

United States Senate

HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 112
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0505
(202) 224-3553
<http://boxer.senate.gov/contact>

September 24, 2012

H.E. Ilham Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Baku, AZ1066
Istiglaliyyat Street, 19

Dear President Aliyev:

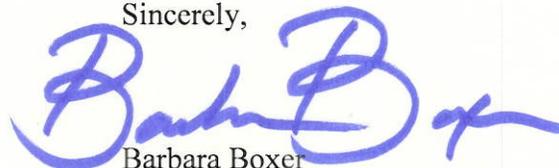
I write today to express my outrage regarding your decision to release and pardon Ramil Safarov, an Azeri soldier who had been sentenced to life in prison for the vicious murder of an Armenian soldier. This deeply disturbing and provocative action has only served to inflame tensions and endanger efforts to forge a lasting peace in the Caucasus.

As you know, Mr. Safarov was convicted of the brutal axe murder of an Armenian soldier and fellow trainee at a NATO language course in 2004 and had been serving a life sentence in Hungary. On August 31, 2012, Mr. Safarov was extradited to Azerbaijan after Hungary received assurances that his sentence would be enforced.

The pardon of Mr. Safarov upon his return to Azerbaijan represents a blatant disregard for the rule of law. This decision, coupled with the hero's welcome Mr. Safarov received, is an affront to the most basic principles of justice and human rights.

As such, I strongly urge you to reconsider your decision to free Mr. Safarov and adhere to the standards of the international law by returning Mr. Safarov to jail, where he belongs, for the heinous crime that he committed.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator