

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 33/98

Fear of imminent execution

30 April 1998

UZBEKISTAN Javdad SALIKHOV (in Russian, _____)

Ziyavutdin KASYMKHAJAYEV (in Russian, _____
_____)

Javdad Salikhov and Ziyavutdin Kasymkhajayev have recently been sentenced to death and may face imminent execution.

An appeal to the Supreme Court against their sentences is believed to have been turned down leaving a petition for clemency to the President of Uzbekistan the only option left to them. It has been reported that many executions are carried out within ten days of the petition for clemency being turned down by the President of Uzbekistan, and sometimes within as little as three days.

According to an Uzbek television report shown on 24 April 1998, Javdad Salikhov and Ziyavutdin Kasymkhajayev received the death sentence for the murder of four of Javdad Salikhov's family members, including his mother. The two men reportedly carried out the murders "with the help of hired killers", whose identity has not been established. Javdad Salikhov was alleged to have let the killers into his house, to have delivered the fatal blow to his mother and then to have injured himself in an attempt to appear a victim of the attack.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A new criminal code introduced in Uzbekistan in 1995 retains the death penalty for 13 offences. Although the Uzbek authorities do not disclose statistics regarding the use of the death penalty, unofficial sources allege that a very high number of executions are carried out -- human rights monitors in the country claim that at least one execution takes place each week at the main prison in Tashkent. At least 10 death sentences are known to have been passed in 1997, but the total figure is believed to be much higher.

Amnesty International has consistently pressed the Uzbek authorities to reduce the scope of the death penalty as a step towards total abolition. The organization has also asked that they impose a moratorium on death sentences and executions pending a review of this punishment and that they publish comprehensive statistics on the application of the death penalty. It has also appealed for commutation of all death sentences which have come to its attention -- so far with little success.

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

- urging the President of Uzbekistan to use his constitutional authority to commute the death sentences passed on Javdad Salikhov and Ziyavutdin Kasymkhajayev, and all other death sentences that come before him;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of crime, 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:

Please note: Fax tones may be difficult to obtain at certain times

The President of Uzbekistan, Islam Abduganievich Karimov:

Respublika Uzbekistan
700000 g. Tashkent
pr. Uzbekistansky
Rezidentsiya Prezidenta
Prezidentu Karimovu I.A.
Uzbekistan

Telegrams: Prezidentu Karimovu I.A., 700000 Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Faxes: + 7 3712 (1) 39 55 25 / (1) 39 54 00

Salutation: Dear President Karimov

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COPIES TO:

Head of the Clemency Department at the President's Office, Nurmat Akhmanov:

Respublika Uzbekistan
700000 g. Tashkent
Apparat Prezidenta
Respubliki Uzbekistan
Otdel po voprosam pomilovaniya
Zaveduyuchshemu otdelom Akhmanovu N.
Uzbekistan

Oliy Majlis (Parliamentary) Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Sayora Rashidova:

Respublika Uzbekistan
700008 g. Tashkent
pl. Mustakillik, 2
Oliy Majlis Respubliki Uzbekistan
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Rashidovoy S.
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Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Khafizovich Komilov

Respublika Uzbekistan
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and to diplomatic representatives of Uzbekistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 May 1998.