



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

October 1, 2025

Jacob A. McGee  
Senior Bureau Official  
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C St., NW Washington, DC

Dear Mr. McGee,

We write as Co-Chairs of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (TLHRC) to express deep concern regarding the ongoing persecution by the government of Azerbaijan of Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu and his brother Galib Bayramov. The abysmal human rights record of the government of Azerbaijan, where hundreds of political prisoners remain behind bars and independent voices are silenced, has been well documented in the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and is too notorious to require further elaboration here.

The persecution of these two men has been particularly severe and oppressive. Ibadoghlu was unlawfully detained on fabricated charges in July 2023, and Mr. Bayramov is persecuted for supporting his brother. Ibadoghlu suffers from serious health conditions and urgently requires adequate medical care which cannot be properly provided during the arrest.

Regarding the well-known case of Dr. Ibadoghlu, he remains under indefinite house arrest since April 22, 2024, barred from travel and required to report to police twice weekly. Many in Congress have supported his release - H.Res. 120 has been introduced on his behalf and now has 45 co-sponsors. Most recently, on the second anniversary of his detention, 14 senators issued a bipartisan statement calling for his release.

The government of Azerbaijan has escalated Ibadoghlu's case by extending its persecution to Ibadoghlu's brother, Galib Bayramov, who regularly visited and publicly supported Ibadoghlu, including on social media. On April 10, 2025, Bayramov was formally charged as a defendant in the so-called "NGO case" by the Grave Crimes Investigation Department of the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan and was placed in police custody.

He was formally indicted under Article 193-1.3.1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (legalization of property obtained through crime) and Article 308.1 (abuse of power).

The charges are as patently absurd as the counterfeiting charge against his brother. On September 5, 2025, the pre-trial investigation was declared complete, and the case was referred to the Baku Court on Serious Crimes for adjudication. If convicted, Bayramov faces a prison sentence of 8 to 12 years.

We respectfully request you to urge the government of Azerbaijan to release Dr. Ibadoghlu and cease its persecution of Galib Bayramov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Smith", written in a cursive style.

Christopher H. Smith  
Co-Chair, TLHRC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James P. McGovern", written in a cursive style.

James P. McGovern  
Co-Chair, TLHRC