

United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland
National Statement

Universal Periodic Review April 2013 – Azerbaijan

Thank you, Mr President.

We welcome Azerbaijan's engagement with this process and hope that this second review will act as a spur to quicken the pace of reform.

We encourage Azerbaijan to strengthen its efforts to guarantee the freedom of assembly. In light of recent events and looking ahead to the Presidential elections of October 2013, it is important that the Government of Azerbaijan allows peaceful protests and demonstrations to take place within central Baku.

The UK remains concerned about the atmosphere in which journalists and human rights defenders have to operate. We call upon Azerbaijan to foster an environment which allows all journalists and human rights defenders to carry out their work free of intimidation, harassment and threat of unjust prosecution.

We recommend Azerbaijan:

1. To ensure that all human rights violations against human rights defenders and journalists are investigated effectively and transparently, with perpetrators being promptly brought to justice, including pending unresolved cases requiring urgent attention.
2. To guarantee the freedom of assembly and work with organisers to ensure that peaceful protests and demonstrations are allowed to take place within central Baku.

It is important that commitments made by Azerbaijan are implemented through well-considered reforms, bringing about tangible results for the citizens of Azerbaijan. The UK stands ready to work in partnership with Azerbaijan to achieve these goals.

Thank you, Mr President.