

PUBLIC

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Fear of imminent execution/unfair trial

15 January 1999

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Abdusalam Shamseden (*Abudushalamu Xiamuxiding*), 29, textile factory worker**

**Abdusalam Abdurahman (*Abudushalamu Abudureheman*)**

**Others**

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A group of young Uighurs sentenced to death on political charges are facing imminent execution in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), according to information recently received by Amnesty International. Only two have been identified.

They were sentenced to death at the end of October 1998 in Gulja (*Yining*) city, after a secret trial by the Ili prefecture Intermediate People's Court. They were reportedly convicted of organising a "counter-revolutionary group" and involvement in "armed activities to overthrow the government". Some of them were reportedly arrested in connection with protests by ethnic Uighurs in Gulja in February 1997 and held incommunicado since their arrest. Their relatives were not informed of the trial.

Abdusalam Shamseden, a worker at a textile factory in Gulja, who is married with one child, was reportedly arrested in June 1997 for taking part in the 5 February protests in Gulja. He is not believed to have been involved in violence. In early January 1999, his appeal against the death sentence was rejected by the XUAR High People's Court. It is not known whether the others had appealed against the verdict but all the prisoners are reportedly due to be executed soon.

Amnesty International is also concerned that they are political prisoners who were denied a fair trial, in violation of international standards, and that they may be arbitrarily imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The XUAR is the only region of the People's Republic of China where political prisoners are known to have been executed in recent years. Since 1996, the Chinese authorities have carried out a harsh crackdown on suspected Uighur nationalists and independent Muslim religious leaders in the XUAR. The crackdown intensified in 1997 following anti-Chinese protests by Uighurs in Gulja that February, and a series of bomb explosions and violent incidents attributed to underground nationalist groups.

In 1997, official sources reported the execution of 12 Uighurs for taking part in the Gulja protests and of eight others for alleged involvement in terrorist activities. In 1998, at least 14 Uighurs, officially described as terrorists or "separatists", were executed in the region.

Thousands of Uighurs are reported to have been arbitrarily detained in the region in the past few years, including many people who were simply suspected of supporting the nationalist cause.

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

- urging the authorities to stop the execution of Abdusalam Shamseden, Abdusalam Abdurahman and others sentenced to death in Gulja (*Yining*) in October 1998;

- expressing concern that they were convicted of political offences after a secret unfair trial, and urging that the basis for the charges against them and full trial proceedings be made public;
- urging that they be granted a new open trial, carried out according to international standards on fair trial, failing which they should be released;
  
- expressing opposition to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment and as a violation of the right to life as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**APPEALS TO:**

Premier of the People's Republic of China

**ZHU Rongji** Zongli

Guowuyuan

9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie

Beijingshi 100032

People's Republic of China

**Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN**

**Telegram: Premier Zhu Rongji, Beijing, China**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

President of the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China

**XIAO Yang** Yuanzhang

Zuigao Renmin Fayuan

27 Dongjiao Min Xiang

Beijingshi 100726

People's Republic of China

**Telegram: President of the Supreme People's Court, Beijing, China**

**Salutation: Dear President**

Chairman of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional People's Government

**ABDULAHAT Abdurixit** Zhuxi

Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Renmin Zhengfu

2 Zhongshanlu

Wulumuqishi 830041

Xinjiang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

**Telegram: Chairman of the Regional People's Government, Wulumuqi, Xinjiang**

**Uighur Autonomous Region, China**

**Salutation: Dear Chairman**

Secretary of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional Party Committee

**WANG Lequan** Shuji

Zhonggong Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu

Weiyuanhui

Wulumuqishi

Xinjiang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

**Telegram: Secretary of the Regional Party Committee, Wulumuqi, Xinjiang Uighur**

**Autonomous Region, China**

**Salutation: Dear Secretary**

**COPIES TO:**

Xinhua News Agency

**Faxes: + 86106 201 9332**

and to diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 February 1999.