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B6-0360/2005

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

Pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on Azerbaijan

B6-0360/2005

European parliament resolution on Azerbaijan

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Azerbaijan and the European Union of July 1999,
 - having regard to the European Union's Neighbourhood Policy and to the Commission, Council and European Parliament reports and resolution on this subject,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 21 May 2005 the police beat up and arrested several participants in a peaceful demonstration by the Ugur opposition in Baku, whose aim was to voice the opposition's concerns in connection with the preparations for the November parliamentary elections,
- B. whereas, following this violence, over 30 opposition and youth movement activists were arrested and detained for several days and whereas there are reports that journalists were beaten,
- C. whereas on 31 May 2005 the authorities detained more students and youth movement activists for having distributed pro-opposition leaflets,
1. Strongly condemns the action by the Azeri authorities in these crack-downs on lawful protesters, which is in flagrant breach of Azerbaijan's international and European commitments;
 2. Urges the authorities to release immediately all those protestors and youth activists that remain in custody and to assure the highest standards in any eventual judicial proceedings resulting from these events; calls also on the authorities to bring to justice the killers of independent journalist Elmar Guseinov, shot to death outside his apartment in March 2005;
 3. Reminds the authorities of Azerbaijan and its President, Ilham Aliyev, that they carry the full political, moral and judicial responsibility for securing the right to peaceful and democratic protest;
 4. Calls on the Azeri authorities to take urgent action in order to rule out any further violence by its security forces against the opposition, journalists and youth activists, in particular in the run-up to the November elections;
 5. Calls on the Azeri authorities as a matter of urgency to implement the recommendations by the Council of Europe as regards the treatment of political prisoners and independent media and by the Venice Commission as

regards changes to the electoral law and procedures for the securing free, fair and democratic parliamentary elections;

6. Calls for renewed efforts from all sides in the round-table discussions between the ruling party and the opposition parties, whose aim is to strengthen confidence in the election proceedings and minimize the risk of fraud;
7. Calls on all EU actors, in particular the High Representative and the Commission but also the Member States, to pay particular attention to developments in Azerbaijan in the run-up to the November elections and during the campaign; calls for a sufficient number of international observers to be deployed in the country for the elections, including a delegation from the European Parliament;
8. Instructs on its President to forward this resolution to the President, Government and Parliament of Azerbaijan, to the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States, to the High Representative, to the Council of Europe and to the OSCE.