



Press Release

AIB concerned over treatment of journalists in Azerbaijan

London, 21 February 2014

The Association for International Broadcasting has today expressed its concern about the welfare of Azerbaijani journalist Khadija Ismayilova.

Ms Ismayilova is an investigative journalist who contributes to the award-winning Radio Azadliq, the Azerbaijani-language service of AIB Member RFE/RL. This week she has been summoned to the Prosecutor General's office in Baku accused of spying for the United States against Azerbaijan. Ms Ismayilova and RFE/RL – an international broadcaster based in Prague – vociferously deny the charges which they say are completely without foundation.

“Azerbaijan has consistently created obstacles for journalists reporting from and within the country,” commented AIB chief executive, Simon Spanswick. “AIB and its Members are concerned that Khadija Ismayilova is the subject of new charges that are without foundation. We call on the Azerbaijani authorities to drop the charges and allow Ms Ismayilova and all other journalists in the country to carry on their work free from intimidation and threats to their lives and those of their families.”

Ms Ismayilova has been subjected to a series of attacks over recent years as she has undertaken comprehensive journalistic investigations into the Azerbaijani government. In 2012, her apartment was bugged and illegally-obtained intimate footage of her and her boyfriend released on the Internet. Despite these intimidations, Ms Ismayilova has continued her work to expose corruption in the country.



Press Release

“As a participating State of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Azerbaijan has committed to respect freedom of the media,” notes Spanswick. “It is important that Azerbaijan upholds this commitment and offers protection to journalists working in the country.

- E N D S -

About the AIB

Established in 1993, the AIB is the international industry association and global knowledge network for the broadcasting industry – cross-media, cross-border, cross-cultural.

With a reach of over 25,000 communicators and media professionals, AIB is a unique centre of information about international broadcasting, covering TV, radio, online and mobile. AIB researches regular market intelligence briefings for its members and provides client-specific consultancy and project support.

Members receive an extensive package of services throughout the year. AIB publishes the comprehensive Global Broadcasting Sourcebook and the international media magazine, *The Channel*.

AIB hosts the annual AIB International Media Excellence Awards – the “AIBs”.

For more information, visit www.aib.org.uk and theaibs.tv or call +44 (0) 20 7993 2557

About RFE/RL

RFE/RL is a private, non-profit corporation funded by the US Congress through the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

RFE/RL journalists report the news in 21 countries where a free press is banned by the government or not fully established. RFE/RL provides what many people cannot get locally: uncensored news, responsible discussion, and open debate (mission statement).

RFE/RL broadcasts to 21 countries in 28 languages. With over 400 full-time journalists, 750 freelancers, and 19 local bureaus, RFE/RL is one of the most comprehensive news operations in the world.

www.rferl.org