

CRUDE ACCOUNTABILITY

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October 26, 2023

Dear Chairman Lund:

On September 20th, BP Executive Vice President for Production and Operations Gordon Birrell, former Chief Executive Officer Lord John Phillip Browne, and yourself met face-to-face with President Aliyev in Azerbaijan. Commemorating your nearly three decades of close cooperation, you and your associates discussed future BP investments in Azerbaijan's energy sector.

Are you aware that during your meeting, Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu, a renowned academic, human rights defender, and anti-corruption advocate was being held and tortured by Azerbaijani officials at the Kurdekhani pre-trial detention center outside of Baku? Dr. Ibadoghlu and his wife were assaulted by masked men and detained on July 23rd, and since that time, Dr. Ibadoghlu has remained imprisoned, denied critical medical care for his diabetes and high blood pressure, and his family has faced ongoing threats. Dr. Ibadoghlu's health is in rapid decline and his family fear his life is in jeopardy.

Governments and civil society across the globe have condemned the actions of the Azerbaijani government and demanded the immediate release of Dr. Ibadoghlu, including the US Department of State, the OSCE, and the European Union. The latter adopted a joint motion on September 14th demanding an impartial investigation, just 6 days before your meeting with the Azerbaijani head-of-state. Yet, amongst this global outcry, BP has remained silent on the matter.

Your company is the single largest foreign corporate investor in Azerbaijan and holds one of the oldest long-standing relationships with the Azerbaijani state. Your influence is unparalleled. BP's values and morals are articulated clearly in the company's "who we are" statement and code of conduct. According to its own values, BP is committed "to safety, to speaking up if something doesn't seem right, compliance, care for others and working together as one integrated BP team." BP must "be accountable. We follow through on our promises – when we can't – or make mistakes – we own it. Care for others." Finally, BP's supplier expectations emphasize the necessity for the supplier to respect human rights and to provide an environment free of fear to speak out. These principles should be designed to help protect advocates like Dr. Ibadoghlu, one of the most vocal advocates for fossil fuel transparency and accountability in Azerbaijan. Yet, despite these promises, BP, singular in its influence in the country, remains quiet about the case of Dr. Ibadoghlu.

We urge BP to uphold its code of conduct and utilize its unparalleled influence in Azerbaijan to demand the unconditional and immediate release of Dr. Ibadoghlu.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

