue to support Armenia on its reform path through the implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). In order to boost reforms and enhance cooperation in all areas, the EU and Armenia will make headway on the new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda.

- The United States is committed to helping Armenia and PM Pashinyan carry out envisioned reforms. The Biden Administration, working with the U.S. Congress, plans to provide over \$65 million in fiscal year 2023 development assistance to Armenia.
- The European Union and the United States welcomed Armenia's commitment to improved connectivity with the outside world, including the Crossroads of Peace initiative, which would promote shared prosperity and regional economic and trade diversification.
- The EU and the US intend to provide further assistance to help the country mitigate risks, diversify its trade, and strengthen its economic and institutional resilience.
- To underpin the new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda, the EU will put forward a EUR 270 million Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia for the period 2024-2027.



*A prosperous, sovereign, and democratic Armenia that develops its own partnerships and freely sets its own course will contribute to regional stability.*

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# Nuclear Energy Summit

*Prime Minister Pashinyan delivered a speech at  
the Nuclear Energy Summit*

“Prime Minister De Croo,  
Director General Grossi,  
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I extend my sincere gratitude to Director General Grossi for convening this inaugural Nuclear Energy Summit, and to Prime Minister De Croo for generously hosting this important gathering.

Armenia, as a state reliant on nuclear power generation, stands firmly behind the consensus that nuclear energy is indispensable in our fight against climate change and recognizes the inalienable right of all NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) States Parties to develop it for peaceful purposes without discrimination and political barriers. This is why Armenia was among 22 countries who fully supported the “International Atomic Energy Agency Statement on Nuclear Power” at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai in December 2023. We also proudly align ourselves with the historic decision made at the COP28, which recognized nuclear energy as one of the solutions to climate change alongside other low-carbon energy sources.



21 March, 2024



# Nuclear Energy Summit

Nuclear energy stands as a cornerstone in our strategy, ensuring both the energy security of our nation and the mitigation of climate change. We commend Director General Grossi's efforts to elevate nuclear energy to the forefront of high-level discussions on climate change mitigation.

For Armenia, nuclear energy plays an essential role and helps to achieve our Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement. For decades, the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant has been serving as a critical element of our energy system ensuring the stability and sustainability of energy production. Presently, about 30% of our country's electricity derives from nuclear energy. Our course of arrival to that point was thorny, marred with dramatic period of the closure of the Nuclear Power Plant. Today, we can proudly state that among other crucial things, it also symbolizes and strengthens our sovereignty.

However, this critical role means great responsibility. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of nuclear safety and security in the operation of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant. This commitment is behind the large-scale modernization and re-equipment of the Plant during the recent years, which allowed to extend the operation of the Armenian NPP until 2026.

Armenia actively collaborates with the International Atomic Energy Agency, adopting a proactive stance to ensure nuclear safety and security while fulfilling all its obligations. We regularly host review and peer review missions, reports of which clearly indicate that Armenia is operating the power plant in line with IAEA safety standards. The absence of any nuclear or radiation safety incidents throughout the history of our plant's operation speaks volumes about our unwavering dedication to this cause. This achievement is a testament to Armenia's political will and expertise. We also acknowledge with gratitude the indispensable technical assistance, knowledge and guidance from the IAEA and partner countries, which have been critical in guaranteeing the safe, secure, and reliable operation of our Nuclear Power Plant.

Armenia actively collaborates with the International Atomic Energy Agency, adopting a proactive stance to ensure nuclear safety and security while fulfilling all its obligations.



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# Nikol Pashinyan and Charles Michel meet in Brussels

Within the framework of the inaugural Nuclear Energy Summit, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met with the President of the European Council, Charles Michel.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to Armenia-European Union cooperation, exchanged thoughts on the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process, the importance of the implementation of the agreements reached based on the results of the tripartite meetings between the President of the European Council, the Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Azerbaijan held in Brussels on May 14 and July 15, 2023 was emphasized.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to the mentioned agreements and presented the "Crossroads of Peace" project.



