

**ASPS DIRECTORS' STATEMENT**

**FREE ILGAR MAMMADOV NOW!**

*Strasbourg 06.06.2017*

As heads of the Schools of Political Studies in Europe and North Africa, we voice our outrage at the continuing illegal detention of our Baku colleague in Azerbaijan. We call for the immediate release of Ilgar Mammadov who was sentenced to a 7 year prison term by an Azeri Court on politically motivated charges in 2014.

Reunited during a meeting of the Association of Schools of Political Studies of the Council of Europe (ASPS) in Ljubljana last week, we collectively call on Azerbaijan to implement the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights which found that Mammadov's arrest and detention breached the European Convention on Human Rights and had been intended to silence or punish him for criticising the Government and publishing information it had been trying to hide.

This travesty of justice is in flagrant violation of Azerbaijan's commitments as a member of the Council of Europe and must cease. Both the Council of Europe and the European Union must stand up for human rights, and this requires action, not just words.

Failure to act decisively on the Mammadov case and similar human rights violations by authoritarian regimes in Azerbaijan and other EU or Council of Europe states is undermining the European project, brings European institutions into disrepute and fuels euro-scepticism.

