

Right of reply by the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Working session – Fundamental Freedoms II

Mr.Moderator,

First, I would like to bring clarification with regard to the remark made by the representative of International Federation for Human Rights. The mentioned Novruzali Mammadov was not human rights defender and he was charged on state treason. Before and after arresting his health state was poor and that is why he was under regular medical monitoring of high-profile doctors. However, in spite of medical support he died as a result of myocardium and this was confirmed by doctors' commission. Nevertheless, given public interest and with a view of providing accountability and transparency there was established the interagency working group involving not only officials from competent authorities but independent experts as well. The preliminary medical conclusions, including diagnosis being thoroughly re-examined were reconfirmed.

Second, in reply to the remark of the US delegation I wish to refer to the Law on Freedom of Assembly adopted in 1998 with the expertise provided by the ODIHR/OSCE. With a view of revising this law new amendments were incorporated in 2008 upon recommendations of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. This law provides fundamental conditions for people to assemble and there are no restrictions in this regard.

As a rule, right of assembly becomes more demanded at the eve of major political events. The Azerbaijani authorities endeavor to create necessary conditions for all political parties before parliamentary elections due to 7th November 2010. The office of executive power of Baky city proposed a number of sites for pre-election rally for parties irrespective of their political orientation (pro-governmental, opposition or independent). At the same time, with a view of promoting dialogue on pending issues the joint working group with participation of the OSCE Baky Office has been functioning.

Azerbaijan remains committed to fundamental rights, including right of assembly.

Thank you.