



UNITED NATIONS
**HUMAN RIGHTS
TREATY BODIES**

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Committee against Torture

REFERENCIA: CAT/Follow-up-Azerbaijan

9 March 2026

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur for Follow-up to Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture, I have the honour to refer to the follow-up to the examination of the fifth periodic report of Azerbaijan, in accordance with the Guidelines for follow-up to concluding observations (CAT/C/55/3).

At the end of its 79th session, held from 15 April to 10 May 2024, the Committee transmitted its concluding observations to your Permanent Mission. The Committee's concluding observations (CAT/C/AZE/CO/5, para. 42) requested the State Party to provide within one year further information on the specific areas of concern identified in paragraphs 13 (b), 17 (a), 21 and 23 (a) of the concluding observations.

On behalf of the Committee, allow me to express appreciation for your letter of 18 November 2025 providing your Government's response to the above-mentioned paragraphs (CAT/C/AZE/FCO/5) and to make the following comments:

Access to and independence of lawyers (para. 13 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State Party regarding guarantees contained in the Criminal Procedure Code and in the Law on the Rights and Freedoms of Persons Held in Places of Detention vis-à-vis the right of detainees to access legal counsel. However, the Committee regrets that the information provided by the State Party in this regard largely mirrors the information contained in its fifth periodic report¹ and falls short of providing up-to-date information regarding the meaningful implementation of the Committee's recommendations, particularly as regards the ability of persons deprived of their liberty to actually avail themselves of their right to access legal counsel in practice.

.../...

H.E. Mr. Galib Israfilov
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¹ CAT/C/AZE/5, paras. 21-33.

The Committee similarly notes the information provided by the State Party regarding the Rules of Conduct for Police Officers with Detained or Arrested Persons, the availability of confidential meeting spaces in temporary detention facilities, and amendments to internal instructions, particularly those aimed at enhanced recording of the provision of fundamental legal safeguards and audio-visual recording. However, the Committee regrets that no information was provided regarding the actions taken by the State Party since the adoption of the concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Azerbaijan to implement its recommendations. As such, the Committee remains concerned by allegations of denial of legal assistance, harassment of lawyers, including judicial harassment, and confiscation of confidential legal documentation by law enforcement officials in the State Party. The Committee further notes recent amendments to the Law on Advocates and Advocate Activity and expresses its concern as to whether the amendments to the Act are in conformity with the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and other relevant international standards (1/E).

The adoption of a zero-tolerance approach to torture (para. 17 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee notes the data provided by the State Party regarding the number of investigations into allegations of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, abuse of office, and other similar offenses by the Service Investigations Department in 2024. Nevertheless, it notes with concern the 90% dismissal rate of investigations, and regrets that no information was provided indicating that any prosecutions were initiated or verdicts handed down in any of these cases. The Committee further regrets that no information was provided regarding the issuance of a clear and effective message from the highest possible level that torture and ill-treatment are unacceptable in all circumstances (1/C).

Protection of human rights defenders and journalists (para. 21 of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State Party in relation to the provisions of the Law on Media and the Law on State Registration and State Register of Legal Entities, along with information indicating that some 4,000 non-governmental organizations are registered in the State Party. The Committee once again regrets, however, that no information was provided indicating measures which have been taken since the adoption of the concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Azerbaijan to implement the recommendations therein. In particular, the Committee regrets the absence of information on any investigations into allegations of torture of human rights defender Tofiq Yagublu, the violent abduction and torture of human rights defender Bakhtiyar Hajiyev, and the arrests of and denial of medical treatment for journalists Avaz Zeynalli and Alasgar Mammadli, nor the arrests of journalists associated with Abzas Media and Toplum TV. Moreover, the Committee expresses its concern that, according to information before it, human rights defenders and journalists, including journalists from Abzas Media and Toplum TV, allegedly continue to face violence, harassment and other forms of ill-treatment as a result of their work (1/E).

Investigation and prosecution of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law (para. 23 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations)

The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State Party in relation to investigations into the conduct of Azerbaijani service members in the context of the international armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in particular information indicating that between July and December 2021 the Investigation Department of the Prosecutor General's Office conducted investigations into a total of 15 criminal cases of human rights violations committed by Azerbaijani service members. The Committee also takes note of information provided indicating that two criminal cases against Azerbaijani service members were initiated in 2023. However, the Committee regrets that the State Party did not provide any information on the outcomes of these cases or on the steps taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee since the adoption of the concluding observations on the

fifth periodic report of Azerbaijan, including as regards efforts made to clarify, at the highest levels, that violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law related to the conflict are unacceptable (1/C).

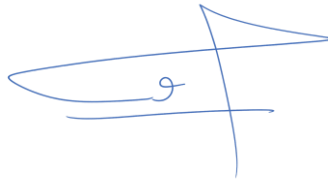
Implementation plan

Lastly, the Committee regrets that the State party has not provided information about its plans for implementing, within the coming reporting period, the recommendations included in its concluding observations (C).

The Government of Azerbaijan is encouraged to provide additional information, if there is any, which would further contribute to the Committee's analysis of the progress made regarding the specific issues of concern cited above. This additional information may be provided in any subsequent report by the State Party pursuant to the Committee's request in its concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Azerbaijan or other future periodic reports.

The Committee looks forward to a continued constructive dialogue with the authorities of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the Convention.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, elongated shape with a small loop and a vertical line extending downwards from the right side.

Abderrazak Rouwane
Rapporteur for Follow-up to Concluding Observations
Committee against Torture