

Title: Standing Up for Azerbaijan's Civil Society: Call Upon the European Institutions

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1 The Alliance of European Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party
2 convening in Vilnius on June 4th, 2016

3 **Considering:**

- 4 • The recent detainment of activists from the oppositional civic
5 movement N!DA VətəndaşHərəkatı under questionable circumstances (13th of
6 May).
- 7 • That N!DA youth activists have been sentenced to up to eight years in prison in
8 the past.
- 9 • The continuous usage of false drug allegations to undermine and discredit
10 oppositional forces and that serve as justification for crackdowns against critical
11 journalism, as reported by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.
- 12 • The increasing display of authoritarianism by president Aliyev since the end of
13 the Baku2015 European Games.

14 **Acknowledging:**

- 15 • ALDE's commitment to freedom of expression, pluralistic democracy, and the
16 right to fair trial as paramount pillars of liberal civil society.
- 17 • The obligations of the Azeri government as a member of the Council of Europe
18 to respect and promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.
- 19 • The active role of Azerbaijan within the Council of Europe when the country
20 chaired the Council in 2014.

21 **The ALDE Party calls for:**

- 22 • The Council of Europe, specifically the ALDE-PACE delegation, to remind the
23 Azeri government of their obligations within the European community and to
24 immediately stop their crackdown practices and to release detained and
25 imprisoned oppositional activists.
- 26 • The Council of Europe to suspend the voting rights of Azeri representatives in
27 the Parliamentary Assembly until concrete steps have been taken to improve the
28 situation.
- 29 • The ALDE Group in the European Parliament to propose targeted sanctions
30 against Azeri officials.