

Open letter calling for the immediate release of Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu

7 May 2024

We, the UNCAC Coalition and the 240 undersigned organizations and individuals from 88 countries across the globe, are deeply concerned about the unjustified arrest and extended imprisonment of Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu in Azerbaijan. Dr. Ibadoghlu is a prominent anti-corruption expert and human rights defender who has been active in the UNCAC Coalition and other civil society networks for many years and served as a Board Member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). We call for his immediate release as well as the release of other political prisoners in Azerbaijan.

Dr. Ibadoghlu has exposed corruption in Azerbaijan's oil and gas sector and advocated for transparency of the country's public revenues. He also advocated for seizing Azerbaijani oligarchs' assets that were stolen from the state and stashed offshore through money laundering schemes. In June 2023, Dr. Ibadoghlu established an education foundation in the United Kingdom with the goal of returning the confiscated assets to the people of Azerbaijan through scholarships for students.

Dr. Ibadoghlu has been imprisoned in Azerbaijan since 23 July 2023, when he was brutally beaten, arrested, and detained by police authorities on unsubstantiated charges of money counterfeiting and connection to terrorism. Despite the lack of evidence, his pre-trial detention has been extended twice, once on 16 November 2023, and most recently on 15 February 2024. After spending 9 months in a prison facility, on 22 April he was placed under house arrest in Baku and is still waiting for a trial. To date, Dr. Ibadoghlu's contacts with his lawyers and his family have been restricted. His health, already fragile due to diabetes and high blood pressure, has deteriorated significantly in prison because he has been denied proper medical care. He is now at a high risk of having a heart attack and diabetic coma.

Therefore, the UNCAC Coalition and the undersigned organizations and individuals urgently call for the unconditional and immediate release of Dr. Ibadoghlu and for him to be given access to the medical care he desperately needs. We also urge the authorities of Azerbaijan – which will also host the UN Climate Change Conference in Baku later this year – to respect their international commitments regarding due process in the administration of justice and human rights, consistent with Articles 9 and 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 9.3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 13 of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

Furthermore, the UNCAC Coalition expresses serious concern for all other human rights defenders, anti-corruption advocates, whistleblowers, journalists and other members of civil society who have been arbitrarily detained or are threatened by government authorities in Azerbaijan and in other countries across the globe. We call upon governments to respect international human rights standards, including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, in order for civil society to operate without fear of intimidation, harassment, reprisals and persecution. Furthermore, we call upon governments and the international community to step up efforts to protect and defend Dr. Ibadoghlu and all other civil society members in Azerbaijan coming under attack for their anti-corruption work.

Sincerely,

Non-Governmental Organizations:

1. Albanian Center for Economic Research (ACER), Albania
2. Action Jeunesse pour le Développement (AJED-Congo), Republic of Congo
3. Access Info, Spain
4. Africa Centre for Open Governance (AfriCOG), Kenya
5. Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC), Uganda
6. Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ), Nigeria
7. African Centre for Media & Information Literacy, Nigeria
8. ALTAX, Albania
9. Aman Coalition, Palestine
10. Amnesty International, United Kingdom
11. Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa, Zimbabwe
12. ARTICLE 19, United Kingdom
13. Asociación civil JAPIQAY, Memoria y Ciudadanía, Peru
14. Association Burkinabè pour le Développement des Energies Renouvelables (ABDER-BIO-DEV/ Burkina), Burkina Faso
15. Association femme et Action pour le Développement , Guinea
16. Association Guinéenne pour la Transparence, Guinea
17. AWTAD Anti-corruption Organization, Yemen
18. Bahrain Transparency, Bahrain
19. Bantay Kita - Publish What You Pay Phils., Philippines
20. Cameroon Anti Corruption Youths Movement, Cameroon
21. Cameroonian Human Rights League, Cameroon
22. Care for the Physically Challenged and Destitute Foundation (CAPCADF), Nigeria
23. Center for Civil Liberties, Ukraine
24. Center for Peace and Advocacy (CPA), South Sudan
25. Centre de Recherche sur l'Anti-Corruption (CERC), Democratic Republic of the Congo
26. Centre for Development and Democratization of Institutions, Albania
27. Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), Pakistan
28. CiFAR - Civil Forum for Asset Recovery e.V., Germany
29. CISE Malawi, Malawi
30. Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)/ TI-Nigeria, Nigeria
31. Club Ohada Thies, Senegal
32. Coalition Nationale Publiez Ce Que Vous Payez Guinée, Guinea
33. Community Information and Advocacy Initiative, Nigeria
34. Community Outreach for Development and Welfare Advocacy (CODWA), Nigeria
35. Corner House, United Kingdom
36. Crude Accountability, USA
37. Crudo Transparente, Colombia
38. Derecho Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR), Peru
39. Dialogue and Research Institute (DRI), South Sudan
40. DiXi Group, Ukraine
41. EITI MEXICO, Mexico
42. Family Therapy Association of the Gambia, Gambia
43. Fundación Jubileo, Bolivia
44. Foundation For Environmental Rights, Advocacy & Development (FENRAD NIGERIA) Nigeria
45. Freedom Files, Poland
46. Freedom for Eurasia, Austria
47. Friends of the Earth Australia, Australia
48. Fundación Libertad Ciudadana - Transparency International Panama, Panama
49. Fundación Multitudes, Chile
50. Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo - TI El Salvador, El Salvador
51. Global Actions for Humanity (GOAH), South Sudan
52. Global Witness, United Kingdom
53. Government Accountability Project, USA

