



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

ARMENIA: APPEAL CASES

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Alleged ill-treatment of serviceman Karen Asloian

Twenty-two-year old Karen Asloian, who is currently serving a 10-year prison sentence, is said to have been tortured, threatened and psychologically pressured in pre-trial detention at Stepanakert military police station in February 1999, reportedly in an attempt to force him to confess to a murder. There were allegations that the investigation carried out into these reports (following a complaint by his parents to the Presidential Human Rights Commission on 12 July 2001) was not thorough and impartial, and that his case file was lost by the office of the General Procuracy.



Karen Asloian was convicted by Lori Regional Court on 27 December 1999 of the murder of a fellow soldier in military unit No. 47681 in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh in February 1998. The Appeal Court and the Court of Cassation of the Republic of Armenia turned down appeals against the sentence on 26 December 2000 and 8 February 2001 respectively.

Karen Asloian was reportedly tortured and ill-treated during interrogations in detention at Stepanakert military police station from 5 to 15 February 1999, under the supervision of a senior officer of the police station (his name is known to Amnesty International). Karen Asloian is also said to have been tortured while in the custody of the military police in Yerevan, where he was transferred on 16 February and kept for seven months, reportedly without an official warrant. There, Karen Asloian was said to have been beaten, including by being whipped with thin twigs on the soles of his feet to the point of losing consciousness, reportedly in the presence of a senior official of the criminal department of the military police in Yerevan (his name is known to Amnesty International).

Fellow soldiers of Karen Asloian reportedly stated at the trial at Lori Regional Court in December 1999 that they had given false testimony during the pre-trial detention stage, including falsely incriminating Karen Asloian, under the dictation of the investigator of the military procuracy. They stated that they had been beaten and tortured, and threatened with arrest by the military police, both in Stepanakert and in Yerevan.

Karen Asloian is currently held at the strict regime colony of the town of Artik in the north-west of Armenia. He *is in a poor state of health, including suffering from a neurotic illness, that reportedly resulted from the ill-treatment he underwent in pre-trial detention.*

¹ Please use this Appeal Case sheet as the basis for your letter-writing and outreach until further notice.

On 21 February 2002 his family for a second time lodged a complaint with the Commission urging them to investigate the torture allegations in the case of their son.

Background information

On 12 July 2001, the Presidential Human Rights Commission heard the complaints of family members of military servicemen who alleged torture, ill-treatment and violations of due process in some 50 cases. The Military Procurator and the Chief of the military police reportedly denied the allegations at a hearing held one week later by the Commission. The case materials were reportedly forwarded to the General Procuracy, and a special working group of seven senior procurators was created to investigate the allegations. Following the working group's investigations, the Presidential Human Rights Commission reportedly stated that the allegations of undue pressure on military servicemen by the Military Procuracy could be confirmed in at least four cases. Subsequently, at least three criminal cases were opened against officers from the military police in the town of Stepanakert (the names are known to AI) on charges including "coercion to give testimony" and "abuse or excess of power, or negligence".

There were allegations that the investigations of the working group into a number of other cases, including the case of Karen Asloian, were not thorough and impartial and that nobody had been charged in connection with those cases.

Recommended actions:

Please send politely worded letters in English, Russian,

Whom to write

<u>President</u>	<u>Procurator General</u>	<u>Minister of Foreign Affairs</u>	<u>Human Rights Commission at the Office of the President</u>
Robert KOCHARIAN Respublika Armenia; 375019 g. Yerevan; pr. Marshala Bagramiana, d. 26; Prezidentu Respubliki Armeniya; KOCHARIANU, R. ARMENIA Fax: + 374 1- 52 15 81; 52 17 96; 15 11 52	Aram TAMAZIAN Respublika Armenia; 375010 g. Yerevan; ploshch. Shaumiana; Prokuratura RA; Generalnomu prokuroru; TAMAZIANU, A.; ARMENIA	Vartan OSKANIAN Respublika Armenia; 375010 g. Yerevan; Pravitelstvenny d. 1; ploshch. Respubliki; Ministerstvo inostrannykh del RA; Ministru OSKANIANU, V.; ARMENIA Fax: + 374 1- 50 72 50; 52 17 96; 151 042	Respublika Armenia; 375077 g. Yerevan pr. Marshala Bagramiana, 26; Apparat Prezidenta RA; Komitet po pravam cheloveka pri Prezidente RA; Ispolnyayushchemu obyazannostey Predsedatelya, ARMENIA
Salutation: Dear President	Salutation: Dear Procurator General	Salutation: Dear Minister	Salutation: Dear Sir/Madam

Send copies of your letters to:

- the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to your country (if there is one)
- the Military Procurator of the Republic of Armenia:
Gagik JANGIRIAN
Respublika Armeniya
g. Yerevan
Voyennaya prokuratura Respubliki Armenia
Voyennomu prokuroru
JANGIRIANU G.

Send a copy of one of your letters to:

- Respublika Armenia, 377200 g. Vanadzor, Hayk square, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA), ARMENIA (*this human rights organization works on the case of Karen Asloian*)
- Respublika Armenia, g. Artik; Koloniya: uchrezhdeniye AO 18/14, Direktoru kolonii, ARMENIA (*this is the address of the director of the prison colony, where Karen Asloian is kept*)

PLEASE SEND ANY REPLIES FROM THE ARMENIAN AUTHORITIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. (South Caucasus and Central Asia Research and Campaign Team; Amnesty International; 1 Easton Street; London WC1 X ODW; United Kingdom)