

URGENT ACTION

DEMAND PROTECTION AFTER BODIES FOUND

The lives of Islam Askerov and Arsen Butaev remain at risk after a burnt-out car containing the bodies of three men was found in the Republic of Dagestan, Russian Federation. One of the bodies has been positively identified by a family member as the remains of Artur Butaev.

The car, belonging to **Artur Butaev's** father, was found in a forest near to the village of Talgi in Dagestan, on 26 August 2009. Artur Butaev's father could only identify his son's body by the personal belongings that were with him at the time of abduction. He also identified the car in which the bodies were found.

The remains of the other two male bodies are also so badly burnt that only DNA testing will be able to prove their identities. Relatives of **Gadzhi Gudaliev** and **Amiraslan Islamov** are waiting for DNA test results to find out if the burnt bodies are the remains of the abducted men.

The other two men, **Islam Askerov** and **Arsen Butaev**, managed to escape on 23 August and are now in hiding as their lives are in danger.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to ensure the protection of Islam Askerov and Arsen Butaev;
- urging the Russian authorities to conduct an immediate, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the circumstances of the abduction of the five men and killing of the three men;
- calling on the authorities to bring anyone found responsible for these crimes to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 OCTOBER TO:

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation

Yurii Ya. Chaika

Ul. Bolshaia Dmitrovka, 15a

Moscow GSP-3

125993 Russian Federation

Fax: +7 4956 9217 25

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Prosecutor of the Republic of Dagestan

Andrei I. Nazarov

Ul. M. Yarakskogo 84

Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

367003 Russian Federation

Fax: +7 8722 6795 24

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

Minister of Interior of the Republic of Dagestan

Ali Alievich Magomedov

Prospekt Lenina 7

Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

367005 Russian Federation

Fax: +7 8722 6701 66

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 224/09 EUR 46/019/2009.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following account was provided by Islam Askerov and Arsen Butaev.

On 23 August Islam Askerov, Arsen Butaev and Artur Butaev were abducted in the Republic of Dagestan, Russian Federation. Islam Askerov was abducted by unknown men in civilian dress from a street near his home. His abductors hit him on the back of the head, put a sack over his head and forced him into a car. Cousins Arsen Butaev and Artur Butaev were abducted later the same day by unknown men who blocked the street they were driving on with a white van. Without identifying themselves they demanded at gun point that the two men got out of their car and that they lie face-down on the ground. The abductors then put bags over the two men's heads. The two men were then put in the van and taken to a building in an unknown location.

The three men were interrogated with the sacks still on their heads. During the interrogations they were beaten and strangled. They were forced to confess to being members of illegal armed groups. They were then taken away in the same vehicle with two other men, Gadzhi Gudaliev and Amiraslan Islamov who were already in the van. The details of their abduction are not known.

All five men were taken beyond the airport of Makhachkala. Their hands were tied with sticky tape and plastic bags put over their heads, they were then put in the cousins' car. The captors then released chloroform into the vehicle, poured petrol over it and then placed an explosive device inside before they left the scene. Islam Askerov and Arsen Butaev were able to free their hands and threw the explosive device out of the car before fleeing. The device exploded and was heard by the abductors who then returned to the cousins' car and chased them. The two men got away and were able to phone for help. Their relatives went to where the car and the three other men had been but the car was not there. They only found pieces of sticky tape and a telephone belonging to one of the abductees.

UA: Further information on UA: 224/09 Index: EUR 46/021/2009 Issue Date: 02 September 2009

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