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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(17.7.2025)

Human rights and the rule of law in Azerbaijan remain a priority for the EU and are at the core of the EU-Azerbaijan bilateral relations. The EU has repeatedly voiced concerns regarding the arrests of independent journalists, human rights defenders and political activists<sup>1</sup>.

The heavy prison sentences recently imposed on independent journalists are a worrying development. The EU has called on Azerbaijan to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, uphold its international obligations, and take immediate steps to ensure a safe and enabling environment for all journalists and media workers<sup>2</sup>.

The EU is committed to phasing out its dependency on Russia fossil fuels, including with measures to save energy, produce clean energy, and diversify energy supplies. Against this background, total EU gas imports have decreased by 18% since 2021 (both pipeline deliveries and liquefied natural gas shipments included) and the share of Azerbaijani gas in this total has increased to 4%. The EU and Azerbaijan share an interest in pursuing cooperation to enhance energy security and advance the energy transition, notably by expanding connectivity and market integration across the region.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-human-rights-situation\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-human-rights-situation_en);  
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-10-22-ITM-020\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-10-22-ITM-020_EN.html);  
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-12-18-ITM-019-03\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-10-2024-12-18-ITM-019-03_EN.html).

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-sentencing-journalists-and-political-activists\\_en?channel=eeas\\_press\\_alerts&date=2025-06-23&newsid=0&langid=en&source=mail](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/azerbaijan-statement-spokesperson-sentencing-journalists-and-political-activists_en?channel=eeas_press_alerts&date=2025-06-23&newsid=0&langid=en&source=mail).