54. Grupo de Trabajo contra la Corrupción (GTCC), Peru
55. Hawkmoth, The Netherlands
56. HEDA Resource Centre, Nigeria
57. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, North Macedonia
58. Human Rights Center, Georgia
59. Human Rights Center "Viasna", Belarus
60. Human Rights Center of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan
61. Human Rights Defence Center Memorial, Russia
62. Human Rights Foundation (HRF), USA
63. Impunidad Cero, Mexico
64. Initiatives for Community Development- Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone
65. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI), Georgia
66. International Platform against Impunity, Switzerland
67. International Society for Peace and Safety, Nigeria
68. I-Watch Organization, Tunisia
69. Jamaa Resource Initiatives, Kenya
70. Jaringan Pemantau Independen Kehutanan (JPIK), Indonesia
71. Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, Kazakhstan
72. Legal Policy Research Centre, Kazakhstan
73. Lumière Synergie pour le Développement , Senegal
74. Mexiro A.C, Mexico
75. Migrant Workers Association of Lesotho, Lesotho
76. Millennium Development Centre Gusau, Nigeria
77. Mineral Inheritors Rights Association, India
78. Mozambican Association for Active Citizenship - AMOCA, Mozambique
79. National Campaign for Sustainable Development Nepal, Nepal
80. National Whistleblower Center, USA
81. Natural Resource Governance Institute, USA
82. Nature Advocacy and Development Initiatives (NADI), Nigeria
83. Netherlands Helsinki Committee, The Netherlands
84. Niger Delta Study Group on Extractive Sector, Nigeria
85. No Business With Genocide, USA
86. Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC), Norway
87. Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme Congo Brazzaville, Republic of Congo
88. Nyika Institute, Malawi
89. ONG ACOMB, Togo
90. ONG WARIS comité des droits humains , Gabon
91. Open Contracting Partnership, USA
92. Open Data Charter, Argentina
93. Organisation Tchadienne Anti-corruption (OTAC), Chad
94. Oživení, z.s., Czech Republic
95. Participación Ciudadana, Dominican Republic
96. Partners Albania for Change and Development, Albania
97. Pay No Bribe Animators (PaNBA) Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone
98. PCQVP, Mali
99. Plateforme de la société civile Démocratie, Paix, Élections et Développement Durable en Guinée (Plateforme DPEG), Guinea
100. Policy Alert, Nigeria
101. PROETICA, Peru
102. Progress Integrated Community Development Organization (PICDO), Ethiopia
103. Protection of Rights without Borders NGO, Armenia
104. Public Association "Dignity", Kazakhstan
105. Public Association Echo, Kazakhstan
106. Public-Private Integrity, Gambia
107. Publiez ce que Vous Payez Congo, Congo, Republic
108. Publish What You Pay United Kingdom, United Kingdom

