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16 October 2018

Follow-up to the Azerbaijani Laundromat investigation

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Rasmus Vestergaard MADSEN and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

One year since the Laundromat investigation exposed Azerbaijan's multi-billion scheme to buy influence, pay lobbyists, and to launder cash, nothing has changed in Azerbaijan. No criminal investigation has been launched; no one held accountable. The story that shook Europe did not spark any significant public debate in Azerbaijan where the space for civil society activity and good journalism has been virtually extinguished by the increasingly authoritarian regime.

One of the journalists to expose corruption in Azerbaijan is famous blogger and human rights defender, Mehman Huseynov. Today, he is serving a two-year sentence in an Azerbaijani prison on made up defamation charges. His family has been subjected to pressure which resulted in the death of Huseynov's mother on 6 August 2018. Huseynov is one of the many victims of the regime who has been wrongly imprisoned for political reasons. Other cases are: Afgan Mukhtarli, Khadija Ismailova, also Intigam Aliyev and Ilgar Mammadov, despite being released after requests by the European Court of Human Rights and other bodies of the Council of Europe, are under the interdiction to leave the country.

The Parliamentary Assembly should hold the Azerbaijani authorities accountable for their corrupt practices to buy influence within the Council of Europe to conceal the widespread human rights abuses. Furthermore, the Assembly should recommend that the profit that Danske Bank has made by being an instrument in the Laundromat, must be channeled to the Azerbaijani civil society with an aim to address corruption, promote human rights and democracy in Azerbaijan.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group