

AI Index: PRE 01/073/2012  
10 February 2012

## **Elections in Turkmenistan with human rights suppressed**

As Turkmenistan's citizens prepare to vote in the third presidential elections since 1991 Amnesty International remains deeply concerned at the continued refusal to allow independent human rights observers access to the country.

Serious human rights violations such as torture and ill-treatment continue to be committed in detention facilities and severe restrictions remain on freedom of movement and expression, political activism, faith and many other fundamental rights.

“Turkmenistan remains closed to international scrutiny by choice. No independent international organization has been granted access to carry out research or monitoring. Such an atmosphere stifles critical voices and deprives people of their right to freedom of expression,” said John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Deputy Programme Director.

Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has been president since the country's last president-for-life died in office in December 2006. Saparmurad Niyazov won the first contest in 1992 with 99.5 percent of the vote. In February 2007, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, who at the time was acting president, took 89 percent of the vote. Now he is vying for the presidency with seven other candidates.

**To learn more about Amnesty International's concerns in relation to human rights violations in Turkmenistan, please see:**

[\*Key human rights challenges facing Turkmenistan\*](#) (EUR 61/002/2012)

[\*Urgent Action on Geldy Kyarizov\*](#) (EUR 61/001/2012)

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