

CPJ Condemns Azerbaijani Treason Charges Against Journalist

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has condemned authorities in Baku for charging a prominent journalist with high treason over allegations he spied for Azerbaijan's rival, Armenia.

The Prosecutor-General's Office said on April 21 that Rauf Mirqadirov "was recruited by the Armenian secret services in 2008 and supplied Yerevan with information on Azerbaijan's state secrets."

In a statement, the CPJ's Europe and Central Asia program coordinator, Nina Ognianova, called on Azerbaijani authorities "to drop these trumped-up charges and stop abusing the law to silence independent reporting on the country."

She said Azerbaijan was "quickly becoming one of the leading jailers of journalists in the Eurasia region."

Mirqadirov has been ordered to stay in pretrial custody for the next three months as investigators pursue the case.

He is a correspondent for the Russian-language newspaper "Zerkalo," which is published in Azerbaijan.

With reporting by AFP, ITAR-TASS, and Interfax

<http://www.rferl.org/content/cpj-condemns-azerbaijan-for-treason-charges-against-journalist/25357678.html>