109. Publish What You Pay United States, USA
110. Publish What You Pay Indonesia, Indonesia
111. Publish What You Pay Nigeria, Nigeria
112. Publish What You Pay International, United Kingdom
113. Publish What You Pay Madagascar, Madagascar
114. Rencontre pour la Paix et les Droits de l'Homme (RPDH), Congo, Republic
115. Repatriation Group International, USA
116. Réseau Nigérien Anti-Corruption, Niger
117. Romanian Academic Society, Romania
118. ROTAB, Niger
119. Rural And Urban Aid for Youth Development Initiatives, Nigeria
120. Rural Initiative for Change, Nigeria
121. Rwenzori Anti Corruption Coalition, Uganda
122. Samata, India
123. Semillas para la Democracia, Paraguay
124. Sensitisation Against Hazard and Crime Initiative, Nigeria
125. Society for the Widows and Orphans, Nigeria
126. Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), Nigeria
127. Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS), Somalia
128. Southern Africa Resource Watch - Coalition Against SLAPPs in Africa (CASA), South Africa
129. Spotlight on Corruption, United Kingdom
130. Stakeholders Alliance for Corporate Accountability, Nigeria
131. Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC), Sweden
132. Syri i Vizionit, Kosovo
133. Terra-1530, Moldova
134. The Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation, Malta
135. The Financial Accountability and Corporate Transparency Coalition, USA
136. The Lebanese Oil and Gas Initiative-LOGI, Lebanon
137. Transparencia por Colombia, Colombia
138. Transparency and Economic Development Initiative TEDI , Nigeria
139. Transparency International, Germany
140. Transparency International - Initiative Madagascar, Madagascar
141. Transparency International - Macedonia, North Macedonia
142. Transparency International Australia, Australia
143. Transparency International Bangladesh, Bangladesh
144. Transparency International Cambodia, Cambodia
145. Transparency International EU, Belgium
146. Transparency International France, France
147. Transparency International Germany, Germany
148. Transparency International Ireland, Ireland
149. Transparency International New Zealand, New Zealand
150. Transparency International Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone
151. Transparency International Taiwan, Taiwan
152. Transparency International U.S., USA
153. Transparency International Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe
154. Transparency Maroc, Morocco
155. Turkmenistan Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Bulgaria
156. UK Anti-Corruption Coalition, United Kingdom
157. UNCAC Coalition, Austria
158. UNISHKA Research, USA
159. United Action for Democracy, Nigeria
160. Uzbek Forum for Human Rights, Germany
161. Veille Citoyenne Togo, Togo
162. Whistleblowers of America, USA
163. World Dynamics of Young People, Cameroon

164. Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights, Yemen

Individuals:

