



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT ON AZERBAIJAN**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile  
at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM),  
Working Session 3 on Fundamental Freedoms,  
Warsaw, 23 September 2014

Madam Moderator,

I aligned myself with the statement made by the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union. I take the floor in my national capacity to say that I fully share the concerns expressed in this room earlier today about the many arrests of journalists and human rights activists in Azerbaijan.

The long list of detained persons include the names of prominent human rights defenders Leyla Yunus and Rasul Jafarov.

It adds to my concern that these arrests are taking place under Azerbaijan's Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Madam Moderator,

Before the lunch break we heard the Azeri delegate exercise her right of reply. We understand that Azeri authorities regard these journalists and human rights activists as criminals.

*We* do not regard the exercise of human rights to be a criminal activity.

I therefore conclude by urging Azerbaijan to fully comply with its OSCE commitments and all its international human rights obligations.

Thank you, Madam Moderator.