

---

## **Council of Europe: Mijatovic, human rights should be at the centre of peace talks between Armenian and Azerbaijani authorities**

Peace talks between the Armenian and Azerbaijani authorities should focus on the protection of human rights, and there should be strong safeguards for all those affected by the conflict. This is what the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, asks for in her Observations released today about her visit to the region in October 2023. “It was the first time in decades that a human rights mission of this kind was able to visit the Karabakh region”, a statement from the Council reads. The reason for the visit was concern for the displacement of over 101,000 Karabakh Armenians who fled to Armenia following Azerbaijan’s military action and the prolonged blocking of the road along the Lachin corridor. The Commissioner met with the displaced persons and asked the Armenian authorities to grant them “access to all necessary support in the immediate, medium and long term”. The Council of Europe’s Member States, on the other hand, were invited to provide financial support. According to Mijatović, all displaced Armenians, inside and outside the Karabakh region, “should be given the possibility of returning in safety and dignity – even if it seems hypothetical for most at the moment”. As for the breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights violations, they should be effectively and promptly investigated, and the perpetrators brought to justice. Also to be addressed are the issues of mines and explosive remnants of war, people detained in connection with the conflict, missing persons, and incitement to hatred.

Sarah Numico