

**Urgent Action Office** 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 [urgentaction@amnesty.ca](mailto:urgentaction@amnesty.ca)  
Fourth UA: 77/23 Index: EUR 55/8048/2024 Azerbaijan of May 15, 2024

## **AZERBAIJAN DROP CHARGES AND RELEASE GUBAD IBADOGLU**

On April 22, 2024, after 274 days in detention, prominent Azerbaijani economist and political activist Gubad Ibadoghlu was moved to house arrest. This decision was due to his deteriorating health, including diabetes and a heart condition. However, he is still deprived of his liberty and is not allowed to leave Azerbaijan to receive the necessary medical care.

### **Write to the President of Azerbaijan urging the government to:**

- Take all necessary steps to ensure that all charges against Dr Gubad Ibadoghlu are dropped and that he is allowed to leave the country to access adequate healthcare abroad.
- In the meantime, ensure he is granted access to adequate care in Azerbaijan including allowing a foreign doctor of his choice to visit him at home.
- End the misuse of the criminal justice system in Azerbaijan to target government critics and dissidents.
- Drop all politically motivated charges against human rights defenders, activists and journalists in Azerbaijan.

### **Write to:**

Ilham Aliyev  
President of Azerbaijan  
19 Istiqlaliyyat Street  
Baku AZ1066  
Azerbaijan  
Email: [office@pa.gov.az](mailto:office@pa.gov.az)  
*Salutation: Your Excellency,*

### **And copy:**

Mr. Vasif Cingiz Oglu ABUTALIBOV  
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.  
Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
275 Slater Street, Suite 1203  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H9  
Tel: (613) 288-0497 Fax: (613) 230-8089  
Email: [reception@azembassy.ca](mailto:reception@azembassy.ca)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Gubad Ibadoghlu is a well-known Azerbaijani economist and political activist. He is the chairperson of the Azerbaijan Democracy and Prosperity Movement, established in 2014. However, the Azerbaijani authorities have arbitrarily denied its registration as a political party. Gubad Ibadoghlu was a senior

visiting scholar at the London School of Economics and led the Economic Research Centre, an NGO focused on public finance management, good governance, and budget transparency. In 2014, the Azerbaijani authorities closed the Economic Research Centre and froze its bank accounts as part of their crackdown on civil society. Gubad Ibadoghlu went into political exile in 2017 but returned to Azerbaijan in 2023 to visit his family.

On July 23, 2023, police officers arrested Gubad Ibadoghlu and his wife, Irada Bayramova, while they were driving to meet youth activists from the Azerbaijan Democracy and Prosperity Movement in Sumgayit. Four unmarked cars surrounded their vehicle and forced it to stop by ramming it from the front and rear. According to their child, Zhala Bayramova, 20 plain-clothed officers "forced the couple out of their car, physically assaulted them, then forced them into separate cars and drove them to the Interior Ministry's Organized Crime Unit in Baku." After her release, Irada Bayramova had multiple bruises on her arms, legs, and back. Gubad Ibadoghlu filed a complaint about their ill-treatment, which was left unaddressed.

On the same day, the Azerbaijani Ministry of Interior stated that the arrest of several people, including Gubad Ibadoghlu, was part of an operation against supporters of Fethullah Gülen. Police allegedly seized \$40,000 in cash from the Economic Research Centre's office. They also raided Gubad Ibadoghlu and Irada Bayramova's home and briefly detained Ibadoghlu's brother, Gabid Baymalov.

On April 22, 2024, after 274 days in detention, Gubad Ibadoghlu was moved to house arrest due to his deteriorating health. His conditions include heart disease, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease, and severe lower back pain. He has not received appropriate medical care, which has worsened his health.

His prosecution is part of the Azerbaijani authorities' [ongoing crackdown](#) on human rights defenders, government critics, and [independent media](#). Amnesty International has documented previously [how the Azerbaijani authorities sought to rid the country of all critical voices](#) ahead of major international events Azerbaijan was hosting. This pattern of repression intensifies ahead of major international events, such as the upcoming 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 29) in Baku.

***Please take action as soon as possible until August 8, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***