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The Problem of Southern Azerbaijan

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Office of HCHR, Geneva, please circulate this Communication to:

- The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
- Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
- The Independent Expert on Minority Issues
- Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders

Also:

- FAO Mr. Dyke and Mrs. Harrison, Amnesty International, London
- The Helsinki Committees for Human Rights – Oslo: - This is submitted for your attentions to do whatever you can
- Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly
- Human Rights Watch and
- Human Rights Server



Dear sir/madam

UPDATE 1: COLLECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH CHAINED-DETENTIONS

This is Update 1 to our Collective Communication in September 2010 (Date: 1 September 2010, Ref: 529/2010; as well as Date: 29 September 2010, Ref:531/2010), campaigning for the release of 17 Southern Azerbaijani prisoners of conscience. Their ordeal is not over as they are yet to be subjected to a kangaroo court trials to be staged on 1 January 2011 and therefore this Update presents the following:

Table 1: the key data identifying the arbitrary detention of those released on bail

Table 2: the key data identifying the arbitrary detention of those still in solitary confinements

Table 3: Further information on each of these individuals

The strong campaign over the last few months was effective only in securing the temporary release of 15 out of 17 victims and the remaining two are still in solitary confinements. However, we have learned that the Iranian authorities are pressing with their arbitrary acts by staging a trial against them, twelve of whom have been summoned to the Revolutionary Court in Tebriz on 1 January 2011. So our campaign is heightened to the next stage and hence this Update.

Now that the imputed charges are available and given in Tables 1 and 2, we can see the emerging picture from the various jigsaw pieces, as follows:

- It is probable that the victims still suffering solitary confinements will be tried in the impending trial on 1 January 2011 and therefore they may too be subjected to the same arbitrary sentences.
- These victims collectively swear their allegiance to the defence of Azerbaijani Turkic, as their mother language, including the veteran writer and journalist, Mr. Ekber Azad, the honorary member of the PEN Club, who is still campaigning for his mother language while awaiting the looming trial. As a reminder, please note that the nation of Azerbaijan in Southern Azerbaijan has a population of 30 million and still the Iranian racist government removes the official status of their mother language and imposes Farsi as a singular language of the country!



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- Although many of these victims have visited their relatives in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the fact remains that Azerbaijan is a divided nation and many have their relatives at both sides of the border, which is officially open between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan for the enjoyment of the citizens of both countries.
- None of these victims have entered illegally the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- Many Azerbaijani youth are now travelling to the Republic of Azerbaijan to join the joy of studying in mother language and the Iranian authorities have been alarmed by this and now are resorting to deploy deterrent measures such as bringing the charge of spying for the visitors of the Republic of Azerbaijan, e.g. these victims.

The above scenario is only complemented by the following items of information provided to you in the past and by way of reminding these include:

- These individuals were all detained through a chain reaction, one leading to others;
- Their detentions were all arbitrary;
- The detentions were without any court injunction;
- The detainees were kept in solitary confinements and were deprived of the right to choose a lawyer;
- They were exposed to severe physical and mental torture to obtain a confession but this was in vain;
- They were not allowed to meet or contact their family for a long time.

When the collective information is considered in its entirety, it is clear that the charge of spying for the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the other charges, against these victims are arbitrary and cannot stand in rigorously conducted international courts. We hold that the Iranian authorities are despairing by seeing that their racist policies are being derailed by the will of Azerbaijanis and are therefore resorting to the acts of kangaroo court.

We are confident that this trial behind closed doors is unacceptable to you. Now that your organisation is minded with the racism in Iran, we hope you will step up your campaign to restore the human rights of these individuals. Considering that the sentences for the charges are potentially associated with long-term prison sentences, we appeal to you to intervene in the trial procedure by dispatching an observer, as the victims deny each and all of the charges. We are confident that your intervention will deter the Iranian authorities from passing arbitrary sentences. We believe the essential pre-requisite for the prevalence of justice is an open trial, where lawyers can freely defend the victims, but this can only be realised by your intervention.

Thank you in advance for your care.

