

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE TOFIG YAGUBLU ON A HUNGER STRIKE

The life of imprisoned Azerbaijani dissident, Tofig Yagublu, is in danger. His health, already weak after years of persecution, arbitrary detention, and ill-treatment, has been deteriorating since he began a hunger strike on April 1 to protest against his politically motivated sentence. He must be immediately and unconditionally released and obtain access to adequate, independent medical assistance.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **Fourth UA 38.20**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Ilham Aliyev

President of Azerbaijan

19 Istiqlaliyyat Street Baku AZ1066, Azerbaijan

Email: office@pa.gov.az

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Embassy of Azerbaijan in the United States

Ambassador Khazar Ibrahim

2741 34th St NW,

Washington, DC 20008

Email: azerbaijan@azembassy.us

Mister President,

I am writing to draw your attention to the arbitrary detention of opposition figure, **Tofig Yagublu**. On March 10, he was sentenced to nine years in prison on politically motivated charges, following proceedings that did not comply with fair trial standards. He has been on hunger strike since April 1, and his already weak health condition is significantly deteriorating.

Tofig Yagublu has been repeatedly arrested, imprisoned, and subjected to ill-treatment for his political activism and criticism of the government, for more than a decade. His most recent trial has been widely condemned for its lack of due process, with the prosecution relying solely on the testimony of a victim, disregarding all the arguments of the defense, including allegations of due process violations. Tofig Yagublu has stated that he started the hunger strike in protest to his imprisonment.

He is suffering from chronic asthma, which has been gradually worsening due to poor prison conditions and lack of adequate medical care. His lawyer, who visited him recently, described him as being very weak, pale, rapidly losing weight, exhibiting dizziness, and having difficulty walking.

I urge you to take all necessary steps to end the misuse of the criminal justice system in Azerbaijan to target criticism and dissent and to immediately and unconditionally release Tofig Yagublu. Pending his release, and given his health condition, I call on you to urgently ensure that Yagublu has access to all the healthcare services that he needs without any delay, which may require his transfer to an independent specialized institution or civil hospital.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tofig Yagublu is a prominent opposition figure, a former journalist, and an outspoken government critic in Azerbaijan. He is a member of the Musavat Party and a senior politician in the National Council of Democratic Forces – a coalition of opposition parties and activists. Yagublu has long been a target of Azerbaijani authorities due to his criticism of government corruption and human rights violations.

Tofig Yagublu has been repeatedly arrested and subjected to ill treatment for his political activism and criticism of the government for more than a decade. During this time, he has been sentenced to prison three times on politically motivated charges. He has also been arrested for participation in peaceful protests multiple times and punished with fines and “administrative detention” for up to 30 days.

On December 14, 2023, police arrested Tofig Yagublu as he was exiting the metro in central Baku. They later claimed to have found 5,000 euros, 2,500 manats, and an unspecified amount of US dollars in his family's home. According to his daughter, Nigar Hazi, the money had been planted by authorities during the search.

[On March 10, the Baku Serious Crimes Court sentenced Tofig Yagublu](#) to nine years in prison on charges of “fraud resulting in substantial harm” (Article 178.3.2 of the Criminal Code) and “document forgery” (Articles 320.1 and 320.2). His co-defendant, Elnur Mamedov, who provided incriminating testimony, was sentenced to eight years in prison. Tofig Yagublu has consistently denied the accusations of receiving any money for his activities.

On April 1, Tofig Yagublu announced a hunger strike in protest against the “unfounded, unlawful and dishonorable sentence”. According to his daughter Nigar Hazi, he reacted to the sentence by saying, “I am released at 75 years old, is this a life? If it is [not a life], I will choose to die before”.

Tofig Yagublu’s unfounded, politically motivated prosecution is part of the Azerbaijani authorities’ systematic ongoing crackdown on human rights defenders, government critics, independent media, and all dissent. Yagublu’s sentencing follows a one-and-a-half year long escalation of repression, including [the recent imprisonment](#) of other opposition activists and journalists on similarly baseless charges.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: May 1, 2025

NAME AND PRONOUN: Tofig Yagublu (he/him)

LINK TO THE PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/urgent-action-free-prominent-opposition-leader-azerbaijan-38-20/>