



*Center for Civil Liberties, Kyiv
October 9, 2014*

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF LEYLA YUNUS
FOR THE ANDREI SAKHAROV PRIZE FOR FREEDOM OF THOUGHT IN THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Every year since 1988 the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has been awarded by the European Parliament for notable achievements in the struggle for basic human rights, the defence of the rights of minorities, respect for international law, contribution to the development of democracy and upholding of the supremacy of the rule of law.

Leyla Yunus has been nominated for the 2014 Sakharov Prize. Leyla Yunus is a celebrated Azerbaijan human rights defender and director of Azerbaijan's Institute for Peace and Democracy.

In January 2014 Leyla Yunus unveiled a list of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience compiled by the Institute for Peace and Democracy. On her initiative a Centre to Resist Repression was also created by the Institute for Peace and Democracy. In 2014 the institute launched an initiative calling for international sanctions against Azerbaijani officials who violated human rights and also called for an international boycott of the European Games scheduled to be held in Baku in 2015.

The result of this activity was the systematic persecution of Leyla and her family. On July 30, 2014 she was arrested and later charged with treason, embezzlement of funds, illegal business activities and failure to pay taxes. Her husband, the well-known writer, analyst and conflict specialist Arif Yunus was also arrested on August 5. In detention, Leyla Yunus has been abused by her cell-mates and members of the prison administration and refused medical treatment for her diabetes.

A delegation from the Center for Civil Liberties in Kiev visited Azerbaijan in August 2014 to get acquainted with the disturbing human rights situation in that country and express solidarity to our colleagues there. The Center for Civil Liberties supports the candidature of Leyla Yunus for the 2014 Sakharov Prize. We believe that this will help not only the restoration of justice in the case of Leyla personally, but also attract the attention of the international community to the problem of political repression in Azerbaijan.

Respectfully, Oleksandra Matviychuk
Head of the Board of the Center of Civil Liberties



www.ccl.org.ua

01004, Україна, Київ, Басейна 9-г, оф.25
тел./факс: (+38044)-246-71-36