

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

AI Index: EUR 62/9133/2018

20 September 2018

Amnesty International urges Uzbekistan to investigate past human rights violations and end the criminalization of same sex relations between men.

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Uzbekistan

Amnesty International welcomes Uzbekistan's cooperation with the UPR and its acceptance of 200 out of the 211 recommendations made to it. These include recommendations to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,¹ to eradicate the use of torture and other ill-treatment,² and to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment.³

We firmly believe that there will be no genuine improvement in the human rights situation in Uzbekistan unless human rights violations of the past are thoroughly and effectively investigated and those found responsible held to account in fair proceedings.

Amnesty International deeply regrets that Uzbekistan rejected the 11 recommendations relating to sexual orientation and gender identity rejected by Uzbekistan,⁴ including by repealing Article 120 of the Criminal Code which criminalizes consensual sexual relations between men by a fine or a prison term of up to three years.

Amnesty International values Uzbekistan's commitment to an ambitious reform program over the past two years and the adoption of a national action strategy for 2017-2021 on five priority areas for development.⁵ Amnesty International emphasizes that the effective implementation of these important initiatives and necessary reforms will be a decisive test as to the authorities' commitment to upholding its international human rights obligations and improving conditions for all citizens of Uzbekistan.

We welcome the easing of certain restrictions on freedom of expression and of the media. In this regard, we are pleased that Uzbekistan accepted recommendations to release those imprisoned on politically motivated charges.⁶ We also note other recent releases of prisoners of

¹ A/HRC/39/7, recommendations 101.1 (Honduras), 101.2 (Spain), 101.6 (Denmark), 101.7 (Estonia), 101.8 (Ghana), 101.9 (Greece), 101.10 (Lithuania), 101.11 (Chile), 101.12 (Senegal), 101.18 (Georgia), 101.76 (Australia), 101.78 (France), and 101.84 (Czechia).

² A/HRC/39/7, recommendations 101.69 (Greece), 101.73 (Canada), 101.77 (Belgium), 101.80 (Hungary), 101.82 (Chile), and 101.83 (Russian Federation).

³ A/HRC/39/7, recommendations 101.81 (Ireland) and 101.84 (Czechia)

⁴ A/HRC/39/7, recommendations 102.1-102.11 (Mexico, Argentina, Iceland, Italy, Canada, Netherlands, Honduras, Chile, Spain, Uruguay, Czechia).

⁵ The five areas are: Improving state and public development; ensuring rule of law and reforming judicial-legal system; developing and liberalizing economy; developing social sphere and ensuring security, inter-ethnic harmony and religious tolerance; and implementing balanced, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy.

⁶ A/HRC/39/7, recommendations 101.75 (Sweden), 101.80 (Hungary), 101.99 (Slovakia), 101.104 (Australia), 101.108 (Ghana).

conscience and other prisoners who had been serving long sentences on politically motivated charges. We are concerned, however, about the administrative detention of a number of bloggers and human rights defenders in recent months. We are also concerned that some of those who were recently released face travel restrictions: Erkin Musaev and Agzam Turgunov were both denied exit visas in August this year.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Uzbekistan on 20 September 2018 during its 39th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered this oral statement.

Public Document

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