

H.E. Ilham Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Office of the President
19 Istiqlaliyyat Street
Baku AZ1066, Republic of Azerbaijan

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our deep concern regarding the continued imprisonment of Mr. Avaz Zeynalli, editor-in-chief of the independent media outlet Xural TV, and to call urgently for his immediate release on humanitarian grounds.

Mr. Zeynalli has been in detention since 2022. His health has severely deteriorated in custody, and in April 2025, he was diagnosed with metastatic colon cancer, with metastasis to the liver. The prognosis remains critical, and whether the cancer is of the “wild” or “mutagenic” form, his life is in imminent danger.

Continued incarceration under such dire medical circumstances constitutes a serious violation of basic human rights and humanitarian principles. International standards, including those enshrined in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), call for the immediate release of prisoners facing life-threatening health conditions, and for appropriate medical care to be provided without delay.

We therefore respectfully urge you to take immediate and compassionate action to release Mr. Zeynalli, ensuring he has access to the urgent medical treatment he requires. Such a step would not only save a life but also demonstrate Azerbaijan’s commitment to upholding human rights and the dignity of individuals in state custody.

Respectfully,

The Undersigned Organizations:
Institute for Reporters` Freedom and Safety
International Press Institute
Index on Censorship
European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)