

URGENT ACTION

SICK PRISONER DIES IN CUSTODY

Novruzali Mammadov died in prison on 17 August in Azerbaijan. The 67-year-old language expert's health had suffered badly in Penal Colony No 15, and he had been moved to the central hospital of the penitentiary system on 28 July.

According to a 13 August statement by the Committee to Defend the Rights of Novruzali Mammadov (set up after he was arrested), the Ombudsperson of Azerbaijan, Elmira Süleymanova, "took **Novruzali Mammadov's** case under her control" and was going to monitor the progress of his examination and treatment.

On 31 July the Committee reported that following his transfer to the central hospital of the penitentiary system run by the Ministry of Justice, Novruzali Mammadov had not been given any treatment or pain relief by hospital staff, as they said they needed to carry out tests before treating him. Only on 13 August, following intervention of the Ombudsperson, the hospital made the hospital's diagnosis available, the doctors said that his state was "satisfactory and his treatment continues." However, he died four days later. Local news agencies quoted the Ministry of Justice press office stating that the cause of death was believed to be an acute cerebral thrombosis but that there would be further forensic examination.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals. Amnesty International will be pressing the Azerbaijani authorities for clarification of what happened to Novruzali Mammadov. The Chair of the Committee to Defend the Rights of Novruzali Mammadov told Amnesty International that though Novruzali Mammadov's life could not be saved, they were grateful for all the work of Amnesty International activists.

This is the first update of UA 209/09/09, 18 May 2009, AI Index: EUR 56/008/2009.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further case information please see *Azerbaijan: Independent journalists under siege*, AI Index: EUR 55/004/2009, June 2009.

Further information on UA: 209/09 Index: EUR 55/008/2009 Issue Date: 19 August 2009

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