

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 91/98

Fair trial concern / Fear of death penalty 27 November 1998

**TURKMENISTAN Mukhametkuli Aymuradov  
Khoshali Garayev**

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On 30 November 1998, possible prisoners of conscience Mukhametkuli Aymuradov and Khoshali Garayev, face a closed trial for new charges brought against them.

These include one of organizing an attempt on the life of the President of Turkmenistan which carries a possible death penalty. Amnesty International is extremely concerned that they may not receive a fair trial, which will take place in the prison, and may be sentenced to death as a result.

The other charges reportedly brought against the two men are that they tried to escape from prison and also assaulted a prison guard. No one, including close family members, had been informed of the charges until now.

The two men have been in prison since 1995 and are currently serving 15 and 12 years respectively in a maximum security prison near the Caspian Sea Coast.

They were convicted of anti-state crimes including "attempted terrorism". There is strong evidence to suggest, however, that they are innocent and that the case against them was fabricated to punish them for associating with exiled opponents of the ruling Niyazov regime. Amnesty International has been campaigning for a judicial review of their case. The organization has also raised concerns about their conditions of detention and the poor state of health of Mukhametkuli Aymuradov in particular.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has repeatedly complained of the widespread and apparently often arbitrary use of the death penalty in Turkmenistan. Information on this punishment is treated as a state secret, but there are credible reports that the number of executions is very high. In 1996 for example at least 123 people were reportedly executed for the offence of drug-taking alone.

Amnesty International has said in the past that "we have monitored cases in Turkmenistan of death sentences passed and carried out despite significant doubts about the safety of the conviction, and of grossly inadequate or non-existent procedures for appealing against a death sentence."

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

- pointing out that, as prisoners in Turkmenistan, Mukhametkuli Aymuradov and Khoshali Garayev are particularly vulnerable to wrongful conviction and urging the authorities to ensure that they receive a fair trial in line with international human rights standards;
- pointing out that it is particularly important that international standards are adhered to in cases where the defendants face a possible death sentence;
- reminding the government of Turkmenistan of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3: "*Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.*"

**APPEALS TO: (please note, fax tones can be difficult to obtain)**

President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Atayevich Niyazov  
744000 g. Ashgabat

Apparat Prezidenta  
Prezidentu Turkmenistana NIYAZOVU S.A.  
TURKMENISTAN

**Telegrams: Prezidentu Niyazovu, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan**  
**Faxes: + 993 12 35 51 12 / 993 12 35 55 71 (Presidential press office)**  
**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 12 35 44 82**  
**Salutation: Dear Procurator General**

Minister of Internal Affairs of Turkmenistan, Poran BERDIYEV  
Turkmenistan  
g. Ashgabat  
ul. Azady, 87  
Ministerstvo vnutrennikh  
del Turkmenistana  
Ministru BERDIYEVU P.  
TURKMENISTAN

**Telegrams: Ministru vnutrennikh del, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan**  
**Faxes: + 993 12 35 65 26**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**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 12 35 06 76**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Boris Shikhmyradov  
744000 g. Ashgabat  
pr. Magtymguly, 83  
Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Turkmenistana  
Ministru SHIKHMYRADOVU B.  
TURKMENISTAN

**Faxes: + 993 12 51 14 30 / 993 12 25 37 27**

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.