

URGENT ACTION

FORMER PRISONER DENIED URGENT MEDICAL CARE

Geldy Kyarizov, who was previously imprisoned after falling out of favour with the Turkmenistani authorities remains in very poor health. He is in need of urgent specialist medical care, but he and his family are being kept under constant surveillance by the security forces in Turkmenistan and have been denied permission to travel.

Geldy Kyarizov, a horse breeder and former director of state-run Association Turkmen Atlary ("Turkmen Horses") is in urgent need of medical treatment. On 22 January along with his wife, 12-year old daughter and his sister-in-law, Geldy Kyarizov travelled to seek medical treatment from an orthopaedic doctor. According to credible reports, the family were followed by 10 Ministry of National Security cars, which surrounded them and forced them to stop. Three security officials twisted the hands of his sister-in-law behind her back and tried to push her to the ground. They were then all taken to a police station for questioning. Law enforcement officers reportedly threw Geldy Kyarizov's daughter into the police car and in the process she hit her head; at the police station she was not allowed to use the bathroom. Geldy Kyarizov's sister-in-law needed medical assistance when she arrived at the police station, due to high blood pressure and chest pains. When the ambulance arrived law enforcement officers reportedly did not allow the doctors to treat her until she signed a paper saying that she would not file a complaint against the officers for their actions. The whole family were made to sign this paper.

Geldy Kyarizov suffers from poor health, including a heart condition, high blood pressure, chronic hepatitis, cholecystitis, gall bladder and gastric problems as well as severe arthritis. There are fears that his life will be in danger if he does not receive prompt specialist medical treatment. In similar cases residents of Turkmenistan would seek medical treatment abroad. However, Geldy Kyarizov and his family are believed to be on a 'black list' and therefore are not allowed to leave the country.

Geldy Kyarizov was sentenced to six years' imprisonment in an unfair trial in April 2002 on charges of abuse of office and negligence. The charges were allegedly brought because he had fallen out of favour with the former President Saparmurad Niyazov and was caught up in a clampdown that saw scores of officials imprisoned. Geldy Kyarizov was included in the October 2007 presidential pardon and released from prison but has been subjected to constant surveillance and harassment by the Turkmenistani authorities ever since.

Please write immediately in Turkmen, Russian, English or your own language:

■ Demanding that the politically motivated harassment of Geldy Kyarizov and his family cease immediately and that he be provided with the medical care he needs and that he be allowed to leave the country should he desire to do so.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 MARCH 2014 TO:

President of Turkmenistan

Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov
 Presidential Palace
 744000 Ashgabat
 Turkmenistan
 Fax: +993 12 93 5112 (please continue
 to try between 10-1500 GMT)

Salutation: Dear President

Minister of National Security

Yailim Berdiev
 Ul. 2033 (pr. Mahtumkuli) 93
 744000 Ashgabat
 Turkmenistan

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Rashid Meredov
 Archabil av. 108
 744000 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
 Email: info@mfa.gov.tm
 Fax: + 993 (12) 44-58-12 (please
 continue to try between 10-1500 GMT)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

This is the first update of UA 35/12. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR61/001/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Geldy Kyarizov used to be the director of state-run Association Turkmen Atlary ("Turkmen Horses"). He was detained by the National Security Services in Turkmenistan in January 2002. He witnessed the torture of one of his cellmates before trial and his family and children were threatened with imprisonment. On 2 February 2002 Geldy Kyarizov appeared on television making a statement saying that he had stolen horses, which in fact belonged to him. Prior to his appearance on television he was subjected to sleep deprivation.

On 4 March 2002 Geldy Kyarizov had a heart attack and was taken to hospital under the supervision of state security officers. He had to be carried into the court room to stand trial on 10 March 2002. Although the court found that Geldy Kyarizov was not guilty of theft, he was nevertheless sentenced to six years imprisonment after an unfair trial in April 2002 on charges of abuse of office and negligence. Amnesty International believes that the charges were politically motivated as Geldy Kyarizov had fallen out of favour with former President Niyazov.

Reportedly, during his time in prison, Geldy Kyarizov's family were harassed and frequently subjected to racial insults because his wife, Julia Serebryannik, is Jewish.

Geldy Kyarizov was transferred to a closed prison on 27 August 2006 and the family were not allowed to visit him or send letters or parcels. He remained there until his release on 25 January 2007. His family did not know of his whereabouts during this time.

Since his release from prison, Geldy Kyarizov and his family have been subjected to constant harassment from the authorities, accused of squatting land. They have had a number of criminal cases opened against them. Geldy Kyarizov was instructed by the authorities to no longer engage in horse breeding and told to write a statement to this effect. State officials had started to demolish Geldy Kyarizov's stud farm from August 2006. The horses from the stud farm were seized by the state in 2010. In 2012 the family were threatened with eviction by the Mayor of Ashgabat. The fence around their house was demolished and the size of the yard reduced.

Geldy Kyarizov and his family continue to be under surveillance. A surveillance bus is reportedly parked permanently next to their house. His wife and sister-in-law have been unable to find employment due to their relationship with him. Julia Serebryannik has reportedly attempted to get treatment in Turkmenistan for kidney stones, but was told that no treatment was available for her. His wife, sister-in-law and daughter attempted to leave Turkmenistan in 2006, 2008 and 2010 respectively but were denied exit.

In July 2011 Geldy Kyarizov attempted to travel to Dashoguz, northern Turkmenistan, to visit a family grave but was escorted home by state officials.

In October 2013 Geldy Kyarizov and his wife were made to sign another paper stating that Geldy Kyarizov must not approach horses again.

Name: GeldyKyarizov
Gender m/f: m