



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Travel of Leyla and Arif Yunus

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 21, 2016

The United States welcomes as another positive step Azerbaijan's decision to allow human rights activist Leyla Yunus and historian Arif Yunus to travel abroad for urgent medical care.

We firmly believe that expanding freedom of expression and political participation will do much to strengthen Azerbaijan as well as our bilateral relationship.

We encourage the government to take additional steps and unconditionally release all individuals who have been incarcerated for exercising their fundamental freedoms.

We call on the government of Azerbaijan to adhere to its OSCE commitments to protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.