

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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Russian Federation: Amnesty International calls for assurances on Zakayev case

(Moscow) Amnesty International will seek assurances from the Russian authorities that Akhmed Zakayev, an envoy of the Chechen President, not be subjected to torture or ill-treatment, or the death penalty, if the Danish authorities extradite him to the Russian Federation.

The organization's call comes after Akhmed Zakayev was detained in Copenhagen -- where he was attending the World Chechen Congress -- following an extradition request from the Russian authorities.

An Amnesty International delegation will meet officials from the Russian procuracy tomorrow and will also seek assurances that, if extradited, Akhmed Zakayev will receive a fair trial in line with international standards.

The organization is calling on the Danish authorities to ensure that Akhmed Zakayev is not extradited without firm guarantees that these rights will be respected. As in all cases of this kind, the organization is also monitoring Akhmed Zakayev's conditions of detention at present, including his right to confidential communications with his lawyer and access to the outside world.

According to media reports some 30 people have been detained in Moscow in recent days, including security officials and political advisors, on suspicion of links with those who carried out the recent hostage taking in a Moscow theatre.

"As our latest report confirms, although anyone who comes into contact with law enforcement officials may be at risk of torture and ill-treatment, Chechens and members of other ethnic minorities are at particular risk." Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan said.

The organization's report "Denial of Justice" released yesterday, details the widespread use of torture and ill-treatment in the Russian Federation, often to elicit confessions.

To obtain more information, arrange an interview or briefing, or obtain a copy of the B-roll, please contact our media officers in Moscow:

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