

URGENT ACTION

UA PROMPTS INVESTIGATION INTO POLICE EXTORTION

The Ukrainian Ombudspersons Office has responded to the Urgent Action appeal on behalf of Rostislav Chapran by carrying out an investigation in Lviv.

Amnesty International initially issued an Urgent Action on behalf of Rostislav Chapran on 19 May based on information received from his relatives. 32-year-old Rostislav Chapran had been detained by police in Lviv on 4 April when he voluntarily went to a police station having been told that the police had been asking for him. He was initially charged with an administrative offence of 'failing to obey the instructions of the police' and detained for 15 days. At the expiration of his administrative sentence he was transferred to a psychiatric hospital. However, neither his family nor his lawyer received any information about his whereabouts, and were not informed about the charges against him, nor the basis of his forced hospitalisation. He had been unable to contact his lawyer or speak to his relatives from the moment of his detention to 19 May. His relatives also told Amnesty International that on 19 April police had demanded a 3,000 Euro bribe for his release.

In a letter dated 16 June the Ombudspersons Office informed us that **Rostislav Chapran** was charged with attempted murder on 19 April, and this charge was confirmed by the Galitsky District Court on 21 April. He was detained in Lviv regional psychiatric hospital from 22 April to 26 May on the basis of a decision by the Galitsky District Court, and not arbitrarily by the police as we had initially understood. He is currently detained in Lviv remand prison. The regional prosecutor's office is carrying out an investigation into the allegations of extortion made in our Urgent Action. The ombudspersons office has found no other violations.

It is normal practice in Ukraine for suspects accused of serious crimes to be sent for psychiatric evaluation as an inpatient in a closed ward of a psychiatric hospital, however Amnesty International is concerned that Rostislav Chapran was effectively held incommunicado during this period.

Amnesty International remains concerned that Rostislav Chapran was arbitrarily detained from 4 to 19 April, in violation of Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights, on the basis of a groundless administrative charge - the purpose of which was to allow the police to produce evidence for the criminal charge. This is a very common violation in Ukraine which provides police officers with the opportunity to force confessions through torture and other ill-treatment or to extort money from relatives.

We thank you all for your participation, and remind you to forward all such responses to the IS. No further action is required.

This is the first update of UA 146/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR50/007/2011/en>
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