

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/death threats

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**Boris Maksovich Kreindel (m), human rights defender
Elena Kreindel (f), aged 16, his daughter
Other members of his family**

Leaflets inciting violence against human rights defender Boris Maksovich Kreindel and his family have been distributed in the city of Tomsk, including at the building where he has his office. Those responsible are believed to be people who object to his campaigning on behalf of Roma.

Boris Maksovich Kreindel is the head of the non-governmental organization Commission for Human Rights Tomsk Region, which has worked to defend the rights of a community of Romani people in the town of Iskitim, in Novosibirsk region, which borders Tomsk region. In 2004 and 2005 they suffered a series of arson attacks, which happened after allegations were made that some of the community were selling drugs. It was possibly as a result of the Commission's campaign on behalf of the Roma that 17 people have been charged in connection with the attacks, of whom seven have been detained and are now awaiting trial.

On 16 December the Russian newspaper *Izvestiia* published an article on drug abuse which alleged that Roma were often involved in drug trafficking. Because of his work in defence of the Romani community in Novosibirsk, the article described Boris Maksovich Kreindel as someone who gave legal advice to drug dealers.

On 4 March Boris Maksovich Kreindel found leaflets in the entrance to the building where he has his office, which included a picture of him and quotes from the *Izvestiia* article. At the time he took no action, as he knew that his work in defence of the Roma was unpopular, and the leaflets did not appear unduly menacing. But on 10 March more leaflets appeared near his office and elsewhere in the city, this time with a picture of his 16-year-old daughter Elena. The leaflets gave her date of birth, and said that in 2006 she would die of drug abuse.

Boris Maksovich Kreindel went to the police and asked them to investigate; the police refused to take any action.

A local newspaper wrote about the leaflets and the work of the Commission. Many people from the region then called Boris Maksovich Kreindel to express their support for the Commission and their concern for him and his family.

Boris Maksovich Kreindel has worked with many Russian and international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International. Among other activities he has coordinated a human rights education programme in Tomsk. He took up the case of the Romani community in Iskitim after concerns were expressed that the police were failing to effectively investigate the attacks. Boris Maksovich Kreindel appealed to the local authorities as well as to national human rights bodies and international human rights organizations to intervene. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations wrote to the Russian authorities calling on them to investigate and bring the arsonists to justice.

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

- urging the Director of the Department for the Fight against Organized Crime to fully and promptly investigate who is behind the leaflets, smearing human rights defender Boris Maksovich Kreindel and issuing death threats against his daughter;
- calling on the Governor of Tomsk Region to publicly express support for the work of the Commission on Human Rights Tomsk Region and to condemn any act of harassment of human rights defenders;
- reminding the authorities that any form of racist or prejudicial statements against a whole community should be vigorously and publicly opposed by them.

APPEALS TO:

Director of the Department for the fight against organized crimes and terrorism
Lieutenant-General Nikolai Aleksandrovich Ovchinnikov
Ministry of Interior of the Russian Federation
Ul. Sadovaia-Spasskaia d. 1/2
Moscow
109078
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 2048855
Salutation: Dear Lieutenant-General

Governor of Tomsk Region
Viktor M. Kress
Administration of Tomsk Region
Pl. Lenina 6
Tomsk
634050
Russian Federation
Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Ombudsman of the Russian Federation
Vladimir Lukin
ul. Miasnitskaia 47
103084 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 207 7470

and to diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 April 2006.