Statement by the Spokesperson of the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on serious armed incidents along the border of Armenia and Azerbaijan

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative is very concerned at the reported serious armed incidents on 4, 5 and 6 June along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the Line of Contact in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and deeply regrets the loss of human life.

The High Representative calls on both sides strictly to respect the ceasefire and exercise restraint on the ground and in public statements in order to prevent a further escalation of the situation, which has been deteriorating during the last several months.

Threat or use of force as well as the status quo do not contribute to a resolution of the persisting conflict.

These incidents highlight the importance of a functioning incident investigation mechanism as proposed by the OSCE. Moreover, they reinforce the need for progress in the negotiation process.

The High Representative urges Armenia and Azerbaijan, as partner countries, to step up their efforts to reach agreement on the Madrid principles, as a basis for peace, and to fully implement the commitments made by their Presidents in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. The EU reiterates its full support of the OSCE Minsk Group and the efforts of its co-chairs aimed at a peaceful conflict resolution."

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