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The release of political prisoners in Azerbaijan

Written question No. 688 to the Committee of Ministers

by Ms Kerstin LUNDGREN, Sweden, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

The Azerbaijani authorities must release political prisoners, including human right defenders, journalists, bloggers and other activists who are still in prison. The situation is becoming worse. Hilal Mamedov, a representative of a national minority, scientist and journalist is one of many journalists, bloggers and social activists who have been hit by the current legal system in Azerbaijan. A system that selectively arrests and condemns people, not based on law, but by political order. Systematically, freedom of expression and the right to a free and fair legal system are eroded.

All those who are not applauding the authorities seem to systematically be condemned as drug dealers, separatists, suicide bombers, revolutionaries or terrorists. This has to be challenged the Council of Europe to make sure that its values are not totally eroded by the authorities of Azerbaijan. The Council of Europe must take action to make sure that the authorities release I. Jafarov and other political prisoners. They must release K. Rasul, H. Mamedov and all other human rights defenders, journalists and others who are unjustly in prison.

Ms Lungren,

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

Due to the situation of political prisoners, human right defenders, journalists and social activists in Azerbaijan, what actions have been taken and what is the Committee of Ministers going to do to safeguard the values of the Council of Europe in Azerbaijan?

What action could be taken to make the legal system independent from the executive and legislative branches, and how can we make sure that political prisoners, human right defenders, journalists and other social activists are released from prison?

