

**Question for written answer E-012700/2015  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

**Juan Carlos Girauta Vidal (ALDE), Javier Nart (ALDE) and Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Freedom of press in Azerbaijan

Khadija Ismayilova, an investigative journalist and contributor to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, has been sentenced to seven and a half years in prison in Azerbaijan. She was convicted on charges of criminal libel, tax evasion and abuse of power, after reporting on corruption linked to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and members of his family. Another prominent human rights activist in Azerbaijan, Leyla Yunus, has been sentenced to eight and a half years in prison.

The Azerbaijani authorities are jailing critical voices in trials which do not meet international standards. Is the VP/HR aware of these sentences? What action does the VP/HR intend to take to urge the Azerbaijani Government to guarantee freedom of press and to release political prisoners?