

PUBLIC

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UA 300/05      Fear of forcible return/"disappearance"

KAZAKSTAN      Abdurahman Ibragimov (m), aged 45  
Tohir Abdusamatov (m), aged 35  
Farhod Islamov (m), aged 33  
Sharofuddin Latipov (m), aged 26  
Nozim Rahmanov (m), aged 30  
Shoirmat Shorahmedov (m), aged 45  
Alisher Mirzaholov (m), aged 29  
Abdurauf Holmuratov (m), aged 47  
Ruhiddin Fahrudinov (m), aged 38  
Alizhon Mirganiev (m), aged 35

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On 24 and 27 November, ten Uzbekistani citizens were allegedly arrested by the Kazakstan National Security Committee (KNSC) in Kazakstan and are being held in incommunicado detention. Amnesty International believes that they are in serious danger of being forcibly returned to Uzbekistan, where they would be at risk of incommunicado detention, torture and unfair trial leading to a long prison term or even the death penalty.

Abdurahman Ibragimov, Alisher Mirzaholov, Abdurauf Holmuratov, Alizhon Mirganiev and Ruhiddin Fahrudinov "disappeared" in the city of Shymkent in southern Kazakstan on 24 November. There are allegations that they were arrested by the KNSC and are wanted by the Uzbek authorities for "participation in a banned religious organization". Ruhiddin Fahrudinov is a former independent imam [religious leader] at a mosque in the Uzbekistani capital, Tashkent and was wanted on allegedly fabricated charges of being "Wahhabist", a term of abuse used in countries of the former Soviet Union to describe independent Muslims. His wife was released from prison in 2004 after serving three years on reportedly fabricated charges after refusing to disclose her husband's whereabouts. His brother-in-law, a teacher of Arabic language at the Egyptian Cultural Center in Tashkent, reportedly "disappeared" in June 2004.

On 27 November, Tohir Abdusamatov, Farhod Islamov, Sharofuddin Latipov, Nozim Rahmonov and Shoirmat Shorahmedov were arrested in Shymkent, reportedly by armed KNSC officers. The charges against them are not known at this time.

It is believed the ten men fled Uzbekistan to escape arrest and possible torture by the Uzbekistani authorities. Independent Muslims or suspected sympathizers of banned Islamic opposition parties are often targeted by the Uzbekistani authorities in the name of "national security", and since September 2001, in the name of the "war on terror".

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In Uzbekistan, there is a pattern of widespread human rights violations, which include arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment, "disappearances", violations of international fair trial standards and the imposition of the death penalty after an unfair trial. A wave of mass arrests and detentions was sparked by the murders of several law enforcement officials in the Namangan Region in December 1997. The arrests and detentions have continued following other events, including the events in the town of Andizhan in May 2005 when security forces fired indiscriminately into crowds of thousands of demonstrators following attacks on military barracks and government buildings.

Individuals targeted in the “war on terror” campaign included alleged supporters of banned Islamic opposition parties and movements, along with their relatives. The authorities have also targeted independent human rights monitors and suspected supporters of the banned political opposition parties and movements, Erk and Birlík. Thousands of devout Muslims, convicted after unfair trials of membership of an illegal party, distribution of illegal religious literature and anti-state activities, are currently serving long prison sentences.

Amnesty International has documented many cases of people forcibly returned to Uzbekistan at the request of the Uzbekistani authorities who have been tortured or sentenced to death and executed after unfair trials.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Russian, Kazak or your own language:**

- urging the authorities not to forcibly return Abdurahman Ibragimov, Tohir Abdusamatov, Farhod Islamov, Sharofuddin Latipov, Nozim Rahmanov, Shoirmat Shorahmedov, Alisher Mirzaholov, Abdurauf Holmuratov, Alizhon Mirganiev, Ruhiddin Fahrudinov to Uzbekistan, because they would be at risk of serious human rights violations including torture and the imposition of the death penalty after unfair trial;
- urging the authorities to respect their obligations under international law, including the principle of *non-refoulement*, as enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Convention against Torture, which prohibits the return of a person to a country or territory where they would be at risk of serious human rights violations.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic of Kazakstan

Kazakstan, 473000 Astana, ul. Beybitshilik 11, Prezidentu NAZARBAEVU N.

**Fax: +7 3172 32 40 89**

**Salutation: Dear President**

You also can send a letter from the President’s website:

[http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page\\_id=185&lang=2](http://www.akorda.kz/page.php?page_id=185&lang=2)

Chairman of the Kazakstan National Security Committee

Kazakstan, Astana, ul. Kenesary 97/98, Komitet natsionalnoi bezopasnosti, Predsedatelyu MUSAEVU A.

**Fax: +7 3172 32 80 50**

**Salutation: Dear Chairman**

Procurator General of the Republic of Kazakstan

Kazakstan, 010000, Astana, ul. Seyfullina 73 “a”, Generalnomu prokuroru TUSUPBEKOVU

**Fax: +7 3172 21 67 20**

**Email: [kanc@pravstat.kz](mailto:kanc@pravstat.kz) or [gp-rk@mail.online.kz](mailto:gp-rk@mail.online.kz)**

**Salutation: Dear Procurator General**

**COPIES TO:**

Human Rights Ombudsman of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan, 4, Beibitshilik Str., Astana, Upolnomochennomu po pravam cheloveka BAIKADAMOVU B.

**Fax: +7 31 72 32 17 67**

**E-mail: [ombudsman@mail.kz](mailto:ombudsman@mail.kz)**

and to diplomatic representatives of Kazakstan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 January 2006.