

# URGENT ACTION

## JABBAR SAVALAN CONSCRIPTED INTO ARMY

**University student Jabbar Savalan has been conscripted by the Azerbaijani military. As he should be exempt from military service, Amnesty International believes he is being targeted because of his peaceful activism.**

**Jabbar Savalan** was summoned to the military commissariat for a medical examination on 30 April. On arrival, he was given two hours to prepare for conscription and there was no medical examination. According to his lawyer, Jabbar Savalan is completely deaf in one ear and unlikely to pass a medical exam. He should also have been notified of his conscription 10 days in advance.

In the previous few months Jabbar Savalan had been giving interviews to national and international media, in which he has been critical of the government, and taking part in peaceful protests. On 7 March, he was arrested and beaten by police, together with Popular Front Party youth activists Dayanat Babayev, Majid Marjanli, Abulfaz Gurbanly and Beyim Hasanli, for taking part in a peaceful protest calling for the release of prisoners of conscience in Azerbaijan.

Jabbar Savalan was first arrested on 5 February 2011, the day after he posted a call to protest against the government on Facebook. He was jailed for two-and-a-half years on fabricated drugs charges, but released by a presidential pardon on 26 December 2011, after Amnesty International led an international campaign for his release.

Jabbar Savalan had been reinstated at Sumgayit State University on 15 February, after weeks of negotiation with senior university staff. He resumed his studies and attended several classes before he was told by his university that he would need a document from the military commissariat to continue.

### **Please write immediately in English, Russian, Azeri, Turkish or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to release Jabbar Savalan from military service immediately, as Azerbaijan's military draft law exempts undergraduates from conscription;
- Calling on them to ensure that Jabbar Savalan can immediately resume his studies at university.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 JUNE 2012 TO:**

President  
İlham Aliyev  
Office of the President of the Azerbaijan  
Republic  
19 İstiqlaliyyat Street  
Baku AZ1066, AZERBAIJAN  
Fax: +994 12 492 0625  
Email: office@pa.gov.az  
**Salutation: Dear President**

Ombudsperson  
Elmira Suleymanova  
40 Uz. Hajibeyov Street  
Baku AZ1000, AZERBAIJAN  
Fax: +994 12 498 23 65  
Email:  
ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.az  
**Salutation: Dear Ombudsperson**

**And copies to:**  
Minister of Defence  
Safar Abiyev  
3 Parliament Avenue  
Baku AZ1073, AZERBAIJAN  
Fax: +994 12 439 41 89  
Email: [mninfo@asumo.baku.az](mailto:mninfo@asumo.baku.az)

**\*\*Fax machines are likely to be switched off outside office hours (GMT +5)\*\***

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 133/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR55/007/2011/en>

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INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The authorities in Azerbaijan have effectively criminalised peaceful anti-government protest, by banning demonstrations and imprisoning those who organize and take part in them. Police use excessive force to break up demonstrations that, though peaceful, are not officially sanctioned. They have threatened and intimidated human rights defenders, and used legislative and administrative means to shut down and deny registration to civil society groups working for democracy and human rights.

Journalists have been beaten up and abducted, while the range of independent media outlets has been curbed through laws banning foreign broadcasters from the national airwaves.

New methods of exercising the right to freedom of expression, such as internet social media, are also under siege. Bloggers and youth activists have been harassed and imprisoned on trumped-up charges. The government is considering ways to control and monitor internet use.

As frustration with these increasingly tight controls grew, hundreds of people gathered in the streets in March and April 2011 demanding democratic reform and greater respect for human rights. The authorities suppressed these early signs of popular protest with a new wave of repression and intimidation. Following the protests, 14 people were convicted of organizing or taking part in the anti-government rallies. The authorities also used trumped-up charges to arrest and imprison a further three men: two members of the opposition and a human rights defender.

Three of these 17 were recognised as prisoners of conscience, and have since been released following a campaign led by Amnesty International. However, as Azerbaijan prepares to host the 2012 Eurovision Song Contest in May, 15 prisoners of conscience are still in jail, many of whom were arrested solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression in a peaceful protest in April 2011.

Reports in the Azerbaijani press of beatings suffered by Babek Hasanov and Mahammad Majidli during their transfer from Prison No. 16 to Prison No. 14 on 5 March motivated young activists into rallying for a spontaneous protest. Around 60 activists gathered near the Academy of Sciences in the Yasamal district of the capital, Baku, in the morning of 6 March to call for the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience, and an end to their ill-treatment.

Two musicians and a youth activist were beaten and arrested at a rally organised by several youth organisations on 20 March. During a performance by singer Jamal Ali and his band that contained a swearword, one of the demonstrators got up on the stage and asked him who he was swearing at. Before he resumed his performance, Jamal Ali asked the crowd, "What's wrong with swearing? Fuck Ilham's [President Ilham Aliyev's] mother, does anyone have a problem with that?" At this point one of the organizers went up to Jamal Ali and asked him to stop, before plainclothes and uniformed police officers descended on the two men and band member Natig Kamilov.

Jamal Ali was given an administrative sentence, and ill-treated twice as he served it. He was made to serve the sentence at a police station, despite the legal requirement that his sentence be served at an Administrative Detention Facility. For details, see UA 88/12, EUR 55/004/2012, 20 March 2012.

Name: Jabbar Savalan  
Gender: M

Further information on UA: 133/11 Index: EUR 55/010/2012 Issue Date: 3 May 2012