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Fear of imminent execution

24 October 1994

UZBEKISTAN

Valizhon Akhmedzhanovich AKHMEDZHANOV, 44
(_____ in Russian)

Amnesty International fears that Valizhon Akhmedzhanov faces imminent execution after having been sentenced to death in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan.

An appeal against his sentence has been turned down by the Supreme Court, and his only hope of avoiding execution now is a petition for clemency to the President of Uzbekistan.

Valizhon Akhmedzhanov, who worked as the deputy director of a brick factory in the city of Toytyuba in the Tashkent region, was sentenced to death by Tashkent Regional Court on 17 February 1994 for premeditated, aggravated murder (Article 80 of the Uzbek Criminal Code). He maintains that he is innocent. The Presidium of the Supreme Court turned down his appeal against his death sentence on 18 October. A petition for clemency has been lodged with the President of Uzbekistan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan retains the death penalty for 19 peacetime offences. However, senior officials told an Amnesty International delegation which visited Uzbekistan in April 1992 that regulations introduced in December 1991 reduced the number of offences which in practice still carry the death penalty to four: treason; murder under aggravating circumstances; murder of a minor; and aggravated rape. Execution is by shooting. The Minister of Justice told Amnesty International that the use of the death penalty in Uzbekistan was declining, but he was unable to provide the delegation with statistics.

Amnesty International has consistently pressed the Uzbek authorities to reduce the scope of the death penalty as a step towards total abolition; to impose a moratorium on death sentences and executions pending a review of this punishment; and to publish comprehensive statistics on the application of the death penalty.

Besides Valizhon Akhmedzhanovich, Amnesty International knows, from unofficial sources, of three other pending death sentences in Uzbekistan. So far at least five executions have been carried out in 1994.

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

- expressing concern that Valizhon Akhmedzhanovich has been sentenced to death;
- urging President Islam Karimov to grant clemency to Valizhon Akhmedzhanovich, and to commute his death sentence;
- urging the authorities to make the outcome of appeals and petitions of clemency known to the relatives of prisoners on death row and to Amnesty International;
- urging President Karimov to commute all other death sentences that come before him.

APPEALS TO

The President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov:

Respublika Uzbekistan
g. Tashkent
pl. Mustakillik
Apparat prezidenta
Prezidentu Karimovu I.

Telegrams: Uzbekistan, Tashkent, apparat prezidenta, Prezidentu Karimovu I.

Faxes: + 7 3712 39 55 25 or + 7 3712 39 54 00

Salutation: Dear President Karimov

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Chairman of the Clemency Commission of the Uzbekistan Supreme Soviet, Pulatov
(first name unknown):

Respublika Uzbekistan
g. Tashkent
Verkhovny Sovet Respubliki Uzbekistan
Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya
Predsedatelyu Pulatovu

Chairman of the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, Ubaydulla Mingbayev:

Respublika Uzbekistan
g. Tashkent
ul. Abdulla Kodiri, 1
Verkhovny Sud Respubliki Uzbekistan
Predsedatelyu Mingbayevu U.

Procurator General of Uzbekistan, Buritosh Mustafoyev:

Respublika Uzbekistan
g. Tashkent
ul. Gogolya, 66
Prokuratura Respubliki Uzbekistan
Generalnomu Prokuroru Mustafoyevu B.

Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Saidmukhtar Saidkasymov

Respublika Uzbekistan
g. Tashkent
Ministerstvo inostrannykh del
Ministru Saidkasymovu S.

and to diplomatic representatives of Uzbekistan accredited to your country.

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