



To: Health Professional Network

From: Health and Human Rights Team

Date: 21 February 2007

Health Professional Action

Geldy Karizov (m)

Turkmenistan

Summary:

Geldy Kyarizov, aged 56, is held in Turkmenabad prison in the eastern Lebap region of Turkmenistan. He is believed to be in extremely poor health and in urgent need of medical treatment. He has suffered two heart attacks and a stroke since 2002 as well as a bout of pneumonia. It is not known what, if any medical treatment he has received for these conditions. He is reportedly severely malnourished and weakened physically. On 29 January 2007, after visiting Geldy Kyarizov in prison, his wife reported that he had a very bad cough which was worrying her a lot, adding, "He is a skeleton with skin. His weight now [is] 45-50 kilograms. You will never recognize him. He is like a walking dead body." AI is seriously concerned at his present state of health and is urging immediate proper diagnosis and medical care of Geldy Kyarizov, including through transfer to a hospital if necessary.

Background:

Geldy Kyarizov, former director of the Government Association *Turkmenatlary* (Turkmen Horses) and an internationally renowned breeder of Akhalteke horses, arrested in January 2002 on charges including "abuse of office" and "negligence". He was convicted and was sentenced to six years' imprisonment in April 2002 following a trial that was not in line with international fair trial standards.

While Geldy Kyarizov was in pre-trial detention, officers of the Ministry of National Security (MNS) reportedly pressured him to "confess" to the charges. For example, three officers reportedly tortured a detainee in Geldy Kyarizov's presence by giving the detainee electric shocks to his genitals. Geldy Kyarizov was reportedly frequently interrogated during this period for 24 hours without a break.

It was during pre-trial detention that Geldy Kyarizov suffered a stroke. Yulia Serebryannik, Geldy Kyarizov's wife, saw him during this period when she brought him medication. However, in September 2006, Geldy Kyarizov was reportedly transferred to another detention facility but his family were not informed of his whereabouts. On 18 September an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) reportedly informed Yulia Serebryannik that her husband was not registered as an inmate in any detention facility run by his Ministry. On 13 December 2006, Geldy Kyarizov's family was visited by a man who introduced himself as an MNS official but did not present any identification. He reportedly told them that Geldy Kyarizov had been tortured to death. It was only at the end of January 2007 that his family found out that he was still alive and had been transferred back to Turkmenabad prison, where he had previously been detained. During this period, Geldy Kyarizov did not receive adequate medical care in the prison and was unable to receive food parcels from his family to supplement his diet, as a result of which his health suffered.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Russian, Turkmen or your own language. (Government fax machines may only be switched on during office hours, 5 hours ahead of GMT):

- expressing grave concern for the health of Geldy Kyarizov given his medical history and current physical condition
- expressing concern that he has consistently failed to receive adequate medical treatment, and urge the authorities to ensure Geldy Kyarizov is immediately seen by a medical professional and provided with appropriate medical treatment.
- urging the authorities to provide Geldy Kyarizov and other detainees with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, as required under the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.
- expressing concern that Geldy Kyarizov's trial failed to meet international standards and urge that he be re-tried under fair procedures or released
- expressing further concern that Geldy Kyarizov was held incommunicado from September 2006 to January 2007; urge the authorities to inquire into his "disappearance" and to hold to account any official responsible;

APPEALS TO:

President of Turkmenistan
Kurbanguly Berdimukhammedov
Presidential Palace
744000 Ashgabat
Turkmenistan

Fax: + 993 12 35 51 12

Salutation: Dear President of Turkmenistan

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Rashit Meredov
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Magtymguly Avenue, 83
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Turkmenistan

Fax: + 993 12 35 42 41

E-mail: mfatm@online.tm

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country.