

FULL STATEMENT FROM INTIGAM ALIYEV AND HIS LAWYER - 10.08.2014

Rights defender Intigam Aliyev refuses all the charges against him. He thinks that there are no legal, but political motives behind those charges. That is, his detention was connected with his activity as human rights defender, and the purpose of this is to silence him down, based on a political instruction from above.

Intigam Aliyev has submitted several complaints to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) concerning human rights violations in Azerbaijan. He has submitted more than 40 petitions to the European Court in connection with violations that occurred during the 2010 Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan, and currently, communication on these cases have been started with the Government of Azerbaijan. So, Intigam Aliyev's detention is aimed at preventing resolution of those election-related cases against the Government of Azerbaijan by the European Court. It is not accidental that when the investigation search was conducted in the office of the Legal Education Society, headed by Intigam Aliyev, the investigators illegally took all the documents, such as the lawyer's files, concerning those election-related cases, though those documents are in no way related with the charges raised against him. This basically means that, on the one hand, by physically isolating Intigam Aliyev from the Azerbaijani society, they prevented him from continuing his communication with the European Court on election cases; on the other hand, by taking those court files, they hindered other members of the Legal Education Society or the applicants themselves to carry on the above-mentioned communication. According to the Rules of Court of the ECHR, in such circumstances, it is possible to cancel a case, on the ground that the applicant has lost interest in the result of the case. It should be considered that the complaints sent by Intigam Aliyev to the European Court include not only election-related cases, but also numerous cases on violations of property rights, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and other strategically important legal cases. And all the files regarding those cases have been illegally taken by the investigation bodies.

Moreover, it should be noted that, to date, majority of the cases on which the European Court has issued judgments against Azerbaijan were the cases submitted by Intigam Aliyev and/or where he was the lawyer of the applicants.

All this provide a solid ground to say that the main reason behind Intigam Aliyev's detention is to avoid adoption of judgments against Azerbaijan by the European Court on the cases he submitted, especially, the cases concerning the results of the 2010 Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan. In other words, the main reason is Intigam Aliyev's activity as rights defender and lawyer in the cases submitted to the European Court.

Another reason behind Intigam Aliyev's detention is his speech, as human rights activist, at the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe last month. In that speech, he strongly criticized the policy of the Azerbaijani authorities with regard to human rights situation in the country and talked about the problem of political prisoners, pressures on independent NGOs, arrests of the critics of the government on fictitious charges, gloomy human rights situation in the country, massive violations of citizens' property rights, etc. In this sense, his arrest is also a violation of the freedom of expression.

Rights activist Intigam Aliyev considers that his detention is a part of the general policy course aimed at silencing and totally exterminating the independent NGOs in the country. It is no mere coincidence that, in recent months, several other rights defenders have been arrested on similar charges, bank accounts of the leaders of independent NGOs, including the Legal Education Society headed by Intigam Aliyev, have been frozen, and artificial obstacles have been created on registration of grant projects. In this sense, his arrest is also a violation of the freedom of association.

This statement was announced and disseminated by lawyer Anar Gasimli, who met with Intigam Aliyev at Baku Pre-Trial Detention Center on 9 August 2014.