# Nuclear Energy Summit

## *The Prime Ministers of Armenia and Belgium meet within the framework of the Nuclear Energy Summit*

Within the framework of the inaugural Nuclear Energy Summit, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met with Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo. The interlocutors discussed issues related to Armenia-Belgium cooperation.

The parties highlighted the importance of the opening of the Belgian embassy in Armenia and expressed their belief that it will give a new impulse to multi-sectoral cooperation.

Nikol Pashinyan and Alexander De Croo addressed the current situation in the South Caucasus, in particular, the process of the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty, the possibilities of unblocking the regional infrastructure. Nikol Pashinyan presented to the interlocutor the "Crossroads of Peace" project of the Armenian government and its principles. The sides emphasized the activity of the EU observation mission in Armenia in terms of strengthening peace and stability in the region.

The interlocutors also exchanged ideas on Armenia-European Union cooperation. In particular, the issues related to the democratic reforms implemented in our country with the support of the EU, the dialogue on visa liberalization were addressed.



21 March, 2024

# A Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia

*EU showcased its support to the Armenian people & to strengthening Armenia's resilience*

€270 million Resilience & Growth Plan in grant assistance will:

- Build socio-economic resilience
- Support trade diversification
- Strengthen sectoral cooperation

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To underpin this partnership, the EU is proposing a **€270 million Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia** for 2024-2027:



**€200 million**  
in grant assistance

**€70 million**

in grant funding to leverage investments in connectivity, resilience and business development.

## A resilient Armenian society

- Keep supporting **democratic reforms, human rights, and rule of law.**
- Support **reforms** and investments in **skills and employment.**
- Support the **long-term integration** of displaced people including on housing and employment, alongside international partners.

## Bringing Armenia closer to Europe

- Help strengthen administrations and institutions and support regulatory alignment with experts and technical assistance.
- Support **aviation and nuclear safety.**
- Contribute to Armenia's **diversification of exports** and support the promotion of Armenian export products in new markets.



## Investing in connectivity and business

- Support Armenia's **energy diversification and security** with more investments in renewables and stronger transmission network with Georgia.
- Mobilise investments in **transport infrastructure** to develop Armenia's role as a logistics and transport hub in the region.
- Invest in **business development** targeted at tech, startups and SMEs looking to access new markets.
- Mobilise investments under the Economic and Investment Plan in connectivity and support Armenia's participation in regional projects, in particular the **Black Sea electricity cable.**



# The Foreign Minister of Armenia signed a cooperation agreement with “Eurojust”

5 April, 2024

On April 5, in Brussels, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan signed the agreement "On cooperation between the competent authorities in the field of legal cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union in the field of criminal proceedings of the Republic of Armenia and the European Union Agency for Cooperation in the Field of Criminal Justice (Eurojust)".

The EU Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders signed the Agreement on behalf of the EU and on behalf of Belgium, which holds the Presidency of the EU Council, and on behalf of the EU member states, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium, the Minister of Justice and the North Sea Paul Van Tigchelt signed the document.



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# Alen Simonyan awards Members of the European Parliament with the NA Medals of Honour

20 March, 2024



On March 20, the President of the National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan, within the framework of his official visit to Belgium, awarded the Members of the European Parliament François-Xavier Bellamy and Viola von Cramon-Taubadel with the NA Medals of Honour for their activities aimed to foster and deepen Armenia-EU relations.

The Slovak Member of the European Parliament Miriam Lexmann also will be awarded with the NA Medal of Honour.

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Address by the President of the National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan at the 11th Plenary Session of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly

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# "The momentum of the European Coal and Steel Community is ripe for the South Caucasus region"- Ambassador Tigran Balayan

3 April, 2024

On April 3 "The new EU policy in the South Caucasus: safeguarding security through connectivity and energy" round table discussion took place in the European Parliament, at the initiative of the European Liberal Forum (ELF) and under the auspices of MEP Nathalie Loiseau, Chair of the EP Security and Defence Subcommittee (SEDE). Ambassador of Armenia in Brussels Tigran Balayan also participated at the event.

