

13

Sep  
2016  
▲ Lvl. 1

Resolved

Azerbaijan

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## Trumped-up Charges and Trial Without Due Process to Silence an Azerbaijani Journalist

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Detention and imprisonment of journalists

PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ, RSF

On 25 June 2014, Azerbaijan's Supreme Court confirmed well-known journalist and human rights defender Hilal Mammadov's five-year jail sentence on trumped-up charges of drug trafficking, inciting hate, and high treason. Detained since 21 June 2012, Mammadov defends the rights of Azerbaijan's Talysh minority. His September 2013 conviction was upheld in appeal on 25 December 2013. The trial was marked by procedural irregularities and the lack of respect for defence rights. The editor of the Talysh-language newspaper Tolishi Sado, Mammadov has respiratory and immunological problems. The journalist has taken his case against Azerbaijan to the European Court of Human Rights. The Commissioner of the Council of Europe for Human Rights Nils Muižnieks commented on the case, saying that Hilal Mammadov's case "symbolises the persecutions against journalists, bloggers and human rights activists. Azerbaijan persecutes them with allegations that are unjustified."

### RESOLVED

**13 Sep 2016:** On 17 March 2016, Hilal Mammadov was released following presidential pardon. On 13 September 2016, the partner organisations of the Platform declared this case to be "resolved", concluding it was no longer an active threat to media freedom.

 Presidential pardon

### UPDATES

**17 Mar 2016:** Journalist Hilal Mammadov was released along with 147 other prisoners, on 17 March 2016, following presidential pardon.

 Article published on Azadiq Radiosu website: "In Azerbaijan A Number Of High Profile Political Prisoners Pardoned"

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



- ➔ RSF press release on "Freedom of expression situation worsens in aftermath of Eurovision"
- ➔ RSF press release on "Azeri journalist charged with high treason could face life sentence"
- ➔ RSF press release on "Detained journalists at risk in Azerbaijan's prisons"
- ➔ RSF press release on "Azerbaijan's supreme court confirms ailing editor's five-year jail term"
- ➔ The level of hygiene and medical attention in Azerbaijan's prisons is poor. Tolishi Sado's previous editor, Novruzali Mamedov, died in a Baku prison hospital for lack of proper medical attention in 2009, a year after being sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges of spying and inciting hatred.
- ➔ A case brought by the journalist against the prison administration alleging inhuman treatment was heard in camera in August 2012. After discussing the case half an hour and taking three hours to reach a verdict, the judges rejected the complaint by Mammadov, who said he had been given no food or water during his first two days in detention.

## STATE REPLIES



01 Jun 2015 | Reply by the Government of Azerbaijan

- ➔ Written Response by the Government of Azerbaijan