



Brussels, 20 March 2014
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STATEMENT

**by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and
Commissioner Štefan Füle on the sentencing of Ilgar Mammadov and Tofiq
Yaqublu on charges of staging riots in Ismayili, Azerbaijan**

The spokespersons of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, and Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative and the Commissioner have learned with concern that opposition politicians Ilgar Mammadov and Tofiq Yaqublu have been sentenced to long terms in prison by the Court in Sheki Azerbaijan, despite serious misgivings on the part of the international community over the fairness of their trials.

The High Representative and Commissioner note with regret that the verdicts against Mr Mammadov and Mr Yaqublu appear politically motivated, contrary to Azerbaijan's international commitments as a member of the Council of Europe. The High Representative and Commissioner call upon Azerbaijan to do more to ensure the independence of the judiciary, in keeping with their responsibility as upcoming chair of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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