

PUBLIC

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Enforced disappearance/ Fear for safety/ Torture and ill-treatment

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Zurab Datkhuevich Ilaev (m), aged about 36

Died:

Alvi Ilaev (m)
Azhdan Ilaev (m)

Zurab Datkhuevich Ilaev disappeared on 1 December and may be held at a law enforcement base near the village of Dolinski. Concerns for his safety are heightened by the fact that his two brothers were allegedly killed after being held at the same place.

According to media reports, at around 8pm on 30 November, more than 100 armed masked men surrounded the Ilaev family home in the Pervomaiskii district of Grozny, Chechen Republic. Brothers Alvi and Azhdan Ilaev, their sister Zalina Ilaeva and Azhdan's wife, Khadizhat Ilaeva who was nine months pregnant at the time, were taken to the law enforcement base near the village of Dolinski. At around midnight, their 17-year-old brother was brought to the base. Whilst there, the women reportedly heard their male relatives being beaten nearby.

Early in the morning of 1 December, the women and the younger brother were released. When they arrived home, they reportedly found their house still occupied by armed men who ate and drank from the family's larder and smashed the dishes.

On 2 December, local television reported that two armed fighters had been killed in a clash with the police. The bodies of Alvi and Azhdan Ilaev were shown dressed in camouflage although Amnesty International has received reports that the two had been dressed in civilian clothes when detained. The next day, their mother was called to identify their bodies at the morgue, where she was reportedly told by forensic experts that the bodies bore injuries caused by beatings.

Early on the morning of 1 December, Zurab Ilaev, who works for the fifth detachment of the oil regiment in the Chechen Republic – a police regiment created in 2003 and initially consisting of President Ramzan Kadyrov's guards – was called to work. At 10am that day, his sister called him on his mobile phone. He could not say much but managed to tell her that he was being held at the same place as his two brothers. A witness who spoke to the family, but did not agree to speak to the police or investigators, claims that Zurab Ilaev is still being held at the law enforcement base.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The number of enforced disappearances in the Chechen Republic has gone down over the last two years but such human rights violations have not ceased. Amnesty International is concerned that in many cases of reported extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment by members of the law enforcement forces in Chechnya, the authorities are reluctant to investigate the alleged crime and that such crimes are too often committed with impunity.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Zurab Ilaev, who is reportedly kept at a law enforcement base near the village of Dolinski;
- urging the authorities to conduct full, thorough, independent and impartial inquiry into the circumstances of Zurab Ilaev's detention and confirm whether he is still being held and if so where;
- calling for him to be released immediately and unconditionally, if he is found to be in detention, if he is not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence in line with internationally recognized standards of fair trial;
- reminding the Russian federal and Chechen authorities that Zurab Ilaev should be accorded full protection of Russian and international human rights law, if he is being detained, including the rights to immediate access to a lawyer of his choice; to inform his family of his detention and whereabouts; to be brought promptly before a judge and the right to challenge the lawfulness of his detention;
- urging the authorities to conduct full, thorough, independent and impartial inquiry into the circumstances of death of brothers Alvi and Azhdan Ilaev.

APPEALS TO:

Yurii Yakovlevich Chaika
Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation
Bolshaia Dmitrovka 15a
125993 Moscow, GSP-3, Russian Federation
Fax: + 7 495 692 1725 (try during Moscow office hours, GMT+3)
Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Mikhail Mikhailovich Savchin
Procurator of the Chechen Republic
Office of the Public Procurator of the Chechen Republic
Idrisova str., 42, Grozny, 364000, Chechen Republic, Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8712 22 32 62
Salutation: Dear Procurator

COPIES TO:

Ruslan Shakhaevich Alkhanov
Minister of Interior of the Chechen Republic
Isaeva pr., 21, Grozny, 364051, Chechen republic, Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8712 22 32 33

Nurdi Sadievich Nukhazhiev
Ombudsperson for human rights in the Chechen Republic
Esambaeva pr., 4, Grozny, 364051, Chechen republic, Russian Federation
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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 13 January 2009.