

URGENT ACTION

MAN WHO "DISAPPEARED" MAY BE IN CUSTODY

Rustam Aushev, not seen since 17 February, may have been detained by security service officials. His whereabouts are still unknown, and his life may be in danger.

Rustam Aushev, a 23-year-old resident of Ingushetia, was seen on 17 February 2012 being detained by men in plain clothes at a railway station in the town of Mineralnye Vody in the neighbouring Stavropol region. The next day, his relatives met with members of staff at the railway station. Eyewitness testimony suggested that his abductors were members of the Federal Security Service (FSB), and reportedly there was CCTV footage that showed them driving him away in a "Gazel" minivan.

Rustam Aushev's family received a telegram on 6 March purportedly from a Stavropol region FSB officer, saying that Rustam Aushev had been detained by FSB officials from Ingushetia on suspicion of banditry and organizing a criminal group. A lawyer representing Rustam Aushev's family visited the FSB compound in Ingushetia and asked to see him, but was told that Rustam Aushev was not in their custody.

Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Call on the authorities to investigate whether Rustam Aushev has been detained by the FSB or is the currently in custody of any other law enforcement agency;
- Urge them to establish Rustam Aushev's whereabouts and ensure that if he is being held by law enforcement agencies, he is released immediately or else charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- Stress that if he is held by any law enforcement agency, he must be transferred to an officially recognized place of detention and given access to a legal assistance of his own choosing.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 APRIL 2012 TO:

Prosecutor of Ingushetia
Pavel A. Belyakov
Ul. K. Kulieva, 1
Magas 386001
Ingushetia
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8734 55 04 00
(if a voice answers say "FAX" clearly)
Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

Deputy Prosecutor General
Ivan I. Sydoruk
Prosecutor's Office for SKFO
ul. Kozlova, d. 52/14
Piatigorsk
Stavropol Region, 357500
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8793 97 36 94
(if a voice answers say "FAX" clearly)
Email: ugpskfo@rambler.ru
Salutation: Dear Deputy Prosecutor General

And copies to:
Plenipotentiary Envoy to the North
Caucasus Federal District (SKFO)
Aleksandr G. Khloponin
Ul. Internatsionalnaya, dom 2
Yessentuki 357600
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8793 44 1152
(if a voice answers say "FAX" clearly)
Salutation: Dear Mr Khloponin

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 58/12. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/003/2012/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Rustam Aushev's family filed complaints with a number of government agencies, including the FSB, on 18 February, asking for an investigation into his disappearance in Mineralnye Vody.. However, his fate and whereabouts remain unknown. The family have said that Rustam Aushev has never been involved in any unlawful activities.

A telegram was delivered to Rustam Aushev's brother on 6 March, saying that he had been detained on the railway station platform in Mineralnye Vody by FSB members from Ingushetia "and removed (vyvezen) by members of this agency on 17 February 2012, which has been registered on the border of Stavropol region and Kbaradino-Balkar Republic... From a telephone conversation with the Head of the FSB for Ingushetia it is known that this citizen [Rustam Aushev], born in 1988, resident of the city of Nazran, is currently in that agency charged under Articles 209, 210 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation." After the Aushevs received this telegram, the family's lawyer came to the FSB compound in Magas, Ingushetia, on 7 March and asked to see Rustam Aushev. However, he was not allowed past the checkpoint, and the duty officer told him, after telephoning someone, that Rustam Aushev was not there, and the FSB in Ingushetia did not know of any criminal case against him.

It is not clear whether the telegram received by Rustam Aushev's family was indeed from the FSB and whether it was true that he was in this agency's custody. However, allegations are regularly made in Ingushetia and throughout the North Caucasus that the FSB as well as other law enforcement agencies are responsible for enforced disappearances.

The North Caucasus is affected by violence perpetrated by armed groups, and reports of human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies operating without transparency or public accountability, are common.. Cases of enforced disappearance are regularly reported from Ingushetia, including some carried out against residents of Ingushetia travelling to the neighbouring republics.

Name: Rustam Aushev

Gender m/f: male

Further information on UA: 58/12 Index EUR 46/011/2012 Issue Date: 15 March 2012