

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 46/35/96

UA 196/96 "Disappearance" / Possible extrajudicial execution 6 August 1996

CHECHEN REPUBLIC - RUSSIAN FEDERATION Aslanbek GASSAYEV, fire fighter

Umakh MOGAMEDOV, lawyer

NAGAYEV (first name unknown)

15 other "disappeared" men, names unknown

2 victims of possible extrajudicial execution, names unknown

Eighteen men have "disappeared" since they were seized by Russian OMON special Interior Ministry forces in a dawn raid on their homes on 1 August 1996. Amnesty International is deeply concerned for their safety.

According to media reports quoting eyewitnesses, Russian forces using helicopters, jeeps and armoured personnel carriers raided the settlement of Dolinskoye, some 20 kilometres west of the Chechen capital, Grozny, while residents were still sleeping. They stormed into apartments, shooting indiscriminately, and seized any adult males they could find. The men were led with sacks over their heads to a waiting bus and driven away. They have not been seen since.

Eyewitnesses also claimed that two young men, whose names have not been reported, were shot dead by Russian forces as they slept in a car near the apartment buildings.

Among those who have "disappeared" is Aslanbek Gassayev, a fire fighter. His wife has recounted how she clung to her husband to prevent the Russian forces from taking him, but they threatened to shoot her children unless she let go.

Umakh Mogamedov, a legal consultant at a local state farm, and a man identified as Nagayev, have also been named in reports. All 18 men are believed to be ethnic Chechens.

An official of the pro-Moscow Chechen government in Grozny, quoted by Reuters, has confirmed that 18 men had "disappeared" and two had been killed. He confirmed also that Russian OMON forces were responsible for the raid.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned that the men may have been taken to "filtration" camps. There have been reports of widespread beatings and torture of detainees held in such camps throughout the war in Chechnya.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Massive human rights violations have taken place within the context of the armed conflict in the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic. From the very beginning of the conflict in December 1994 Russian forces have shown disregard for the rules governing armed conflict and the protection of the civilian population. Men, women and children have been the victims of extrajudicial executions and hostage-taking, as well as torture and ill-treatment in detention. Hundreds of people have been detained without trial.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian, English or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to establish, as a matter of urgency, the whereabouts of Aslanbek Gassayev, Umakh Mogamedov, Nagayev and 15 other men seized with them on 1 August 1996, reportedly by Russian OMON forces from Dolinskoye, Chechen Republic;

- if the men are detained, urging that they be safeguarded from torture and ill-treatment and calling for their immediate release unless they are to be promptly charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- calling for an investigation into the alleged extrajudicial execution of two men by Russian OMON forces in Dolinskoye on 1 August 1996, and for anyone found responsible to be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin
Rossiyskaya Federatsiya
g. Moskva
Kreml
Prezidentu Rossiyskoy Federatsii
Yeltsinu B.N

Faxes: +7095 206 51 73

Telegrams: Rossiya, Moskva, Kreml, Prezidentu Yeltsinu

Salutation: Dear President

Russian Federation Minister of the Interior, Col.-Gen. Anatoly Kulikov
Rossiyskaya Federatsiya
g. Moskva
ul. Zhitnaya, 16
Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossiyskoy Federatsii
Ministru Gen.-polk. Kulikovu

Faxes: +7095 230 25 80

Telegrams: Rossiya, Moskva, Ministru vnutrennikh del

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Yevgeny Primakov
Rossiyskaya Federatsiya
g. Moskva 121200
Smolenskaya-Sennaya pl., 32/34
Ministerstvo inostrannykh del RF
Ministru Primakovu Ye.

Faxes: +7095 230 21 30

and to diplomatic representatives of Russia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 September 1996.