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Russia: Journalist killed after appearing in “assassination list”

The Russian authorities must urgently investigate the killing of a journalist this morning in the North Caucasus, Amnesty International said.

The authorities must do all in their power to protect activists, lawyers and reporters from intimidation and violence.

“Reporting on injustice, human rights violations by members of security forces and corruption in the North Caucasus is a life threatening job,” said John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Director at Amnesty International.

“Authorities in Russia must stop looking the other way when it comes to attacks on those who dare to speak out about human rights and instead, ensure those responsible for the abuses face the courts.”

Journalist Akhmednabi Akhmednabiev was assassinated by an unknown gunman near his home in the village of Semender in Dagestan, Russian Federation, earlier today.

Akhmednabiev’s name and that of another journalist killed in December 2011 appeared on a threatening flier produced by anonymous authors and distributed in Makhachkala, in September 2009.

The flier made death threats against several independent journalists, lawyers and human rights defenders accusing them of being supporters of armed groups. Those behind the threats have never been identified.

This was not the first attempt on Akhmednabiev’s life.

In January 2013, a gunman shot at him four times. The authorities later opened an investigation into the incident but described the attempted assassination as “destruction of property”.

A year earlier, the journalist received an anonymous death threat on his mobile phone.