



Deputy Managing Director

DIRECTORATE Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia  
Regional Cooperation & OSCE

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Mr Jan Willem Goudriaan  
EPSU General Secretary  
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Dear Mr Goudriaan,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 2 March 2021, regarding the Armenian economy and the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

In response to your questions, I would underline the following on behalf of the HRVP and the Commissioner:

1. Armenian exporters have benefited from the trade preference offered by the European Union (EU) under the GSP+ scheme. Furthermore, the EU provides Armenian companies with access to knowledge, finance and export support to new markets, including through the EU4Business initiative. Since 2009, the €40 million of funds invested by the European Union have triggered additional loans of over €450 million and additional financial assistance; this benefitted 25,000 SMEs and created over 3,200 new jobs. These are just some of the ways the EU has provided economic and social support to Armenia and has assisted the working people.
2. The EU reacted immediately when, last 25 February, the Armenian Armed Forces General Staff demanded the resignation of the Armenian Prime Minister and of his government, and called upon the armed forces to maintain neutrality in political matters. The EU continues to follow political developments in Armenia very closely and looks forward to credible, transparent and inclusive elections as a way for the Armenian people to express their political choice and to determine the future priorities of the government.



3. At the last EU-Armenia Human Rights Dialogue held on 25 March 2021, the EU encouraged Armenia to implement the 2019-2023 Decent Work Country Programme signed with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which includes activities aimed at strengthening social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels. The EU also stressed the need for Armenia to amend its legislation to align it with ILO fundamental Conventions.

As part of continued support to the establishment of a fully-fledged labour inspection system in Armenia, over the past three years, the EU funded an ILO project that included important baseline studies and wider awareness raising and capacity building activities involving also the social partners.

4. A tailor-made COVID-19 response package for Armenia worth over €92 million was mobilised within the Team Europe framework, using a mix of existing and new funds to deliver concrete support to people. This includes €65 million in direct budget support already disbursed, access to finance facilities for SMEs, and community-support initiatives designed and implemented by civil society organisations.

The EU is one of the strongest supporters of COVAX, the best vehicle to ensure fair and equitable access to vaccines, and it also works together with the WHO to supply medical devices and personal protection equipment, including in Armenia. Moreover, a second batch of COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Armenia through the COVAX Facility.

I would like to assure you that we are following events in Armenia very closely, including through our Delegation in Yerevan, and that the EU is fully committed to implement the CEPA Agreement to ensure progress in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, as well as of social and economic development to the benefit of Armenian citizens.

Yours sincerely,

*[e-signed]*

Luc DEVIGNE