

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

New information
UZB 001 / 0712 / OBS 067
Release / Ongoing arbitrary detentions
Uzbekistan
July 9, 2012

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) has received new information in the following situation in **Uzbekistan**.

New information:

The Observatory was informed of the release of Mr. **Khabibulla Okpulatov**, member of the Ishtikhan regional branch of the Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan (HRSU) in the district of Ishtikhan (Samarkand region), while at least ten other human rights defenders remain arbitrarily detained.

According to the information received, on July 4, 2012, Mr. Khabibulla Okpulatov was released from "severe regime" prison 64/1 in Tashkent region, after serving his whole sentence.

The Observatory welcomes the release of Mr. Okpulatov, but regrets the fact that he was detained for more than six years on the basis of unfair proceedings marred by a number of irregularities, in an attempt to sanction his human rights activities.

The Observatory further deplores the ongoing arbitrary detention of several other human rights defenders in Uzbekistan, in particular that of Messrs. **Azam Formonov, Nasim Isakov, Yuldosh Rasulov, Zafar Rakhimov, Ganikhon Mamatkhanov, Gaybullo Jalilov, Solijon Abdurakhmanov, Dilmurod Saidov, Azam Turgunov, Abdurasul Hudonazarov**, which seems to merely sanction their human rights activities in flagrant violation of the provisions of the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1998.

Background information:

Mr. Okpulatov had been sentenced in October 2005 to 6 years' imprisonment for "slander for profit or for other base motives" and "extortion with aggravating circumstances". The Navoi City Criminal Court extended his sentence by 3 years and 8 days on September 29, 2009, and then in appeal on November 26, 2009, for having supposedly violated detention centre regulations.

Mr. Okpulatov had been frequently subjected to disciplinary measures (including solitary confinement), humiliations, threats and punishment for supposed violations of prison rules.

His health condition strongly deteriorated while in detention: he lost 20 kg, could not use his right leg, suffered from a serious and very painful eye condition requiring urgent medical care.

In addition, Mr. Okpulatov was not allowed to pray or to write any letters. He was also placed in isolation from 15 January 2012 to 15 February 2012, which led to further deterioration of his health condition.

Actions requested :

Please write to the Uzbek authorities and ask them to :

- i. Take all necessary measures to guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Messrs. Khabibulla Okpulatov, Azam Formonov, Nasim Isakov, Yuldosh Rasulov, Zafar Rakhimov, Ganikhon Mamatkhanov, Gaybullo Jalilov, Solijon Abdurakhmanov, Dilmurod Saidov, Azam Turgunov, Abdurasul Hudoynazarov;
- ii. Release immediately and unconditionally all above mentioned human rights defenders as their detention is arbitrary;
- iii. Put an end to any act of harassment - including at the judicial level - against all above mentioned human rights defenders, as well as against all human rights defenders in Uzbekistan ;
- iv. Comply with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in particular Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually or collectively, to promote the protection and fulfilment of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”, as well as Article 12.2, which provides that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually or in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, *de facto* or *de jure* adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration” ;
- v. Comply with the provisions of the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the 2nd Conference on the Human Dimension of the Cooperation and Security Conference in Europe (CSCE) (1990), and guarantee the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments ratified by Uzbekistan.

Addresses :

- Mr. Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov President of Uzbekistan, ul. Uzbekistanskaya 43, Rezidentsia prezidenta, 700163 Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Fax: +998 71 133 1395325. E-mail: presidents_office@press-service.uz
- Mr. Bahodir Matliubov, Minister of Internal Affairs; ul. Junus Rajabiy 1; Tashkent 700029, Uzbekistan. Fax: + 998 71 233 89 34. Email: mvd@mvd.uz, info@mvd.uz, secretariyat@mvd.uz
- Mr. Rashidjon Hamidovich Kodirov, General Prosecutor of the Republic of Uzbekistan, ul. Gulamova 66, 700047 Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Fax: +998 71 133 39 17. E-mail: prokuratura@lawyer.com
- Mr. Vladimir Norov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, pl. Mustakillik, 5; Tashkent 700029, Uzbekistan. Fax: + 998 71 139 15 17. E-mail: rnews@mfa.uz
- Ms. Sayora Rashidova, Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights, ul. Xalqlar Dostligi 1, 700035 Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Fax: +998 71 139 85 55. E-mail: office@ombudsman.gov.uz
- Senator Akmal Saidov, Natsionalny Tsentr po pravam cheloveka / National Centre for Human Rights, Mustakillik Maidoni 5/3, 700029 Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan Fax: + 998 71 139 13 56 / 45 16, E-mail: office@nchr.uz
- Head of the Nukus City Department of Internal Affairs (police), Glave GOVD, Gorodskoi Otdel Vnutrennikh Del, ul. Biruni, g. Nukus, AR Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan.

- H.E Ms. Goulnora Karimova, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations in Geneva, International Centre Cointrin (ICC), Bloc G (7th Floor), Route de Pré-Bois 20, 1215 Geneva 15, Switzerland. Fax: +41 22 799 43 02. Email: uzbekistan@bluewin.ch

Please also write to the diplomatic representations of Uzbekistan in your respective countries as well as to the EU diplomatic missions or embassies in Uzbekistan.

Paris-Geneva, July 9, 2012

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need. T

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

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