**Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists**

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**Azerbaijan n° 103/2017**

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**Blogger Rashad Ramazanov Jailed for Nine Years**

**SOURCE OF THREAT:** State

**CATEGORY:** Detention and imprisonment of journalists

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**NO STATE REPLY YET**

The Azerbaijani blogger Rashad Ramazanov is serving a nine-year sentence in Baku Prison #2, which media freedom organisations link with his writings. Ramazanov was arrested on 9 May 2013, charged for drug possession, and on 13 November 2013 sentenced to nine years in jail. The Baku Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court later upheld this sentence. Ramazanov used to actively post micro blogs on social media networks, particularly on Facebook, in which he criticized the governmental policy and high-ranking Azerbaijani officials, including the President. After the arrest, he was unlawfully held in the Ministry of Internal Affairs Organized Crime Department for 11 days. His lawyer Aslan Ismayilov stated that Ramazanov was subjected to torture and beatings while in custody. Ismayilov's demands for investigation of the journalist's case yielded no results and he ended up being detained by police as well. Despite the repeated calls for release from local and international organisations, Ramazanov is still in prison.

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**UPDATES**

**18 Mar 2019:** On 17 March 2019, Rashad Ramazanov was released, following presidential pardon.

- **Azerbaijan releases more than 50 political prisoners**

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**FOLLOW-UPS**

**12 Dec 2019 |** In her report following her visit to Azerbaijan from 8 to 12 July 2019, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights regrets that no progress has been made regarding the protection of freedom of
expression and calls on the authorities to release all those detained because of the views they expressed, notably journalists.

Statement by Dunja Mijatović

Key information:
Rashad Ramazanov

An Azerbaijani blogger known for posting critical content about high-ranking public officials, including the president.