

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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"Disappearance"

31 October 1994

TURKMENISTAN

Yusup Kuliyeu, journalist
(in cyrillic _____)

Yusup Kuliyeu has "disappeared". On 20 October 1994, he was reportedly by agents of the Committee for State Security (KGB) at his home in the capital, Ashgabat. No reason was given for his arrest at that time, but it was apparently part of a round-up of known or suspected government opponents who were taken into police custody prior to Turkmenistan's independence day celebrations on 27 October. All the others have since been released. Yusup Kuliyeu has not been released, and his family has been unable to obtain any information about his whereabouts.

Turkmenistan's 1992 independence day holiday was similarly preceded by the detention of known or suspected government opponents: the authorities were apparently acting to prevent any possible disruption to celebrations. Government opponents are also frequently detained in Turkmenistan to prevent them meeting visiting foreign dignitaries. These detentions normally last only a few days, however.

Yusup Kuliyeu is a former employee of the state newspaper Esh Kommunist (Young Communist), and more recently has worked as an editor at a documentary film studio and as a stringer for the US-financed Radio Liberty (based in Germany).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkmenistan is led by President Saparmurad Niyazov. There are two registered political parties, the Democratic Party (the renamed Communist Party, of which Saparmurad Niyazov is chairman) and the Peasants' Party for Justice, which also supports the President. A rival Democratic Party and the Agzybirlik movement are not officially registered, and their activists have been forced by official harassment to work underground or have gone into exile. In presidential elections in June 1992, Saparmurad Niyazov ran unopposed and was returned to office with 95.5 per cent of the vote. In January 1994 a proposal to extend the President's current term from five to 10 years was overwhelmingly endorsed in a referendum. A cult of personality is being actively promoted around President Niyazov.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Russian, English or in your own language:

- calling on the authorities to clarify the whereabouts of Yusup Kuliyeu, and to release him if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- calling on the authorities to guarantee the physical safety and well being of Yusup Kuliyeu, noting that the victims of "disappearance" are especially vulnerable to torture or extrajudicial execution;
- calling on the authorities to put a stop immediately to all forms of harassment and persecution, including short-term detention, of people who have sought peacefully to exercise their fundamental human rights.

APPEALS TO

1. The President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Niyazov
 Turkmenistan
 744000 g. Ashgabat
 Apparat Prezidenta
 Prezidentu Niyazovu S.A.
Telegrams:Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, apparat Prezidenta,
 Prezidentu Niyazovu S.A.
Faxes:+ 7 3632 25 51 12
Salutation:Dear President Niyazov

2. The Chairman of the Committee for State Security, Allashur
Ovedzhov
 Turkmenistan
 g. Ashgabat
 KGB Turkmenistana
 Predsedatelyu Ovedzhovu A.
Telegrams:Turkmenistan, g. Ashgabat, KGB, Predsedatelyu
 Ovedzhovu A.
Salutation:Dear Chairman

3. The Procurator General, Turbanmukhamed Kasimov
 Turkmenistan
 g. Ashgabat
 Prokuratura Turkmenistana
 Generalnomu Prokuroru Kasimovu T.
Telegrams:Turkmenistan, g. Ashgabat, Prokuratura, Gen.
 Prokuroru Kasimovu. T.
Salutation:Dear Procurator General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan
 Turkmenistan
 744000 g. Ashgabat
 ulitsa Magtymguly, 87
 MID Turkmenistana
 Ministru
Faxes: +7 3632 25 14 63

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country,
 where these exist.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
 or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 December 1994.