In his speech, MEP Loiseau mentioned that although Armenia is facing security, economic and energy challenges, the country has chosen the irreversible path of democracy and reforms. She welcomed the latest resolution adopted by the European Parliament, which referred to the qualitatively new level of relations between Armenia and the European Union and the further integration of Armenia into the EU.



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19 March, 2024

# Conference

Armenian Prisoners of War in Azerbaijan: the situation three years after the adoption of the European Parliament resolution on the topic



*On March 19, the conference on the "Armenian Prisoners of War in Azerbaijan: the situation three years after the adoption of the European Parliament resolution on the topic" was held in the European Parliament at the initiative of the AFET Standing Rapporteur on Armenia, MEP Andrey Kovatchev (EPP Group).*

At the conference, Mr Andrey Kovatchev and the Ambassador of Armenia in Brussels Mr Tigran Balayan delivered opening remarks, and the main panelists were Yeghishe Kirakosyan, Representative of Armenia for International Legal Affairs, Simon Papuashvili, Programme Director of the "Eastern Europe/South Caucasus, International Partnership for Human Rights" (IPHR) organization, Siranush Sahakyan, Co-founder of the "Path of Law" NGO and international law specialist, Arif Yunus, Head of Department of Conflict and Migration of the Azerbaijani Institute of Peace and Democracy, and Hilda Tchoboian, representative of the "Libertas 2020" project and the President of the "Covcas" Centre for Law and Conflict Resolution and the Armenophobia Observatory. Member of the European Parliament François-Xavier Bellamy sent a video message.

In his speech, Andrey Kovatchev emphasized the importance of the resolution adopted by the European Parliament regarding the Armenian prisoners of war and its implementation, he also referred to the recent exchange of prisoners, but pointed out that there is still a lot to be done. Mr Kovatchev also stressed that this humanitarian problem should always be kept high on the agenda and efforts should be made to conclude a peace agreement between the parties.



Ambassador Balayan mentioned the importance of the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament, but emphasized the need to develop mechanisms for the implementation of these resolutions. He stressed that the Armenians illegally held in the prisons of Baku are actually hostages. Mr Balayan also pointed out the need to implement the agreements reached through the mediation of the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, in this context underlining the consistency, which is of utmost importance. He stressed that the implementation of those agreements by the Aliyev regime can only take place if the EU demonstrates consistency.

Simon Papuashvili noted that as a result of the investigation carried out by his organization, it became clear that the Armenian POWs held in Azerbaijan are not provided with the necessary medical and legal aid, in other words, the Armenian prisoners of war do not have the opportunity to have a human rights defender of their choice. He added that the POWs are subjected to unspeakable tortures and sufferings, most of the deaths occur because of this inhumane treatment. He also referred to the cases of enforced disappearances.

Arif Yunus referred to the mindset of the leadership of Azerbaijan and the authoritarian regime, as a result of which there is no freedom of speech in the country, and every such case is subject to severe punishment. Moreover, he also presented the goals of the Aliyev regime, noting his obsession of punishing everyone and presenting himself as invincible.

At the end of the conference, Andrey Kovatchev thanked everyone for their participation, and Ambassador Balayan, in his turn, thanked the Standing Rapporteur on Armenia for fulfilling his mission in the best possible way.

Discussion



*16 April, 2024*

**COMMEMORATING THE  
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE:  
REFLECTING ON HISTORICAL  
MEMORY IN TODAY'S  
CONTEXT**





# Discussion

On April 16, a discussion on "Commemorating the Armenian Genocide: Reflecting on Historical Memory in Today's Context" was held in Leuven. The Ambassador of Armenia to Brussels Mr Tigran Balayan delivered the opening remarks.

Els van Hoof, Chair of the Belgian Federal Parliament's Foreign Relations Committee, Mariam Harutyunyan, Founder of "Armenian Students Leuven" organization, and Nicolas Tavitian, Senior Specialist in Civil Society Advocacy, were among the speakers.

