

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

PUBLIC STATEMENT

AI Index: EUR 61/9126/2018

20 September 2018

Amnesty International urges Turkmenistan to resolve all enforced disappearances and end criminalization of same sex relations

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Turkmenistan

Amnesty International welcomes Turkmenistan's cooperation with the UPR and its acceptance of 172 of the 191 recommendations made to it. These include recommendations to cooperate with UN human rights mechanisms,¹ to promote gender equality,² and to combat violence against women.³ Amnesty International encourages the authorities to introduce legislation to criminalize domestic violence as soon as possible.

The whereabouts of at least 80 prisoners convicted after an alleged assassination attempt on then President Saparmurat Niyazov, in November 2002, remain unknown. Amnesty International particularly welcome Turkmenistan's commitment to provide information to the families of persons subjected to enforced disappearance, concerning their whereabouts and details of their sentences.⁴ The organization regrets, however, that Turkmenistan has not accepted recommendations to end the practice of enforced disappearance,⁵ to accede to the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,⁶ to investigate allegations of enforced disappearances,⁷ and to allow unhindered access to those who have been subjected to enforced disappearances by international monitoring bodies.⁸ Amnesty International calls on Turkmenistan to urgently reconsider its position on these important recommendations.

There continue to be reports of torture and other ill-treatment and conditions in detention that amount to such treatment. The organization regrets that Turkmenistan has rejected recommendations to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.⁹ Anyone making allegations of torture

¹ Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Turkmenistan, A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 114.4 – 114.8 (Paraguay, Portugal, Honduras, Ukraine, Tajikistan).

² A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 114.69–114.75 (Moldova, Republic of Korea, Laos, Iceland, Bulgaria).

³ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 114.76-114.81 (Slovenia, Georgia, Canada, Belgium, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia).

⁴ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 114.37 (Sweden).

⁵ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.43 (Italy), 116.46-116.52 (Chile, Czechia, Canada, Netherlands, France, Argentina, Poland, Austria).

⁶ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.1-116.3 (Honduras, Senegal, Iraq, Montenegro, Ukraine, Portugal), 116.14 (Slovakia), 116.49-116.51 (Netherlands, France, Argentina).

⁷ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.51 (Russian Federation).

⁸ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.53-116.54 (Norway, USA).

⁹ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.4-116.12 (Senegal, Burundi, Denmark, Greece, France, Chile, Ukraine, Portugal, Norway, Afghanistan, Estonia, Poland, Australia, Czechia, Germany, UK, Togo), 116.15 (Georgia).

or other ill-treatment faces severe reprisals in Turkmenistan. Mansur Mingelov is serving a 22-year sentence imposed in retaliation for his complaints of torture in police detention in 2012. He is critically ill with tuberculosis contracted in prison, and when his health deteriorated in June 2018, he was denied medical care.¹⁰

Consensual same-sex relations between men is a criminal offence in Turkmenistan, punishable by up to two years' imprisonment, and Amnesty International regrets that the government has rejected recommendations to decriminalize consensual same-sex relations.¹¹

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Turkmenistan on 20 September 2018 during its 39th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered this oral statement.

Public Document

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¹⁰ Amnesty International Urgent Action, 12 July 2018:
<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR6187832018ENGLISH.pdf>

¹¹ A/HRC/39/3, recommendations 116.38-116.39 (France, Kyrgyzstan).