

URGENT ACTION

UZBEKISTANI WRITER FREE AFTER 14 YEARS

Writer Mamadali Makhmudov was released on 19 April after serving 14 years in prison in cruel, inhuman and degrading conditions in Uzbekistan. The day of his release he returned to his home in Taskent, the Uzbekistani capital, where he met his grandchildren for the first time.

On 8 April 2013, **Mamadali Makhmudov** was sentenced to an additional three-year prison term for allegedly violating prison rules according to, Article 221 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan (“disobedience to legitimate orders of administration of institution of execution of penalty”). After receiving his sentence he wrote a letter addressed to the President of Uzbekistan asking to be released on medical grounds due to his bad health condition.

At the appeal stage against his new sentence he was released on medical grounds.

Mamadali Makhmudov was informed on 5 March 2013 that the prosecutor had signed an indictment against him for allegedly violating prison rules a total of 31 times. Mamadali Makhmudov had not previously been informed by the prison authorities about any violation that he was alleged to have committed. He was due to be released from detention in February 2013 after serving 14 years in prison. His family feared that he might not survive a further term in prison as he is suffering from tuberculosis, high blood pressure and general weakness. He suffered a heart attack in early April.

International organizations, including Amnesty International, had raised their concerns about his deteriorating health with the Uzbekistani authorities as well as international governmental organizations, such as the EU and the UN, and foreign governments. Human rights defenders believe that Mamadali Makhmudov's early release was the result of this increased international pressure on the Uzbekistani authorities.

Amnesty International will continue to monitor the development of the case of Mamadali Makhmudov and respond accordingly to developments.

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

Name: Mamadali Makhmudov

Gender m/f: m

This is the first update of UA 75/13. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR62/001/2013/en>

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