165. Abdelaziz Nouaydi, Morocco, General Secretary of Transparency Morocco, Lawyer in Rabat Bar
166. Alexandra Gillies, USA, Director, Global Anti-Corruption Consortium
167. Ali Sadki, Morocco, Project manager at Transparency Maroc
168. Andrew Feinstein, United Kingdom, Author
169. Angela Asuncion, Philippines, Lead Technical Consultant - Bantay Kita
170. Anne-Claire Defossez, USA, Researcher, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton
171. Arien Mack, USA, Professor
172. Athayde Motta, Brazil, Consultant
173. Ba Aliou Coulibaly, Mauritania, President of PWYP Coalition
174. Blanche Sonon, Benin, Personne resource
175. Carlo Merla, Botswana, Chair of the Board of Publish What You Pay
176. Carlos Monge, Peru, PWYP Board Member
177. Cde Munyaradzi Bidi, Zimbabwe, Anti-corruption/Human Rights activist
178. Cecilia Ogwuche, Nigeria, Human Rights Advocate
179. Chantal Cutajar, France, Professor
180. Charles Becker, USA, Research Professor of Economics, Duke University
181. Charles Scheiner, USA, Transparency Campaigner
182. Cornelia Abel, Germany, Senior Program Manager, Transparency International
183. Dani Kaufmann, France, Professor
184. Demba SEYDI, Senegal, PWYP Senior Regional Coordinator Francophone Africa
185. Diarmid O'Sullivan, United Kingdom, Editor, Critical Takes on Corporate Power
186. Didier Fassin, France, Professor at the Collège de France
187. Dill Koang Ruey Shagh, South Sudan, Executive Director for Global Actions for Humanity (GOAH)
188. Eze Alloysius, Nigeria, Director, PLAYYA Nigeria
189. Favour Ime, Nigeria, Regional Manager, Africa
190. Gabriel Sipos, United Kingdom, Anti-corruption analyst
191. Gabriela Flores, Peru, Investigative journalist, Co-founder of Japiqay
192. H. Rice, United Kingdom, Independent Researcher
193. Irene Tello Arista, Mexico
194. Jack A. Blum, Esq., USA, Lawyer
195. Jan Kubik, USA, Distinguished Professor and Chair, Rutgers University, Professor Emeritus, UCL (University College London)
196. Jana Morgan, USA, Publish What You Pay - Board Member
197. Jennifer Hunt, USA, Distinguished Professor of Economics, Rutgers University
198. Jeshadul Hoque Tanim, Bangladesh, Whistleblower, Online Digital Marketing Expert
199. Jessica Ludwig, USA, Director, Global Policy, George W. Bush Institute
200. Jodi Vittori, USA, Professor and anti-corruption expert
201. Dr. Juanita Olaya García, Germany, Chair of the UNCAC Coalition Working Group on Victims of Corruption
202. Katharina Lang, Germany
203. Kevin I.J. Yeh, Taiwan, Vice Chair, Transparency International, Taiwan
204. Lisa Hartevelt, The Netherlands, Director of External Relations and Communication at the Wildlife Justice Commission & Chair of the UNCAC Coalition Working Group on Environmental Crime and Corruption
205. Marcel Thum, Germany, Professor of Economics, TU Dresden
206. María Alejandra Márquez, USA, Founder, Iniciativa Para La Recuperación de Activos Venezolanos (INRAV)
207. Matthew Murray, USA, Adjunct Professor, Columbia University
208. Mel Flanagan, Australia, Chair PWYP Australia Steering Committee
209. Michael Jarvis, USA, Executive Director, Trust, Accountability & Inclusion Collaborative

210. Michael Johnston, USA, Charles A. Dana Professor of Political Science Emeritus, Colgate University
211. Michael Karanicolas, USA, Executive Director - UCLA Institute for Technology, Law & Policy
212. Michael Kwame Boadi, Ghana, Fundraising Manager
213. Mohamed SANGARE, Senegal, Regional Advisor
214. Mona Lena Krook, USA, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University
215. Moussa Iboun Conté, Guinea, Vice Président de la coalition nationale "Publiez Ce Que Vous Payez - Guinée"
216. Dr. Mustapha Olajiday Thomas, Sierra Leone, Geoscientist/Social Activist
217. Prof. Naomi Roht-Arriaza, USA, Professor of Law
218. Dr.Noora Hasan, Iraq, MENA Region representative at Global Council
219. Obert Chinhamo, Zimbabwe, Director, Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa
220. Osman Ahmed, England, Somali Diaspora Anti-corruption Committee founder
221. Patrick Conway, USA, Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
222. Rainer Geiger, France, Transparency International
223. Robert Pitman, USA, Senior Governance Officer, NRGi
224. Saladin Ambar, USA, Rutgers University
225. Sarah Backstrand, USA, Fundraising Associate, Natural Resource Governance Institute
226. Shaazka Beyerle, USA, Author
227. Sihem Bouazza, Tunisia, Radio Director
228. Silas Olan'g, Tanzania, Human Rights Activist
229. Simon Taylor, Spain, Co-Founder & Board member, Global Witness, and Co-Founder Publish What You Pay
230. Soumyabrata Chakraborty, India, Human Trafficking Prevention Practitioner
231. Susana Coroado, Belgium, Researcher
232. Suzana Frasheri, Albania, Senior Anti-corruption Expert
233. Suzanne Hoff, The Netherlands, International Coordinator, La Strada International
234. Tamika Halwiindi, Zambia, Programme Coordinator - TI Zambia & CSO Board member (alternate) EITI
235. Tara James, USA, Program Coordinator, Rutgers University
236. Thomas de Waal, United Kingdom, Writer and scholar
237. Thomas Prusa, USA, Professor of Economics
238. Tom Devine, USA, Legal director, Government Accountability Project
239. William Field, USA, Rutgers University
240. Zoé Spriet-Mezoued, United Kingdom, Strategic Communications and Campaigns Manager, Publish What You Pay International