Yours sincerely,

Boyuk Resuloglu

The Committee for the Defence of the Rights of World Azerbaijanis



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Table 1: The Following Prisoners of Conscience are Summoned to a Trial on 1 January 2011

No	Name, Surname	Date Arrested	Place Arrested	Solitary Confinement	Further Days Arbitrary Confinement	Surety for the Bail	Date Released on Bail	Imputed Charges
1	Aydin Khajeyi (ایدین خواجه ای)	09.5.10	Tebriz	91	169	\$220k	13.11.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
2	Behbud Qulizade (بهبود قلیزاده)	10.5.10	Qoshachay (میانداوآب)	94	151	\$220k	06.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
3	Dr Elirza Abdullahi (عبداللهی علیرضا)	11.6.10	Urmu (ارومیه)	95	150	\$220k	06.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
4	Ekber Azad (اکبر آزاد)	14.6.10	Tehran	92	181	\$220k	11.12.10	5.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 6.Membership of GAMOH 7.Campaign against the system Aiding Azerbaijani spies
5	Hesen Rehim Bayat (حسن رحیمی بیات)	22.7.10	Tehran	75	115	\$220k	13.11.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
6	Heyder Kerimi (حیدر کریمی)	28.6.10	Khoy	72	137	\$220k	09.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
7	Kubra Ferejzade (کبری فرج زاده)	14.6.10	Urmu (ارومیه)	135	154	\$220k	13.11.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
8	Mahmud Fezli (محمود فضللی)	28.6.10	Tebriz	78	137	\$220k	09.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
9	Neim Ehmedi (نعیم احمدی)	04.6.10	Khiyov (مشکین شهر)	56	126	\$220k	06.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies



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10	Shehram Radmehr (شهرام رادمهر)	13.6.10	Khiyov (مشكين شهر)	93	148	\$220k	06.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies
11	Shukrullah Qehremani Ferd (شکر الله قهرمانی فرد)	11.7.10	Keleyber (کلیبر)	63	120	\$220k	07.10.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system Aiding Azerbaijani spies
12	Yunis Suleymani (یونس سلیمانی)	07.6.10	Erdebil (اردبیل)	62	143	\$220k	26.11.10	1.Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2.Membership of GAMOH 3.Campaign against the system 4.Aiding Azerbaijani spies

Table 2 The Following Prisoners of Conscience are Still Kept in Solitary Confinement

No	Name, Surname	Date Arrested	Place Arrested	Solitary Confinement	Duration of Detention	Imputed Charges
1	Ayet Mehrelibeyglu (آیت مهر علی بیگلر)	30.5.10	Sofiyan (صوفیان)	224	Still in detention	1. Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2. Membership of GAMOH 3. Campaign against the system 4. Aiding Azerbaijani spies
2	Dr Letif Heseni (لطیف حسنی)	13.6.10	Kerej (کرج)	210	Still in detention	1. Gathering and conspiracy against the system 2. Membership of GAMOH 3. Campaign against the system 4. Aiding Azerbaijani spies



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Table 3 Further Details on the Victims

1	Aydin Khajeyi (ایدین خواجه ای)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A veteran of campaign for mother language and a victim of Iranian persecution • Summer 2008: detained for managing the students weblog (Az.O.H.) for 3 months, was kept in detention facilities of the Ministry of Information in Tebriz • Summer 2009: finished the prison sentence (a three year prison of one year punitive sentence and two years in suspension) • He was continually harassed after being freed from the prison
2	Ayet Mehrelibeyglu (آیت مهر علی بیگلر)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security agents forced their entry into his house and without any injunction • Upon the forced entry, the victim was beaten up and was taken to detention • After the detention, the victim's house was searched and his computer and other personal belongings were confiscated • The victim was also detained twice in the past (on the commemoration of Prof. Zehtabi on 21 Azer 81 and the Babek Anniversary in summer 2004 • He was the licence holder of student publication <i>Qopuz</i> and a MSc graduate
3	Behbud Qulizade (بهبود قلیزاده)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After his detention, his office was searched by security agents and his computer, CDs and other personal belongings were confiscated • The manager of None Governmental Organisation: <i>Green Azerbaijan</i> • The Revolutionary Court in Soyuqbulaq (مهاباد) summoned him to the court in relation to the name of his NGO by a Turkic word: <i>Green Azerbaijan</i> but was released on bail.
4	Dr Elirza Abdullah (عبداللهی علیرضا)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After his detention, his office was searched by security agents and his computer, CDs and other personal belongings were confiscated • A founding member of the NGO: <i>Bilim Yolu</i> (Scientific Way) • A member of Azerbaijani Publication Foundation
5	Ekber Azad (اکبر آزاد)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was arrested and detained in the years 2004, 2006 and 2008 and kept in solitary confinements for taking part in the Babek Annual Assembly • In 2005 was interned for four months in Eher • A founding member of <i>Chichekler</i> and other civic and linguistic foundations • An editor of <i>Varliq</i> • Author of many papers and articles.
6	Hesen Rehimi Bayat (حسن رحیمی بیات)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A human rights activist • According to eyewitness accounts, he was arrested in his workplace at 1.30 p.m. and it is understood that he was then transferred to the notorious Evin prison in Tehran • He is an active contributor to many petitions • He has an article on the national movement of South Azerbaijan and the Iranian Green Movement • Was arrested and detained two years ago and was kept in Evin prison 240 and 209 together with 20 others; was kept in solitary confinement for 40 days then. • He is a civil engineer and well known activist of the national movement of Southern Azerbaijan



