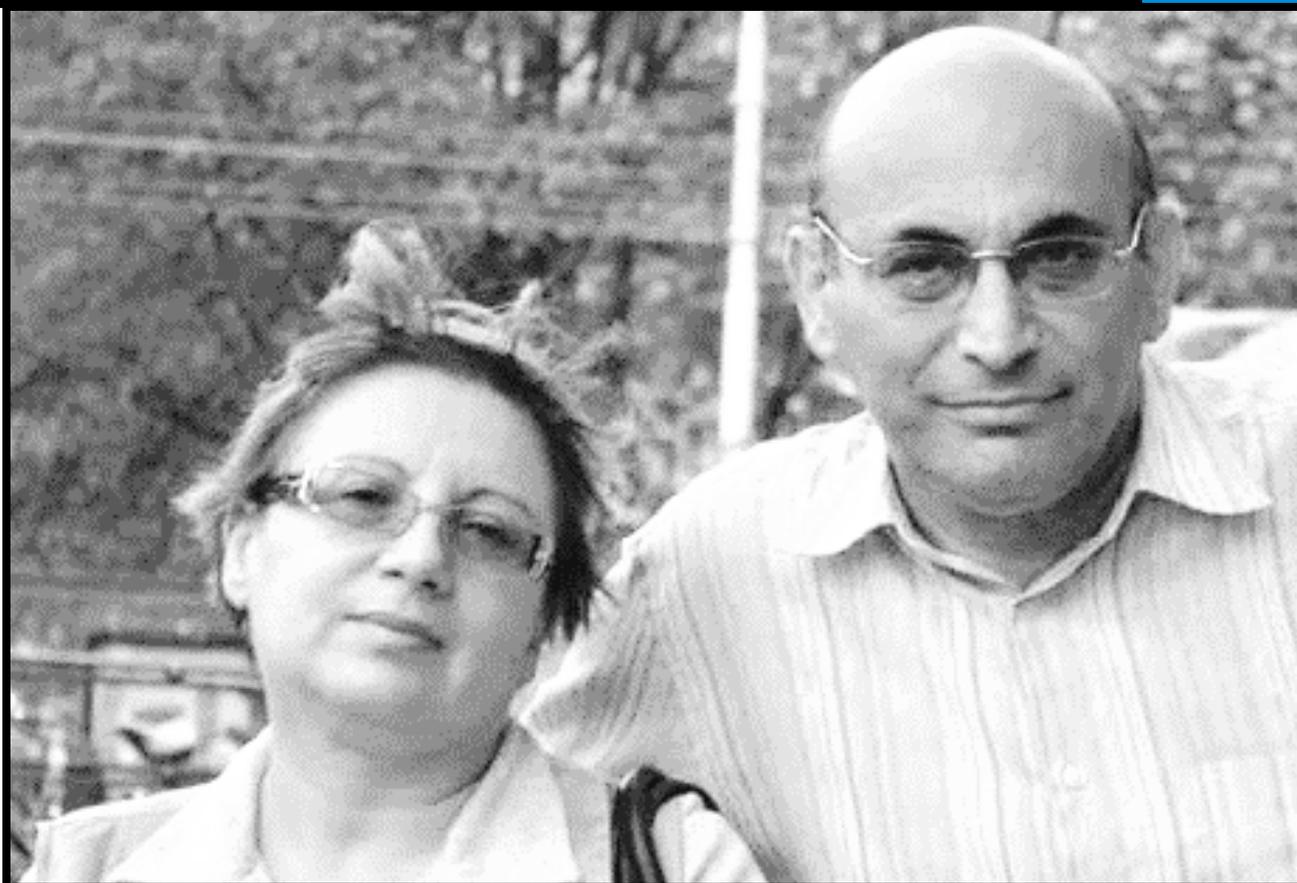


LEYLA and ARIF YUNUS



AZERBAIJAN

On 9 December 2015, Leyla Yunus was released from detention and her 8.5-year prison sentence on charges of fraud and tax evasion was converted into a 5-year suspended sentence, following a decision by the Baku City Court of Appeal on the basis of a request from her lawyers with reference to her deteriorating health condition. Similarly the prison term of her husband, Arif Yunus was changed into a 5-year suspended one. He was released under house arrest on 12 November 2015.

Charges of fraud and tax evasion against Leyla and Arif remain unchanged. Leyla Yunus might still face separate trial on the treason charges. While on probation, the couple cannot leave the country and they have to report to the probation service with some regularity. The appeals court also annulled the previous decision to confiscate the house owned by the daughter of Leyla and Arif, Dinara Yunus.

The Stand 4 Human Rights Defenders campaign welcomes the change of the prison terms against the Yunus couple into suspended ones, while continuing to call for the unconditional release of Leyla and Arif and for dropping all charges against them.

We welcome diplomatic efforts of some of the EU actors in this particular case and we reiterate our call on all EU Member States and Institutions to mobilize efforts to:

1) Develop a common position, committing all member states and the EU institutions to a single, coherent policy approach vis-a-vis the human rights situation in Azerbaijan and collectively work to pursue the immediate and unconditional release of all those imprisoned on politically motivated charges such as Khadija Ismailova, Intigam Aliyev, Rasul Jafarov, Anar Mammadli, Hilal Mammadov and Rauf Mirqadirov.

2) Send a clear message to Azerbaijani authorities that the ongoing crackdown on civil society is unacceptable and it cannot be "business as usual" until the government creates favourable conditions for human rights activists and civil society to freely operate in the country.

The Human Rights and Democracy Network launched the [Stand 4 Human Rights Defenders](#) campaign in November 2015. This one-year long campaign aims to raise the profile of human rights defenders at risk and to urge the EU to put into practice the set of instruments it already has adopted "to reinforce and step up their action in support of human rights defenders and civil society worldwide". The case of Leyla and Arif Yunus is the first one featured within the Stand4HRDs campaign. The campaign members have repeatedly raised importance of the release of Leyla and Arif in public or private meetings with the EU officials.

CONTACT DETAILS OF RELEVANT OFFICIALS

Executive Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Republic of Azerbaijan,
Baku city, AZ1066,
Istiglaliyyat street, 19,
"The President Palace"
E-mail office@pa.gov.az

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

Minister, Elmar Mammadyarov
Shikhali Gurbanov str. 50, Baku AZ 1009 Azerbaijan
Phone: +994 12 596 90 00
E-mail: katiblik@mfa.gov.az

National Parliament of Azerbaijan

Speaker of the Parliament of Azerbaijan, Oqtay Sabir oğlu Əsədov
Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Azerbaijan, Seyidov Səməd İsmayıl oğlu
Parlament prospekti, 1 AZ 1152, Bakı
AzərbaycanTel: (99412) 498-97-48
E-mail: azmm@meclis.gov.az

On Twitter

Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration & Director of Foreign Relations Department, Administration of the President of Azerbaijan
[@NovruzMammadov](#)
Official twitter channel of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan - İlham Aliyev [@presidentaz](#)