Standing Up for Azerbaijan's Civil Society

The Alliance of European Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 4 June 2016:

Considering:

- the recent detainment of activists from the oppositional civic movement N!DA Vətəndaş Hərəkatı under questionable circumstances (13th of May);
- that N!DA youth activists have been sentenced to up to eight years in prison in the past;
- the continuous usage of false drug allegations to undermine and discredit oppositional forces and that serve as justification for crackdowns against critical journalism, as reported by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International;
- the increasing display of authoritarianism by President Aliyev since the end of the Baku2015 European Games;

Acknowledging:

- ALDE's commitment to freedom of expression, pluralistic democracy, and the right to fair trial as paramount pillars of liberal civil society;
- the obligations of the Azeri government as a member of the Council of Europe to respect and promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law;
- the active role of Azerbaijan within the Council of Europe when the country chaired the Council in 2014;

Calls for:

- the Council of Europe, specifically the ALDE-PACE delegation, to remind the Azeri government of their obligations within the European community and to immediately stop their crackdown practices and to release detained and imprisoned oppositional activists;
- the Council of Europe to suspend the voting rights of Azeri representatives in the Parliamentary Assembly until concrete steps have been taken to improve the situation;
- the ALDE Group in the European Parliament to propose targeted sanctions against Azeri officials.

Resolution:
Standing Up for Azerbaijan's Civil Society

Year and Council:
Vilnius, Lithuania 2016

Category:
Urgency