



UNSC Briefing on Armenia

16 August 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt
Chargé d'Affaires of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President. I thank Director Wosornu for the briefing.

Malta is deeply concerned about the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the ensuing humanitarian situation aggravated by the blockade of the Lachin corridor. It is deplorable that citizens in the region continue to be deprived from essential goods such as food, medicine and fuel, which has impacted the functioning of medical and education institutions. Malta calls for the immediate and unconditional end to this blockade.

The implications of this situation on the local population and the lack of humanitarian access to the region is serious and will only worsen as time goes by without any form of redress or remedy. Unimpeded humanitarian access must be given. We appeal to the Azerbaijani authorities to restore free access to the Nagorno-Karabakh region and refrain from further violations of the Trilateral Statement of 9 November 2020, international humanitarian law and orders by the International Court of Justice. We also take note of the expressed readiness of Azerbaijani authorities to also supply goods via the city of Aghdam. This should not be seen as an alternative to the reopening of the Lachin corridor.



Malta calls for an immediate de-escalation of the situation and highlights the importance of reconciliation between both parties in order to prevent unnecessary hardship and loss of life.

Everyone must have easy access to basic and essential goods, especially society's most vulnerable groups including women, children, the elderly and persons with disability who should be effectively protected and their wellbeing prioritised. Women and girls who are internally displaced or are in a refugee-like situation often face intersecting forms of discrimination, and have limited access to education, employment, health care and housing and are inadequately protected from gender-based violence. Malta strongly believes that humanitarian access must not be politicised under any circumstance by any of the actors involved and continues to support and commends the work carried out by the ICRC in the region, and by local women's organisations that have provided services to victims of domestic violence, psychosocial support, and sanitary and hygiene products.

Malta remains fully committed towards constructive dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan and to long-lasting peace and stability in the South Caucasus. We encourage confidence building measures by both the Armenian and Azerbaijani leadership to overcome differences and guarantee the safety and security of citizens in the region. Armenian women in all their diversity continue to be marginalised in all stages of peace and reconstruction processes. Only inclusive dialogue and diplomacy can ensure



a peaceful settlement to the situation and assure an outcome that is beneficial for the people in the South Caucasus. In this context, Malta encourages the direct engagement between both sides in attempt to reach a quick resolution to the conflict.

Malta reaffirms its support for a negotiated and comprehensive solution for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is supportive of the efforts by the OSCE Minsk Group in pursuing this objective. The continued engagement by the EU in facilitating the peaceful resolution of issues between both sides is strongly commended. There is no other viable way forward but to continue working together to overcome the differences and to guarantee the safety and security of citizens in the region.

In conclusion, Malta reiterates its call for the immediate removal of the blockade imposed in the Lachin corridor and for the restoration of freedom of movement of people and goods in the Nagorno-Karabakh region both ways. We continue to fully support efforts leading to towards sustainable peace, security and prosperity.

I thank you.