Press release | 11.06.2015

European Games in Azerbaijan

Political boycott of Baku Games the only just response to ongoing human rights concerns

Ahead of the European Games, which start in Baku (Azerbaijan) on Friday, the European Parliament last night held a debate on the games and the human rights situation in Azerbaijan. In the context of the debate Green MEP and EP vice-president **Ulrike Lunacek** said:

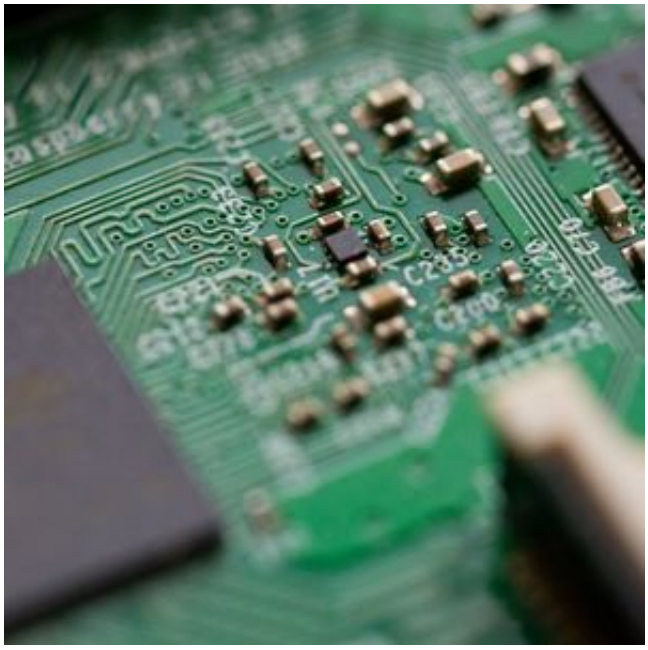
“The long shadow of human rights abuses in Azerbaijan will hang over this inaugural edition of the European Games. Instead of using the opportunity of the games to address the rights abuses in Azerbaijan, the Aliev regime has instead sought to block out all criticism and clamp down on dissent. EU member states cannot simply look the other way. We are calling on all EU and national politicians to boycott these games as the only just response to Aliev's total failure to address human rights concerns.

"The list of prisoners of conscience and rights activists detained by the regime is long and growing, including Sakharov Prize finalist Leyla Yunus and many others, who are held on spurious grounds. This kind of regime should not be handed a public platform like the games to try and enhance its public image. Instead of tip-toeing around the issue, EU governments and the EU institutions need to now proactively engage with the regime and make addressing human rights and the promotion of democracy a top priority."

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Responsible MEPs



Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member

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