

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 60/01/00

UA 02/00 Death Penalty / Fear of imminent execution

4 January 2000

TAJIKISTAN Makhmud Nadzhmiddinov (_____)
Abdumannon Kholmudminov (_____)
Yurabek Ravshanov (_____)

and others

Amnesty International is concerned that a number of people sentenced to death in related cases, including the three men named above, may soon be executed.

Makhmud Nadzhmiddinov, Abdumannon Kholmudminov and Yurabek Ravshanov were sentenced to death at the end of 1999 by Khatlon Regional Court for crimes which included terrorism, murder and smuggling of weapons. Reports indicate that Khatlon Regional Court sentenced one other person to death around the same time and that, on 28 December 1999, two others were sentenced to death in the Khudzhand region. On 29 December, two men were also reportedly sentenced to death by the Supreme Court of Tajikistan, though this may have been upholding death sentences passed down earlier by a court of first instance. More detailed information on such cases, however, is extremely difficult to obtain. Verdicts on co-defendants are still pending.

Amnesty International recently issued an action on behalf of Davlatali Husenov and J. Khojajev, who were also sentenced to death by the Khatlon Regional Court after they were convicted of organizing an illegal armed group and other crimes which included murder, robbery and rape (see Extra 180/99, EUR 60/02/99, 17 December 1999).

According to reports, most of the men are followers of the opposition figure and former Popular Front commander and warlord Makhmud Khudoyberdiyev. They are apparently being tried for involvement in acts of political violence that took place in November 1998 in Qurghonteppa, the regional centre of the southern Khatlon Region, and in the northern Leninabad Region, with the intent of seizing power.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Criminal Code of the former Soviet republic of Tajikistan has 15 articles which carry a possible death sentence. In 1999, at least 15 death sentences were handed down and two people executed, although the real number may be much higher. News of these executions seems to confirm that a reported *de facto* moratorium on the death penalty is no longer in place in Tajikistan.

More than five years of civil war in Tajikistan formally ended in late June 1997 with the signing in Moscow by President Imomali Rakhmonov and United Tajik Opposition (UTO) leader Sayed Abdullo Nuri of a General Agreement on Peace and National Accord. The fighting, however, continued after the peace accord. Makhmud Khudoyberdiyev was one of the warlords involved in the struggle for power.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/E-mails/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian or in your own language:

- urging the President to use his constitutional authority to commute the death sentences passed down to Makhmud Nadzhmiddinov, Abdumannon Kholmudminov and Yurabek Ravshanov, as well as others that come before him;
- urging that a moratorium be imposed on death sentences and executions pending a comprehensive review of the death penalty;

- expressing sympathy for the victims of crime and their families, but pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments, and is brutalizing to all those involved in its application.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Imamali Sharipovich RAKHMUNOV
Respublika Tajikistan, g. Dushanbe, Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki
Prezidentu RAKHMUNOVU I.Sh.
Tajikistan

Telegrams: Prezidentu Rakhmonovu, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

E-mails: primer@pds.td.silk.org

Salutation: Dear President Rakhmonov

Procurator General of the Republic of Tajikistan, Salomiddin SHAROPOV
Respublika Tajikistana, 734022 g. Dushanbe, prospekt A. Sino, 126, Prokuratura
Respubliki
Generalnomu prokuroru SHAROPOVU S.
Tajikistan

Telegrams: Generalnomu prokuroru, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Chair of the Clemency Commission of the Tajikistan Supreme Council
Respublika Tajikistana, 734051 g. Dushanbe, pr. Rudaki 42, Komissiya po voprosam
pomilovaniya Verkhovnogo Soveta
Predsedatelyu
Tajikistan

Telegrams: Predsedatelyu, Komissiya pomilovaniya, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Salutation: Dear Chairman

COPIES TO:

Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan, Ubaydulo A. DAVLATOV
Respublika Tajikistana, g. Dushanbe, Verkhovny Sud Respubliki Tajikistan
Predsedatelyu DAVLATOVU U.A.
Tajikistan

Chairman of the Tajikistan Supreme Council Committee for Legislation and Human Rights, Abdumannon KHOLIKOV
Respublika Tajikistana, 734051 g. Dushanbe, pr. Rudaki 42, Komitet po
zakonodatelstvu i pravam cheloveka pri Majlis Oli
Predsedatelyu KHOLIKOVU S.
Tajikistan

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, Talbak Nazarovich NAZAROV
Respublika Tajikistana, 734051 g. Dushanbe, Rudaki 42, Ministerstvo inostrannykh
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Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Russia, R.Z. MIRZOYEV
Rossiya, 121069 g. Moskva, Skatertny per. 19, Posolstvo Respubliki Tajikistan,
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and to diplomatic representatives of Tajikistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 February 2000.