

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 31, 2012

**Statement by NSC Spokesman Tommy Vietor on Azerbaijan's Decision to Pardon
Ramil Safarov**

President Obama is deeply concerned by today's announcement that the President of Azerbaijan has pardoned Ramil Safarov following his return from Hungary. Safarov confessed to the murder of Armenian Army officer Guren Margaryan in Budapest in 2004, and was serving a life sentence in Hungary for this brutal crime. We are communicating to Azerbaijani authorities our disappointment about the decision to pardon Safarov. This action is contrary to ongoing efforts to reduce regional tensions and promote reconciliation. The United States is also requesting an explanation from Hungary regarding its decision to transfer Safarov to Azerbaijan.

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