

Ilham Aliyev
President of Azerbaijan
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Dear President,

We write to you on behalf of Gubad Ibadoghlu, a renowned economist and civic activist, who was detained in Azerbaijan last summer on unsubstantiated charges after he published articles criticising Azerbaijan's oil and gas policies.

Dr. Ibadoghlu suffers from serious health issues, including diabetes and high blood pressure, which worsened in detention due to the restrictions placed on his access to healthcare. Over one year since his arrest, Dr. Ibadoghlu remains detained in Baku, cannot leave the country, and is being denied the medicine he needs to survive. His health is rapidly deteriorating, and his life is at risk.

Azerbaijan's courts have now frozen the case, cancelled trial proceedings and are preparing to keep Dr. Ibadoghlu hostage indefinitely. We ask that you free him unconditionally, allow him to seek medical treatment abroad, and reunite him with his family.

As you prepare to host this year's COP29 climate conference, the world is turning its attention to Azerbaijan. Hikmet Hajiyev, your foreign policy adviser, pronounced this year's summit as a "COP of peace", and that Azerbaijan's "approach to the peace agenda is living by example."

Yet these ambitions are starkly at odds with your government's treatment of Dr. Ibadoghlu, who has dedicated his career to promoting accountability in the fossil fuel industry, both in Azerbaijan and internationally, which plays a vital role towards realising COP29's goal of a just energy transition.

Gubad's son, Ibad Bayramov, said:

"I worry every moment of every day about my Dad's treatment due to this politically motivated detention. Just as any son would want to see their father, we are desperate to have him back. He suffers greatly, and we need to know that he is okay. We call on President Aliyev to release him now and unconditionally."

If Azerbaijan is to make this year's climate conference truly a COP of peace, the government must immediately and unconditionally free Gubad Ibadoghlu and drop all charges against him.

By doing so, Azerbaijan would demonstrate its commitment to climate leadership and to hosting a more open and accountable COP summit.

SIGNATORIES

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Leader of Plaid Cymru, Ynys Môn

Patrick Harvie MSP, Co-leader of the Scottish Green Party, Glasgow

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Islington North

The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds

Baroness Ruth Lister of Burtersett, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at Loughborough University

The Rt Hon the Lord Boateng CVO

John McDonnell MP, Hayes & Harlington

Alex Sobel MP, Leeds Central and Headingley

The Right Honourable Lord Hain

Baroness Hooper

Lord Lipsey

Lord Alfred Dubs, Baron Dubs

David Triesman, Baron Triesman

Bill Kidd MSP, Glasgow Anniesland

Richard Balfe, The Lord Balfe

Alison Margaret Wolf, Baroness Wolf of Dulwich

Lord Stevenson

Ayoub Khan MP, Birmingham Perry Barr

Shokat Adam MP, Leicester South

Ross Greer MSP, West Scotland

Nadia Whittome MP, Nottingham East

Cllr Dylan Stothard, Sustainability Advocate

Chris Law MP, Dundee Central

Maggie Chapman MSP, North East Scotland

Mark Ruskell MSP, Mid Scotland and Fife

Jenny Rathbone MS, Cardiff Central

Zarah Sultana MP, Coventry South

Global Witness

UK Anti-Corruption Coalition

Transparency International

Publish What You Pay International

Open Contracting Partnership

Natural Resource Governance Institute

Spotlight on Corruption

The Corner House