



Press-release

On the rally of 14-15 July and aftermath

On July 12, new skirmishes outbroke in the borderline between Azerbaijan and Armenia, near the Tovuz district, which as a result both sides have lost personnel member with 11 personnel member and one civilian, resident of Tovuz, from Azerbaijan. Following this, at the night of 14th of July, citizens from capital Baku and surrounding areas initiated a rally towards central Baku. The rally participants mostly gathered in front of the Parliament building and the Freedom Square. The main slogans of the rally were about the support to the army and demands of accountability.

The rally lasting for hours remained mostly peaceful where citizens waited for officials at the scene. Prior to the morning, one small group of citizens broke into the building of the Parliament. Subsequently, the clashes happened between the citizens and police officers where police started to disperse the crowd by using tear gas, water cannon, rubber bullets and disproportionate use of physical force. According to the official information issued by Office of the General Prosecutor and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, numbers of police officers were injured, and police cars were damaged.

Generally, the course of the events was accompanied by several human rights violations. First of all, the freedom of peaceful assembly of the rallygoers were violated while police officers aggressively dispersed the rally. Near the end of the rally, police used disproportionate force against participants whereas there were reports of detention of more than 70 people across the central Baku afterwards. However, the Ministry of Internal Affairs announced the launch of the criminal case about 7 people for entering the parliament building.

The journalists, activists and other citizens were among the detainees who were kept in police stations for more than 15 hours where some of them were demanded by police to unlock their phones and reveal personal conversations. At the same time, the police officers infringed on the freedom of expression and information of journalists by hindering their professional work while covering the rally. Independent journalists Khayala Aghayeva, Sevinj Vagifgizi and Aysel Umudova were attacked during the rally and their equipments were confiscated and damaged by police officers. On the day after the events, a public smearing campaign was started against the independent media outlets, such as MeydanTV, Radio Liberty and others covering the events. The following is the list of known participants of the rally detained afterwards, according to the information received by Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center.

1. Anar Abdulla – independent journalist
2. Elvin Jabizada – activist
3. Firudin Salimov – activist

4. Farid Asadov – activist
5. Elvin Mammadov – activist
6. Salman Aliyev – participant
7. Sadig Jafarli – participant
8. Ali Abishov – participant
9. Anar Karimzada – participant

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