

Council Of Europe Slams Baku On Human Rights

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Nils Muiznieks has harshly criticized Azerbaijani authorities over deteriorating human rights and basic freedoms in the country.

Talking to RFE/RL by phone from Strasbourg on April 22, Muiznieks said nothing had been done by Baku to improve the situation around freedom of speech, freedom of gatherings and associations, and ownership rights in Azerbaijan.

Muiznieks cited several cases where Azerbaijani journalists and bloggers critical of the authorities had been jailed, persecuted, or humiliated.

He criticized existing defamation laws that critics say are often used to clamp down on dissent.

Muiznieks also expressed concerns regarding the jailing of Anar Mammadov, the leader of an independent election-monitoring group, and opposition leaders Ilqar Mammadov and Tofiq Yaqublu.

Muiznieks spoke to RFE/RL before releasing an updated report on the human rights situation in Azerbaijan.

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