



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

UZBEKISTAN: APPEAL CASES

Make Europe and Central Asia a Death Penalty – Free Zone!

25 November 2004; AI Index: EUR 62/027/2004; public

The case of Sodik Kodirov (m), born 1974

Sodik Kodirov is believed to be in imminent danger of execution. His allegations that he was tortured and raped in pre-trial detention were reportedly ignored in court.

Sodik Kodirov was sentenced to death on charges including “premeditated, aggravated murder” by Tashkent city court on 7 December 2003.

Sodik Kodirov’s mother told Amnesty International (AI): “During the investigation my son wasn’t only tortured, he was also raped ... When I saw my son in detention on 10 June 2003, he didn’t even recognize me. He was so badly beaten that he couldn’t walk unaided...” She alleges that investigators used a sharp object to injure her son: “When I saw him he had cuts all over his body as a result of the torture.” She added: “My son spoke about the torture in court but the judge simply ignored his words and said he was trying to escape responsibility.”



Sodik Kodirov’s mother told AI: “When I saw my son in detention... he was so badly beaten that he couldn’t walk unaided.”

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His mother also reported that the judge told her not to attend the trial: “If I attend the trial, he said, the relatives of the victims would kill me and my son right there in court. He told me to think of my other four children as Sodik would die anyway.”

On 12 May 2004 the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee urged the Uzbek authorities to stay Sodik Kodirov’s execution while the Committee considered allegations that he had been tortured, and suffered other serious human rights violations. The Uzbek authorities have ignored similar interventions in at least 14 cases, in violation of the country’s obligations as a party to the first Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

When his mother visited Sodik Kodirov in prison on 14 October he told her that prison officials had threatened him: “You will not live longer than 12 November. The stay of your execution requested by the United Nations runs out that day.” There was no way of knowing whether the execution was indeed scheduled for that day as in Uzbekistan neither death row prisoners nor their relatives or lawyers are officially informed of the date of the execution in advance. The (UN) Human Rights Committee is still considering Sodik Kodirov’s case.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In September 2001, President Islam Karimov stated publicly that around 100 people were executed in Uzbekistan each year. As vital information on the application of the death penalty is treated as a secret, the true figures are not known, but several local human rights groups there are over 200 executions annually.

Amnesty International regularly receives credible allegations of unfair trials, and the use of torture and ill-treatment, often to extract “confessions”, from Uzbekistan. Following his visit to

Uzbekistan in November - December 2002, Theo van Boven, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, concluded that “torture or similar ill-treatment is systematic” in Uzbekistan. In his February 2003 report, he noted that “the abolition of the death penalty would be a positive step towards respect for the prohibition of torture and other forms of ill-treatment.”

Theo van Boven also stated that the “complete secrecy surrounding the date of execution, the absence of any formal notification prior to and after the execution and the refusal to hand over the body for burial are believed to be intentional acts, fully mindful of causing family members turmoil, fear and anguish over the fate of their loved one(s).” He described the treatment of family members as “malicious and amounting to cruel and inhuman treatment”.

TAKE ACTION NOW!

Please send appeals to the Uzbek authorities and to diplomatic representatives of Uzbekistan accredited to your country to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Russian, Uzbek or your own language:

- urging the President to grant clemency to Sodik Kodirov and all other death row prisoners;
- calling on the authorities to investigate thoroughly and impartially allegations that Sodik Kodirov was tortured and ill-treated in pre-trial detention and bring to justice anyone found responsible;
- stating that you know of 14 cases in which death row prisoners were executed even though the (UN) Human Rights Committee had asked the Uzbek authorities to stay their executions while it considered their cases;
- urging the authorities to give you guarantees that nobody will be executed whose case is under consideration by the (UN) Human Rights Committee;
- urging the authorities to promptly introduce a moratorium on death sentences and executions.

Please note that it may be difficult to send faxes. If a voice answers during office hours, repeat 'fax' until connected; fax machines may be switched off outside office hours (GMT+5)

Uzbek President

Islam A. KARIMOV;
Prezident Respubliki Uzbekistan;
Prezidentskaya rezidentsiya;
Ulitsa Uzbekistanskaia 43;
Tashkent; 700163
UZBEKISTAN

Salutation: Dear President Karimov

Uzbek Foreign Affairs Minister

Sodik S. SAFOYEV,
Ministr inostrannykh del;
Ministerstvo inostrannykh del;
Ploshchad Mustakillik 5;
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Fax: (+998 71) 139 15 17

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Uzbek General Procurator

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Generalny Prokuror Respubliki Uzbekistan;
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Tashkent; 700047
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Salutation: Dear Procurator General

PLEASE SEND ANY REPLIES FROM THE UZBEK AUTHORITIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. (South Caucasus and Central Asia Research and Campaign Team; Amnesty International; 1 Easton Street; London WC1 X ODW; United Kingdom)