

PUBLIC

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Possible "disappearance"/fear for safety/
fear of torture or ill-treatment

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION
(CHECHNYA)**

Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov (m), aged approximately 34

Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov has not been seen since he was detained by Russian federal soldiers in the Vedeno region of Chechnya on 5 May. Amnesty International fears that he may have "disappeared" and is concerned for his safety. If he is in detention, he is at risk of being tortured or ill-treated.

At 8.30am on 5 May, Russian soldiers stopped the bus in which Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov was travelling, as it reached a military checkpoint near his home village, Elistanzhi. The soldiers began checking the passports of all the passengers. As soon as they found Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov, they stopped their checks and forced him off the bus. When other passengers attempted to find out why Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov had been detained, the Russian soldiers refused to give any explanation.

Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov was reportedly taken to a Russian army barracks on the site of a former asphalt factory. He has not been seen since, and his current whereabouts are unknown. Two of his relatives, Emi Saipudinovich Esambaev, who is the head of the local administration, and local mufti (Muslim religious leader) Abdul-Baid Madagov, went to the barracks to find out where Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov was being held. Soldiers at the barracks would only tell them that he had been taken to the main Russian military base in Chechnya at Khankala for further checks. However, this has not been confirmed. No reason has been given for his detention.

In 2001, Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov's brother was also detained by Russian federal soldiers as he herded cattle in pasture. He has not been seen since.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Thousands of civilians in Chechnya have been detained for various periods during military raids or document checks. In some cases, detainees have reportedly been held in squalid facilities that amounted to little more than pits in the ground beside a checkpoint or at the Russian military base at Khankala. Many of those detained have been tortured or ill-treated.

Furthermore, hundreds of Chechen civilians are believed to have "disappeared" after being detained by Russian forces. The bodies of some of the "disappeared" have been found in unmarked dumping sites or mass graves. Many appear to have suffered torture, including rape, or violent death. Forty-year-old Nura Lulueva and her three female cousins Markha and Raisa Gakaeva and Aset Elbuzdukueva were arrested during a raid on a market in Grozny on 3 June 2000. Their blindfolded bodies were found on a dumping site in Dachny village, near the Khankala base, on 4 March 2001.

Amnesty International has gathered numerous reports of those male and female detainees who have "disappeared" being raped, beaten with hammers and clubs, given electric shocks or being sprayed with tear gas while in the custody of Russian federal forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Russian or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov;

- calling on the authorities to establish the fate and whereabouts of Rizvan Yaragievich Appazov and inform his relatives of their findings;
- calling for guarantees that he will not be tortured or ill-treated if he is in detention;
- if he is in detention, calling on the authorities to release him immediately, unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to do their utmost to prevent “disappearances”, by ensuring that the family of any person deprived of their liberty, is informed of their whereabouts, the reason for their detention, and any transfer of place of detention without delay;
- calling for the authorities to investigate promptly all allegations of “disappearances”, of torture, ill-treatment and extrajudicial execution by Russian security forces in the Chechen Republic, to make the results of the investigations public and to bring those responsible to justice in a court of law.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation

Sergey IVANOV
 Ministry of Defence
 Ul. Miasnitskaia 37
 103175 Moscow
 Russian Federation

Telegram: Minster of Defence of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation

Fax: +7 095 293 83 98

Salutation: Dear Minister

Russian Federation Minister of Internal Affairs

Boris GRYZLOV
 Ministry of Internal Affairs
 Ul. Zhitnaia 16
 117049 Moscow
 Russian Federation

Telegram: Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation

Fax: +7 095 237 49 25

Salutation: Dear Minister

Procurator General of the Russian Federation

Vladimir USTINOV
 General Procuracy of the Russian Federation
 Ul. B. Dimitrovka 15a
 103793 Moscow K-31
 Russian Federation

Telegram: Procurator General of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation

Fax: + 7 095 292 8848 (if someone answers say “fax please”)

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

COPIES TO:

Special Representative of the President on Human Rights and Freedoms in the Chechen Republic

Abdul-Khakim SULTYGOV
 Administration of the President of the Russian Federation
 Staraya ploshad d. 2, pod. 6
 103132 Moscow
 Russian Federation

Fax: + 7 095 206 7344

Procurator of the Chechen Republic

Vladimir KRAVCHENKO
 Procuracy of the Chechen Republic
 Ul. Garazhnaia 9b
 g. Grozny 364000
 Russian Federation

Fax: + 7 095 777 9226/9206/ 8793 60700 (if someone answers say “fax please”)

and to diplomatic representatives of Russian Federation/Chechnya accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 July 2003.