

URGENT ACTION

IMPRISONED DEFENDER DENIED HEALTH CARE

The health of Anar Mammadli, human rights defender and climate advocate, has deteriorated in detention. The authorities are refusing to provide him with the healthcare he requires. He has been in detention on fabricated charges since 29 April 2024 and must be immediately and unconditionally released.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

President of Azerbaijan

Ilham Aliyev Office of the President of Azerbaijan
19 Istiqlaliyyat Street
Baku AZ1066,
Azerbaijan
Email: office@pa.gov.az

Dear President Aliyev,

I am writing to express my grave concerns regarding the continued arbitrary detention of human rights defender Anar Mammadli and denial of adequate healthcare in prison. According to his lawyers, Anar Mammadli's health has deteriorated in prison. His arthritis has reportedly worsened, and he has developed regular stomach cramps and headaches. He is also suffering from symptoms of bronchitis, including shortness of breath and a persistent cough. Many of those health issues have started in 2014 following his previous arbitrary detention and have worsened further during his present arrest.

On 17 and 25 October he had blood tests and stomach scans carried out in the prison medical facilities; however, the prison authorities have not subsequently provided him with the result of his medical examination. The penitentiary authorities have to date failed to carry out thorough examinations and to provide him with the treatment that he requires, despite several appeals from his lawyer.

Anar Mammadli is a prominent human rights defender, head of the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Centre, and co-founder of the Climate of Justice Initiative in Azerbaijan. He was arrested on 29 April 2024 on fabricated charges of "smuggling by prior conspiracy by a group of persons" under Article 206.3.2 of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan and has since remained in detention. If convicted he faces up to eight years in prison.

I urge you to ensure Anar Mammadli's immediate and unconditional release. Pending this, he must be provided with adequate healthcare to assess and treat his deteriorating health condition, including providing him with the results of his recent medical examination. I also urge you to end the misuse of the criminal justice system to target criticism and dissent.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anar Mammadli, a prominent human rights defender and Head of the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Centre. He is a co-founder of the Climate of Justice Initiative, a newly established group looking into the promotion of civic space and environmental justice within the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29), which will take place in Baku, November 2024. He was among the first activists in Azerbaijan who linked respect for human rights and climate justice and was actively involved in international advocacy at the UN Human Rights Council and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. On 29 April 2024, Anar Mammadli was on the way to pick up his child from nursery when he was apprehended by unidentified masked men and driven away in a black vehicle. According to family members, police then searched Anar Mammadli's house and allegedly planted money. The Ministry of Internal Affairs confirmed his detention, and his sister reported that he is officially suspected of "smuggling by prior conspiracy by a group of persons" under Article 206.3.2 of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan.

He was reportedly denied access to his lawyer overnight when kept in a temporary detention centre in Baku. On 30 April 2024, Khatai District Court of Baku ruled to place him in pre-trial detention until the end of August 2024. Baku Appellate Court considered an appeal against the arrest of Anar Mammadli on 6 May, but the appeal wasn't granted.

On October 7, 2024, Anar Mammadli personally, in a handwriting application that included an official attached application by his lawyers, applied to the Chief Medical Department of the Ministry of Justice, the Penitentiary Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Human Rights Commissioner and requested to undergo a thorough examination in a civil private hospital.

Subsequently, Anar Mammadli underwent some medical checkups in the detention facility. The Ombudsperson Office has requested the result of the checkups from the authorities. However, the lawyers and Anar Mammadli have not been given access to the results.

In 2014 Anar Mammadli was recognized as a Prisoner of Conscience by Amnesty International when he was given a five-and-a-half-year prison sentence on trumped-up charges of tax evasion, illegal entrepreneurship, and abuse of office. While in prison he received the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) for his outstanding contributions to civil society in defending human rights. The European Court of Human Rights stated that his arrest in 2013 was a violation of articles 5 and 1 (right to liberty and security); 5 and 4 (right to have lawfulness of detention decided speedily by a court); 18 (limitation on use of restrictions on rights), finding that his arrest and detention was aimed at silencing his criticism. The Azerbaijani authorities have not to date fully complied with the judgment, failing to quash his conviction and restore his civil and political rights.

He was pardoned in 2016 but has since faced repeated attacks from the authorities and the pro-government media, intensifying in the lead-up to COP29. The current detention of Anar Mammadli follows a pattern of abuse of the criminal justice system aimed at silencing government critics including human rights defenders, political activists, journalists and other critical voices in Azerbaijan, including the academic and anti-corruption activist Gubad Ibadoghlu, Third Republic board member Akif Gurbanov and founder of Toplum TV Alasgar Mammadli. In addition, more than 20 journalists remain in detention. Among them are journalists and media workers from the outlets Abzas Media, Toplum TV and Kanal 13.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Azeri, English, Russian
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 December 2024
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Anar Mammadli (he/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [Azerbaijan: Human rights defender detained: Anar Mammadli - Amnesty International](#)