

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 61/06/98

EXTRA 45/98

Fear of imminent execution

7 July 1998

TURKMENISTAN Bayramsakhat ORAZSAKHATOV (in Russian, _____)

Bayramsakhat Orazsakhatov is in imminent danger of execution. Amnesty International recently learnt that he was sentenced to death at the end of 1997 for drug-trafficking. Although in Turkmenistan execution often takes place very soon after sentence is passed, and with only the most perfunctory appeal and clemency process, to the best of our knowledge he is still alive and therefore a chance remains of saving his life.

Bayramsakhat Orazsakhatov was born in 1958, is married with two children and is a resident of the village of Kyonekesir in Bakhardinsky region. He has no previous criminal record.

According to reports, he is a former school physical education teacher whose economic circumstances forced him to leave teaching and take up farming. He took out a loan in order to sow potatoes but his crop was swept away in flooding. Under pressure to return the loan, he succumbed to an invitation from acquaintances to transport several kilos of raw opium in return for payment.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and without reservation, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International is appealing to the President of Turkmenistan to exercise his constitutional authority to commute this death sentence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A new Criminal Code approved by the *Majlis* (parliament) in June 1997 provided for the death penalty for 17 offences. These include murder, genocide and various anti-state and drug-related crimes. Although no official statistics for use of the death penalty in Turkmenistan are available, it is thought to be widely applied. An amnesty decree issued by the President in June 1997 reportedly benefited 222 prisoners under sentence of death. This was the first official indication that the number of people on death row was as high as that stated by unofficial sources. Such sources informed Amnesty International that, during 1997, several women were also sentenced to death for drug-related offences (see Extra 01/98, EUR 61/01/98, 7 January 1998).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian or your own language:

- urging the President to use his constitutional authority and commute the death sentence passed on Bayramsakhat Orazsakhatov, as well as all other death sentences that come before him;
- urging that a moratorium be imposed on death sentences and executions pending a comprehensive review of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Atayevich Niyazov
744000 g. Ashgabat
Apparat Prezidenta
Prezidentu Turkmenistana NIYAZOVU S.A.
TURKMENISTAN

Telegrams: Prezidentu Niyazovu, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Faxes: + 993 1 or 7 3632 followed by 35 51 12 (it can be difficult to get a connection) or at the Presidential press service + 993 1 or 7 3632 followed by 35 55 71

Salutation: Dear President Niyazov

Procurator General of Turkmenistan, Gurbanbibi Atajanova (Ms)

g. Ashgabat

ul. Seidi, 4

Prokuratura Turkmenistana

Generalnomu prokuroru ATAJANOVOY G B.

TURKMENISTAN

Telegrams: Gen. prokuroru, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Faxes: + 993 1 or 7 3632 followed by 35 44 82

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Chairman of the Clemency Commission of the Turkmenistan Majlis (parliament), (name not known)

g. Ashgabat

Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya Majlisa Turkmenistana

Predsedatelyu

TURKMENISTAN

Telegrams: Komissii pomilovaniya, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Salutation: Dear Chairman

COPIES TO:

Chairman of the Supreme Court, Ysa Rakhmonov

744000 g. Ashgabat

prospekt Saparmurad Turkmenbashi, 18

Verkhovny Sud Turkmenistana

Predsedatelyu RAKHMANOVU Y.

TURKMENISTAN

Director of the Turkmen National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights Vladimir Kadyrov

744000 g. Ashgabat

ul. Karla Liebnechta, 47

Turkmensky natsionalny institut demokratii i prav cheloveka

Direktoru KADYROVU V.

TURKMENISTAN

Faxes: + 993 1 or 7 3632 followed by 35 06 76 (it can be difficult to get a connection)

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Boris Shikhmyradov

744000 g. Ashgabat

pr. Magtymguly, 83

Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Turkmenistana

Ministru SHIKHMYRADOVU B.

TURKMENISTAN

Faxes: + 993 1 or 7 3632 followed by 51 14 30 or 25 37 27 (it can be difficult to get a connection)

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.