

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 93/06 (EUR 46/015/2006, 18 April 2006) "Disappearance" / Fear of Torture

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION
(Chechen Republic)**

**Bulat Chilaev (m)
Aslan Israilov (m)**

Amnesty International has received new information on the "disappearance" of Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov which may help to identify those responsible for detaining them. However, the authorities have so far failed to act on the information, and the whereabouts of Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov remain unknown.

The two men "disappeared" after they were arbitrarily detained on 9 April by security forces personnel. Following Amnesty International's Urgent Action on their "disappearance", the Chechen Procurator responded to letters from the Urgent Action network with new information about the case.

In his response, the Chechen Procurator states that the two men were stopped by about eight military personnel wearing camouflage, as they drove in Bulat Chilaev's car on the road between the villages of Sernovodsk and Assinovskaia in the Sunzhenskii region of the Chechen Republic. Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov were dragged out of their car, forced into another car and driven off in the direction of the Chechen capital, Grozny. The car of Bulat Chilaev was driven away, too. The Procurator states that the military personnel who detained Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov were driving in two grey cars, both made by VAZ, a Russian car manufacturer: one car was a VAZ 21099 and the other a VAZ 2110. The Procurator gives the registration numbers for the two cars as 487 95 RUS and 591 95 RUS. The Procurator further states that a criminal case under Article 126, part 2, a and zh of the Russian Criminal Code has been opened. This article concerns the abduction of two or more people by a group.

When Amnesty International spoke to colleagues of Bulat Chilaev in June, they were told that about 10 people witnessed the detention of Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov of which at least three had also given a statement to the Procuracy. These statements had included the registration numbers of the cars, and had also referred to a military identity tag found next to where the two men had been dragged out of the car. Allegedly, the owner of the tag with the number 142733, a member of the so-called battalion *Zapad* (West), a military unit under the Russian Ministry of Defence, has claimed he had lost it.

When Svetlana Gannushkina, head of the humanitarian organization *Grazhdanskoe Sodeistvie* (Citizens' Assistance) for which Bulat Chilaev was working, met with the President of the Chechen Republic and the head of the Chechen Procuracy to discuss the "disappearance" of the two men, she was told that the Chechen Procuracy was "not able" to question the owner of the identity tag.

Colleagues and relatives of Bulat Chilaev have contacted a large number of law enforcement and military agencies in the Chechen Republic about his "disappearance", and while there is apparently evidence to link the case with the *Zapad* battalion, the authorities have reportedly so far failed to question either the owner of the identity tag or the people registered as having used the particular cars identified by witnesses.

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

- thanking the Procurator of the Chechen Republic for the response to letters written by Urgent Action network members concerning the reported "disappearance" of Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov;
- expressing concern about the wellbeing and whereabouts of Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov;

- reminding the Procurator that the Russian and Chechen authorities have a duty under international law to act with due diligence to effectively, thoroughly and speedily investigate cases of “disappearances” and abductions, and bring to justice those identified by the investigation as reasonably suspected of perpetrating a crime;
- expressing concern about the alleged failure of the Procuracy to question those suspected of involvement in the "disappearance" of the two men, including the member of the military unit with the identity tag 142733;
- urging the authorities to establish without delay what happened to Bulat Chilaev and Aslan Israilov after they were taken away in cars with the registration numbers 487 95 RUS (a VAZ 21099 model) and 591 95 RUS (a VAZ 2110 model) and provide this information to the relatives of both men;
- urging the authorities to publish a list of all the individuals missing, “disappeared” and abducted during the two Chechen conflicts, and the status of the investigation into each case.

APPEALS TO:

Valerii Alekseevich Kuznetsov
Procurator of the Chechen Republic
Procuracy of the Chechen Republic
Ul. Idrisova 42
g. Grozny
364000
Russian Federation

Fax + 7 8712 22 32 63 (if someone answers please say “fax”)
Tel: + 7 8712 223143 (reception, in case the fax does not go through)
Salutation: Dear Procurator

COPIES TO:

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 September 2006.