

AZERBAIJAN:

Tortured and jailed for graffiti



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Two young students, Bayram Mammadov and Giyas Ibrahimov, dared to criticize the state in the most public way they could. They painted a defiant message on the statue of Azerbaijan's former president – on the eve of his birthday.

The following day, 10 May 2016, they were arrested and jailed on trumped up charges. Authorities beat both young men into confessing to carrying heroin. "They took my pants off and threatened to rape me with a baton," Bayram later wrote from prison. "I had to 'confess' and sign a statement drafted by them."

Bayram and Giyas protested in the only way they knew how. Fed up with an increasingly authoritarian state, Bayram and Giyas sprayed an angry message on the statue of Azerbaijan's former president, whose son currently rules the country. The message read "Happy slave day", a play on the slogan "Happy Flower Day" which is celebrated on 10 May, the former president's birthday. The young men posted a photo of their action on Facebook on 9 May 2016. They were arrested within a few hours and charged with possessing drugs.

Bayram and Giyas say that the police planted heroin on them. The fact that they were arrested shortly after painting the statue, and that they were only interrogated about the graffiti, exposes the charges for what they are: a complete fabrication.

On October 25, Giyas received a sentence of 10 years in prison. Bayram received the same sentence on December 7. The two students are behind bars for a decade, all for a Facebook post criticizing the government.

Urge Azerbaijan's president to make sure that Bayram Mammadov and Giyas Ibrahimov are released right away.

No one shall be subjected to
cruel,
degrading treatment.

Everyone has the right to
freedom of expression and
opinion.

Articles 5 and 19,
Universal Declaration
of Human Rights

**WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Unleash your pens and keyboards!

Please write to the President of Azerbaijan.

- ◆ Start with Dear President.
- ◆ Describe who you are and what concerns you about the detention of Bayram Mammadov and Giyas Ibrahimov.
- ◆ Ask him to ensure that Bayram and Giyas are released immediately and that false drug-related charges brought against them are dropped.

Send your message to

Ilham Aliyev
Office of the President
19 Istiqlaliyyat Street
Baku, AZ 1066
Azerbaijan

Postage: \$2.50

Fax: 011 994 12 492 3543 or
011 994 12 492 0625

Email: office@pa.gov.az

Twitter: @presidentaz

Please send a copy to

Mr. Ramil Huseynli
Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Azerbaijan
275 Slater Street, Suite 1203
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9

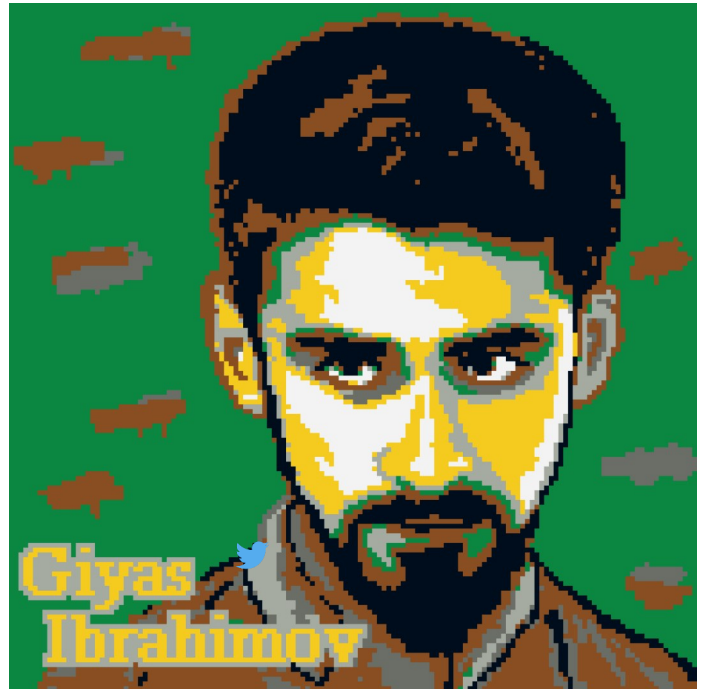
Postage: \$.85

Fax: (613) 230-8089

Email: azerbaijan@azembassy.ca

Sample Tweet

I'm writing for #BayramAndGiyas, jailed on sham drug charges for protest graffiti. @presidentaz release them now! #W4R16 #Write4Rights



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Show Bayram and Giyas that you support them. Send them cards, letters or drawings. Please include "Möhkəm ol" ("Stay strong") in your message.

Bayram Mammadov / Giyas Ibrahimov
Baki Investigation Isolator
(Kurdakhany Detention Facility)
Sabunchu District
Zabrat 2 settlement
AZ 1104
Azerbaijan

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TAKE PART: writeathon.ca