



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON AZERBAIJAN'S MILITARY OPERATION IN KARABAKH AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IN THE REGION

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 20 September 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just one week has passed since we met in this very same format to express our concerns over the escalating tension between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh. We are even more concerned on the backdrop of the violence seen in the last few days.

We know from history that when disputes are solved through the use of force it is usually to the detriment of the civilian population. If the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh would have to leave their ancestral lands, it would be a tragedy which should be avoided at all cost. Let me remind you about the Helsinki principles, that are at the core of our organisation. They have to be respected.

A heavy burden of responsibility now rests on Baku to ensure the security and well-being of the Armenian population, and for the over all peaceful development in the region. For many months already the circulation of people, vehicles and cargo to Nagorno-Karabakh and back has been impeded. Food, fuel and medication are in short supply. Gas and electricity must be provided. The ICRC should continue play an important role to handle humanitarian issues.

The meeting tomorrow between representatives from Azerbaijan and the local population will indicate what is on offer from Baku. The situation for the civilian population should be a priority.

Norway will continue to follow the situation closely.

Thank you!