In his speech, the Ambassador mentioned that on May 24, 1915 the Entente Cordiale condemned the massacres of Armenians using for the first time the term "Crimes Against Humanity." Afterwards, in 1944, Raphael Lemkin used the term "Genocide" to describe the crimes committed against Armenians. Mr Balayan emphasized that despite 109 years have passed since the Armenian Genocide, but the same ideology and mentality still prevail in Azerbaijan, the clear proof of which was the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, committed in a blatant violation of the legally binding decisions of the International Court of Justice and the international legal order. Another proof of that ideology has been the destruction of the religious and cultural heritage of Nagorno-Karabakh in a flagrant breach of the Hague Convention of 1954. Nowadays, the Armenian heritage of Nagorno-Karabakh is on the verge of complete destruction.

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19 March, 2024

## Conference



## "The future of Via Carpathia - Caucasian Road Corridor"

On March 19, the conference on "The future of Via Carpathia - Caucasian Road Corridor" was held in the European Parliament, initiated by MEP Tomasz Poręba.

Vardan Sargsyan, the Deputy Head of the Mission of Armenia to the EU, in his speech thanked for inviting him to this event and presented in detail the project "Crossroads of Peace" tailored by the Government of Armenia, as well as the vision of the Armenian side on how to turn the region to a zone of peace and cooperation, and the expectations of engaging the international partners into the implementation of this project.

Video about the "Crossroads of Peace" was showcased and information materials about the program were distributed among the participants.

V. Sargsyan touched upon the Government's peace agenda by emphasizing the possible economic advantages of the "Crossroads of Peace", as well as its important contribution to establishing sustainable and long-lasting peace in the South Caucasus.



26 March, 2024

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## Round Table discussion

### "Geopolitical Developments in the South Caucasus: Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh"

On March 25, at the initiative of the European-Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy, a round table discussion entitled "Geopolitical Developments in the South Caucasus: Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh" was held in the Belgian Senate. The event was attended by Mark Demesmaeker, Belgian Senator, Head of the Inter-Parliamentary Union with Armenia and Georgia, Els Van Hoof, Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Belgian Federal Parliament, other Belgian politicians and public figures, representatives of the Armenian community of Belgium, as well as representatives of other minorities.

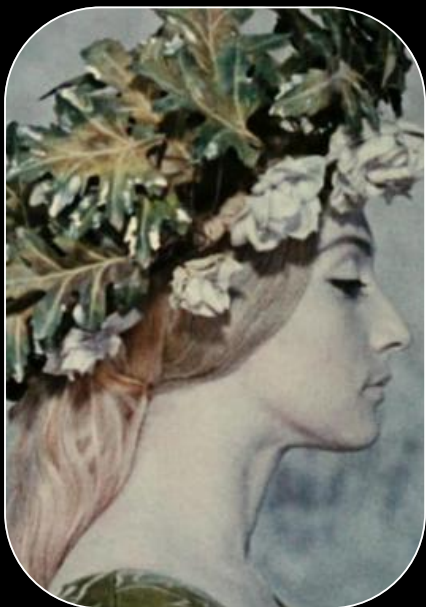
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## EAST EUROPEAN FILM BULLETIN ESSAY

- LIFE HISTORY OF A FRUIT
- SYMBOL & TRADITION IN PARAJANOV'S CAUCASIAN TRILOGY



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# Ski slopes, ancient history and delicious food: All the reasons to give Armenia a go

- Armenia has ranked within the top 10 safest destinations in the world, according to Numbeo's safety index for 2024
- Armenia's historic capital, Yerevan, also performed well, landing 19th out of 333 cities
- Ancient religious sites, delicious cuisine and a vibrant culture are abundant in Armenia and experiencing them all is easy

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Save the date



UN Tourism

# 8th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism

11-13 September 2024  
Yerevan, Armenia

[unwto.org](https://unwto.org)



UN Tourism



TOURISM COMMITTEE  
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

**ARMENIA**  
The Hidden  
Track

Organized by World Tourism Organisation and the Tourism Committee of Armenia, this annual Conference will be a unique opportunity for experts from across the growing field of wine tourism to work together to find concrete solutions to make tourism an enabler of the way forward towards a more sustainable and resilient future for communities.

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# ARMENIA

**in Brussels / Luxembourg**

Issue 6

April, 2024



EMBASSY OF ARMENIA  
IN BELGIUM  
MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE EU