



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**Calling on Azerbaijan to Immediately  
Release Mehman Huseynov**

As delivered by Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Kate M. Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 9, 2017

The United States is troubled by the conviction and two-year prison sentence of blogger and activist Mehman Huseynov on charges of defamation. We are also concerned by his allegations of ill treatment in police custody.

We urge the government of Azerbaijan to uphold its OSCE commitments to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, to release Mehman Huseynov and all others incarcerated for exercising their fundamental freedoms, and to cease the intimidation and detention of those who exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression.

We call on Azerbaijani authorities to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into Mr. Huseynov's allegations of abuse while in detention and to bring to justice those found responsible for any abuses.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

###