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Azerbaijan's Chairmanship of the Council of Europe: What follow-up on respect for human rights?

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Michael McNAMARA and other members of the Assembly

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

In Resolution 1900 (2012) the Parliamentary Assembly reaffirmed its support for the definition of a “political prisoner”, elaborated within the Council of Europe in 2001 by the independent experts of the Secretary General, mandated to assess cases of alleged political prisoners in Armenia and Azerbaijan in the context of their accession.

In Resolution 1917 (2013) the Assembly called on Azerbaijan to:

- review the cases of human rights defenders, activists and journalists detained on criminal charges following trials whose conformity with human rights standards has been called into question by civil society and the international community;
- use all available legal tools to release those prisoners whose detention gives rise to justified doubts and legitimate concerns;
- release on humanitarian grounds alleged political prisoners whose state of health raises concern;
- fully implement the resolutions of the Assembly related to alleged political prisoners in Azerbaijan;

Since that Resolution was passed, there has been an increase in arrests and detentions of persons active in political and public life in Azerbaijan with seven-year jail sentences handed down to two opposition politicians, Ilgar Mammadov, the leader of the Republican Alternative Movement, who is also the Director of the Council of Europe School of Political Studies in Baku, and Tofiq Yagubli, the deputy head of the Musavat Party, and the pre-trial detention of Anar Mammadli, the head of the Election Monitoring and Democratic Studies Centre (EMDS).

In the light of its forthcoming chairmanship of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, it is essential to address concerns regarding the implementation of fundamental freedoms and, especially, politically motivated detention, in Azerbaijan.

The Assembly is, therefore, duty-bound to follow-up on these arrests and detentions in Azerbaijan.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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BALFE Richard, United Kingdom, EDG
BENTON Joe, United Kingdom, SOC
BESELIA Eka, Georgia, SOC
BLONDIN Maryvonne, France, SOC
BOROWSKI Marek, Poland, SOC
BOURZAI Bernadette, France, SOC
CHITI Vannino, Italy, SOC
CORSINI Paolo, Italy, SOC
CRAUSBY David, United Kingdom, SOC
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DOBBIN Jim, United Kingdom, SOC
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GROSS Andreas, Switzerland, SOC
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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left

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