



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Pardon and Release of Prisoners in Azerbaijan

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States welcomes the news that the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, pardoned and released 129 prisoners on March 17.

The Council of Europe had identified twenty-six of these individuals as political prisoners, including the high-profile case of the former Prime Minister Surrat Huseynov. We applaud their release.

We note that none of those pardoned and released were among the detainees arrested following the October 15 and 16 post-election demonstrations.

Mr. Chairman we have raised these cases here in the Permanent Council on several occasions since October. While many cases have been brought to completion, I would here reiterate our call to the Azerbaijani judicial authorities to resolve all the remaining post-election detainee cases quickly, fairly and transparently, in accordance with international standards and due process.

Thank you.