**SOCAR response regarding smear campaign against Mirvari Gahramanli, Head of Oil-Workers’ Rights Protection** **Organization (OWRPO)**

*Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited SOCAR to respond to the following item:*

*- «Activists Condemn Abusive Campaign Against Mirvari Gahramanli», Turan News Agency, 21 December 2018*

*http://www.contact.az/ext/news/2018/12/free/Social/en/77589.htm*

*In response, SOCAR sent the following statement:*

Dear Ms. Skybenko,

Thank you for your e-mail.

As a corporate body, SOCAR upholds the values of freedom of speech. We are in a constant dialogue with trade unions, NGOs and representatives of civil society, taking into account and respecting all various opinions and recommendations. Therefore, there is no basis, let alone evidence for accusing SOCAR of conducting a smear campaign against Mirvari Gahramanli.

If however you still choose to include any mention of SOCAR in any story, it must include a statement that SOCAR complies with all regulations and international practice. This must be done in the interests of accuracy, in order to ensure that readers are not misled, as well as to abide by the legally recognised principles of responsible investigative journalism.  SOCAR refutes any suggestion of wrongdoing.

SOCAR hereby has provided you with a clear explanation regarding accusation of this alleged smear campaign. SOCAR’s position must be made clear by way of its right of reply, if you include reference to SOCAR in any story. Please also be informed that SOCAR reserves its rights to take legal actions in case of any unsubstantional and alleged information against SOCAR, which would be harmful for its reputation.