



**Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the UN Office and other
International Organizations**

GENEVA

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the Joint Communication AL AZE 2/2026 of 13 January 2026 sent by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, has the honor to transmit herewith the response of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure: 3 pages



Geneva, 16 April 2026

**Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
GENEVA**

Response of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan hereby submits its response to the joint communication dated 13 January 2026 (AL AZE 2/2026) by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; and Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers.

In the joint communication it is alleged that suspension of Mr. Zabil Gahramanov's licence to practise law, along with a criminal case against him and detention, allegedly involving due process violations and breaches of his rights may represent retaliation for his legal and human rights work and critical statement.

The Government categorically rejects, in their entirety, all allegations in the joint communication and states that no one is persecuted, charged or arrested for his/her free opinion and professional affiliation in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The due process with respect to Mr. Gahramanov is carried out in full compliance with the national legislation and the relevant international obligations. The Government provides comprehensive information, as well as its observations with regard to the case in question, in the spirit of constructive engagement with the international human rights mechanisms.

Information on the suspension Zabil Gahramanov's license

The Disciplinary Commission of the Azerbaijani Bar Association conducted an investigation into the appeal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan concerning Mr. Zabil Gahramanov, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation. During the investigation, both parties were heard, the submitted evidences were comprehensively, objectively, and impartially assessed, the principle of equality of the parties within the disciplinary proceedings was fully ensured.

The Disciplinary Commission is an independent body composed exclusively of lawyers elected by the General Meeting (Conference) of lawyers, and it is obliged to demonstrate an impartial, objective, and fair position in disciplinary proceedings.

According to the opinion of the Disciplinary Commission, it was established that Z.Gahramanov violated the relevant provisions of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Lawyers and Legal Practice," the Regulations on the Rules of Ethic Conduct of Lawyers, and the Charter of the Azerbaijan Bar Association. Taking into account the relevant opinion of the Disciplinary Commission, as well as the fact that Z.Gahramanov had previously been subjected to disciplinary liability several times (warning and reprimand), his legal practice was suspended by the decision of the Presidium of the Bar Association for a period of 6 (six) months, from 8 October 2025 to 8 April 2026. The decision relates solely to a disciplinary violation and is not connected with the lawyer's activities in the field of human rights or any other reason. Moreover, it has not been established that Z.Gahramanov participated as a lawyer in any politically sensitive case during his legal practice.

Factual and legal basis of Zabil Gahramanov's detention

Zabil Gahramanov was detained on suspicion of committing acts of aggravated hooliganism by resisting another person who attempted to prevent a breach of public order by insulting and causing injuries to [REDACTED] as well as of obtaining money from [REDACTED] through abuse of trust and deception.

On 23 October 2025, [REDACTED] submitted an appeal to the Ganja City Main Police Department, claiming he was hit and injured by Z. Gahramanov at the former's car wash station located at the Gulustan settlement. Investigation and Inquiry Department of the Main Police Department initiated a criminal case regarding the appeal under the Article 221.2.2 (hooliganism) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan. On 25 October 2025, forensic medical examination of [REDACTED] classified the injuries as slight damage to health and Z. Gahramanov was charged under the Articles 178.2.4 (fraud) and 221.2.2 (hooliganism) of the Criminal Code by the order of Ganja City Court, based on the collected material evidence, with 3 months pre-detention period starting from 23 October 2025. On 28 October 2025, the decision was upheld by the Ganja Court of Appeal.

On 12 November 2025, the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan forwarded the criminal case to the Main Investigation and Inquiry Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for continuation of the investigation.

The preliminary investigation on the case revealed that Z. Gahramanov deceived [REDACTED], who applied for his legal assistance services, by misusing his trust and illegally obtaining 5600 manats in cash from him in parts. He committed the similar type of fraud with [REDACTED] (1300 manats), [REDACTED] (950 manats) and [REDACTED] (600 manats).

Collected credible evidence confirmed that Zabil Gahramanov had misappropriated the funds of the said citizens, and on 15 January 2026, he was re-charged under Articles 178.2.2, 178.2.3, 178.2.4, and 221.2.2 of the Criminal Code.

On 17 January 2026, pre detention period of Zabil Gahramanov was extended for 2 months and 5 days, and 2 more months on 18 March 2026 by Baku City Sabail District Court. [REDACTED] lawyer of the accused person, appealed for a replacement of pre-trial detention with another preventive measure on 17 January 2026, which was rejected by the criminal panel of The Baku Court of Appeal on 23 January 2026.

All circumstances of the criminal case have been fully and comprehensively investigated. In addition, 18 lawyers who applied to defend the rights of the accused, Zabil Gahramanov, were admitted to the proceedings, and their participation in procedural actions as defence counsel, their right to confidential communication, and their other procedural rights have been ensured. No complaints regarding any violations of procedural rights have been submitted by the lawyers.

The motions submitted by the defence to the investigative authority have been examined in accordance with the law, the evidence presented by them has been verified, appropriate decisions have been adopted, and the applicants have been duly informed.

The pre-trial investigation is currently ongoing, ensuring the objectivity, impartiality, and fairness of the criminal prosecution.

Pre-trial detention conditions

Z.Gahramanov was admitted to Detention Center No.2 in Ganja on 10 January 2026 and was transferred to the Baku Pre-Trial detention Center on 10 January 2026. At the times of his admission and transfer, his rights and duties were explained, he was provided with living space, which included a bed and necessary material conditions for living, in accordance with the law. In the duration of pre-trial detention, Z.Gahramanov was not subjected to any pressure, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, his rights were not violated, and his safety and appropriate detention conditions were ensured.

On 1 November 2025, Z.Gahramanov's right to meet and to hold telephone conversations with people other than his legal defence was restricted based on the order of [REDACTED] the chief investigator of the Ganja City Main Police Department. Ganja City Court upheld the order on 14 November 2025. Ganja Court of Appeal removed the restriction on 21 November 2025.

In accordance with the legislation, Z.Gahramanov held telephone calls with his close relatives, met with his family members, no restriction was implied on his written correspondences, he was informed of his right to send complaints and suggestions via the management of the detention center. He had confidential meetings with his lawyers without any restrictions. During his stays at the detention centers, Z.Gahramanov held 30 telephone calls, received parcels 11 times and met with her close relatives 7 times. He had confidential meetings with his lawyers without any restrictions.

Z.Gahramanov was subjected to preliminary medical examination upon his admission to the Detention Center and no change in his psychoneurological status was detected. Hemodynamic and physiological indicators were within normal limits in objective and instrumental examinations. There were not any new injuries or trauma marks on his skin. He was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes mellitus and was registered with the dispensary. During his stay at the Baku Pre-Trial Detention Center, he was examined and since he had a history of diabetes, he was seen by an endocrinologist, his blood sugar levels were monitored dynamically, his treatment regimen was adjusted, and he was instructed to strictly adhere to his diet. His current health condition is satisfactory, he is under medical supervision and medical services are available to him.

Z.Gahramanov was visited by members of the National Preventive Mechanism of the National Human Rights Institution (Ombudsperson) of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the Detention Center No.2 in Ganja and held confidential meetings with them. His appeal was heard and his application was received by the NPM members. Additionally, applications addressed to the Ombudsperson by Z.Gahramanov, his lawyer and his family members were raised with the Prosecutor General's Office and the results of the investigations were reported to Z.Gahramanov in the letter of response.