

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 46/041/2003

22 May 2003

Further Information on UA 06/03 (EUR 46/005/2003, 8 January 2003) Fear of deportation/fear of torture/unfair trial

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION/
TURKMENISTAN**

**Khudayberdy Orazov (m), former Deputy Prime Minister
and director of the Central Bank of Turkmenistan
Nurmukhammet Khanamov (m), former Turkmen Ambassador to
Turkey
Orazmukhammet Yklymov (m), freelance journalist**

Exiled government critics Khudayberdy Orazov, Nurmukhammet Khanamov and Orazmukhammet Yklymov are no longer in imminent danger of deportation to Turkmenistan, where they would have been at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Khudayberdy Orazov, the former Deputy Prime Minister and Director of the Central Bank of Turkmenistan, arrived in a European country on 21 May. He had been seeking permission to leave the Russian Federation, where he was exiled, since January 2003. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees recognized Khudayberdy Orazov as a refugee on 19 January. By refusing to return Khudayberdy Orazov to Turkmenistan, the Russian authorities acted in line with their obligations under international human rights law, for example Article 3 of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This convention prohibits the return of a person to a country or territory where they may be subjected to torture.

One of Khudayberdy Orazov's supporters told Amnesty International: "Orazov is safe now. We thank you so much for all the work Amnesty International has conducted on Orazov's case. We believe that it was very important for this positive outcome."

Orazmukhammet Yklymov, a freelance journalist, left the Russian Federation in mid-January 2003 on a tourist visa and is currently applying for asylum in Austria. Nurmukhammet Khanamov, the former Turkmen ambassador to Turkey, managed to travel to Western Europe and is also applying for asylum in a European country. Amnesty International supports their asylum claims.

On 29 December 2002, Khudayberdy Orazov and Nurmukhammet Khanamov were sentenced in their absence to 25 years' imprisonment at a grossly unfair trial of the Supreme Court of Turkmenistan. They were convicted of alleged involvement in an armed attack on President Saparmurad Niyazov on 25 November 2002. On 30 December, the two men's sentences were increased to life imprisonment by the People's Council, which is not an independent body, but consists of representatives of the legislative, the executive and the judicial branches of power. The authorities of Turkmenistan had repeatedly asked for Khudayberdy Orazov and Nurmukhammet Orazov to be handed over to Turkmenistan. There were also indications that the authorities were seeking Orazmukhammet Yklymov's deportation to Turkmenistan.

The appalling human rights situation in Turkmenistan has deteriorated even further since the attack on the President in November 2002. There have been widespread allegations of torture and ill-treatment, including of family members of those implicated by the authorities in the attack. Scores of family members were detained, many were evicted from their homes and faced harassment by the authorities; and 59 alleged government opponents have been convicted and sentenced to prison terms of between five years and life imprisonment following grossly unfair trials.

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the network.