

## **‘No More Business As Usual’ for Azerbaijan**

International Partnership for Human Rights and Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (FIDH-OMCT) Call for the Immediate Release of Azeri Human Rights Defenders

17 November 2014

Azerbaijan’s six-month chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe came to an end last week. During this period Azerbaijan unleashed an unprecedented crackdown against civil society — including the imprisonment of human rights defenders and political activists who criticized the Azeri government.

“The status of the Council of Europe are crystal clear “Every member of the Council of Europe must accept the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and collaborate sincerely and effectively in the realisation” of the “maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms”. The Azerbaijan actions reveal a new attack to the European institutions and values. *It is time to save these values, the commitments and the soul of the Council of Europe. Now,*” said Azeri investigative journalist, Khadija Ismayilova.

We call on the EU and its member states to use all the instruments at their disposal to put pressure on Azerbaijan in order to ensure it complies with its human rights obligations and it immediately and unconditionally releases all those who have been detained on unfounded charges.

Those imprisoned during Azerbaijan’s chairmanship (14 May – 13 November 2014) include:

- Anar Mammadli, election monitor who received the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize.
- Leyla Yunus, justice advocate who received the French Legion of Honor, and her husband, Arif Yunus.
- Rasul Jafarov, campaigner who criticized Azerbaijan at the Council of Europe and compiled with Leyla Yunus a list of 100 political prisoners in Azerbaijan.
- Intigam Aliyev, human rights lawyer who criticized Azerbaijan at the Council of Europe

Please watch *No More Business As Usual for Azerbaijan* here: <http://youtu.be/t2sidYGGbAk>