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7	Heyder (Yashar) Kerimi (حیدر کریمی)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2003 was arrested in Hemedan and was detained for two months in detention facilities in Hemedan for the charge of campaign against the system and the security of the country. A former member of Azerbaijani Student movement of the Bu-Eli University of Hemedan Literary manager of <i>Beyan</i>, manager-in-charge of the publication: <i>Ildirim</i>, a member of writers board of <i>Bulut</i> in Bu Eli University, a member of Shehryar Organisation in the Medical School of Hemedan University, A member of writers board the weekly <i>Sina</i>; The manager of the second festival of Azerbaijani students of Hemedan, a member of <i>Evrin</i> NGO A founding member of the board of the <i>Aydin Seher</i> in Khoy
8	Kubra Ferejzade (کبری فرج زاده)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman human rights defender of South Azerbaijan from Urmu A civil servant in Mutehheri hospital in Urmu After her detention, her house was searched by security agents, who confiscated her CDs, books, manuscripts and other personal belongings
9	Mahmud Fezli (محمود فضللی)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was arrested in his house in Tebriz Reportedly, the security agents failed to show the injunction for the arrest and instead they beat up the victim Was detained in 2002, 2003 and 2009. In 2002 he was imprisoned for 6 months One of the organisers of the national student movements of South Azerbaijan in the 1990s, A member of the Students Islamic Society of the Science and Technology University
10	Dr Letif Heseni (لطیف حسینی)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After his detention, security agents searched his house and confiscated his books, computers, books and other personal belongings According to his wife, the victim had resorted to hunger strike during the detention period and was very weak. His PhD is in international law and he teaches in higher education and secondary schools in Kerej. Hi nomination for the third round of election for local government was rejected
11	Neim Ehmedi (نعیم احمدی)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reportedly, he requested court injunction for his arrest but security agents instead beat him up. Manager of the central council of the disbanded Islamic Society of Sehend University and natural science of Tebriz University Contributions to student publication such as <i>Chelenger</i> and <i>Cheltik</i> During his student times in Summer 2007, he was deprived of two terms from his course; in student sitting protests in 2008 was summoned to the disciplinary committee and was deprived from the university's welfare grants; was also arrested in 2008 temporarily without any reason and was beaten severely It seems that the scenario behind these detentions and harassments is depriving him from obtaining his degree.



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12	Shehram Radmehr	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After being arrested, security agents had turned to his house and searched it in Khiyov (Meshgin sheher); he was then transferred to Tebriz• While doing his MSc in the early 1990s he was expelled from the university• When arrested in the protests of 12 December in 2003, he was kept in solitary confinement for months but his sentence of 6 month imprisonment was postponed
13	Shukrullah Qehremani Ferd شکرالله قهرمانی فرد	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was arrested in Keleyber while travelling from Tebriz to Khudaferin, his native town• The security agents then turned to his house in Khudaferin to search his house, but his wife had managed to fend them off for not producing injunction documents• A teacher and student of the last term degree course on psychology• Was arrested in 2004 for the charge of separatism and was kept in solitary confinement for one month in Evin prison.
14	Yunis Suleymani (یونس سلیمانی)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was arrested in his father's house in Erdebil• His family was severely threatened by security agents before the arrest to arrange him to come to Erdebil and submit himself to the authorities• Suffers from hepatitis• When under torture by electric shock, he has suffered heart attacks twice• A renowned student activist and was the manager of Turkic Students union of Bu Eli Sina university, Hemedan• The former chief editor of the Student publication <i>Ildirim</i> and a member of writers board of <i>Bulut</i> weekly in the same university
15	Zehra Ferejzade (زهرا فرج زاده)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• She was arrested when attending interrogations in Branch 4 of Revolutionary Court, the Judge, Hashimzadeh• A woman human rights defender, renowned activist and a former university student union activist• She is wife of Yurush (Ayət) Mehrelibeyglu and sister of Zehra Ferejzade, both of whom were prisoners of conscience• Her son, Tatar, suffered the bitter days of being deprived from the care of mum and dad, both being arbitrarily detained and tortured by the Iranian authorities. Even this child was deprived of the right to visit his parents