

# **Interactive dialogue with Item 3-Clustered ID with the Special Rapporteur on internally displaced persons and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions**

## **Shia Rights in Azerbaijan**

Greetings esteemed colleagues and member states,

Despite recent efforts to improve intercultural awareness and promote equality for all, there has been regions of the world with deteriorating quality of life for minority populations. One such nation is Azerbaijan. Although Shia Muslims are not minority in this country, they have been treated as one with limited freedom. In the past decade, the Shia of Azerbaijan have fallen victim to targeting by state and non states. Time and time again, their public presence was reduced by eradicating their centers of religious practice and imprisonment of Shia scholars. As of today, there exists over 150 Shia activist and 18 Shia scholars imprisoned on basis of religious expression and identity.

Once a secular nation, the nation of Azerbaijan is under increasing influence of anti-Shia narratives from neighboring nations, and facing a growing anti-Shia ideology. Such ideology is also fueled by a growing and false narrative by which the Shia population is associated with foreign political entities.

Sincerely,

Shia Rights Watch