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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Free Anar Mammadli: Two Years of Arbitrary Detention Must End

On the Eve of the Two-Year Anniversary of his Arbitrary Detention, the Campaign to End Repression in Azerbaijan Calls for the Immediate and Unconditionnal Release of Human Rights Defender Anar Mammadli.

Baku and Geneva, 28 April 2026 — Tomorrow, 29 April 2026, marks two full years since Azerbaijani authorities arbitrarily detained Anar Mammadli, a prominent Azerbaijani human rights defender and the leader of Azerbaijan's only independent election watchdog. On this occasion, the Campaign to End Repression in Azerbaijan launches a global call for his immediate and unconditional release and a petition on Avaaz that the public can sign today.

Two full years on, Mr. Mammadli's trial has been a mockery of justice.

He has been held on fabricated charges that have shifted over time, from smuggling to illegal entrepreneurship, money laundering, tax evasion, and document forgery.

His case has been raised by United Nations Special Rapporteurs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the World Organisation Against Torture, Human Rights House Foundation, and Front Line Defenders.

Anar Mammadli's case is emblematic of the broader pattern of repression in Azerbaijan. Every tool used against him, fabricated charges, prolonged pre-trial detention, denial of fair trial standards, smear campaigns, and solitary confinement, has been used against hundreds of others. Holding Azerbaijan accountable in his case means holding it accountable for all.

The Campaign calls upon President Ilham Aliyev to order the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Anar Mammadli, to drop all charges, and to put an end to the persecution of human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, civic activists and scholars. The Campaign further calls upon Azerbaijan's international partners, especially the European Union and the Council of Europe, to make Mr. Mammadli's release, alongside the release of all political prisoners, a precondition for cooperation.

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