

URGENT ACTION

FATHER AND SON FACE EXTRADITION TO UZBEKISTAN

Two refugees have been detained at Domodedovo airport, Moscow, Russia, since 8 March. They are facing extradition to Uzbekistan where they are at a risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Kholzhigit Sanakulov, 64 years old, and his son, **Sherzod Sanakulov**, 31, originally from Uzbekistan, were detained at Domodedovo airport, Moscow, Russian Federation, on 8 March upon arrival from the Netherlands, where they have lived since 2008. They were visiting Moscow to attend a wedding and they had travelled to Russia several times over the last few years without ever having been detained at border control. Both men are recognized refugees and live in the Netherlands. According to their lawyer, their detention was based on documents received by the Russian authorities from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Uzbekistan notifying them about a criminal case against Kholzhigit Sanakulov and Sherzod Sanakulov and a request to detain them for extradition purposes. On 10 March the Domodedovo Town Court ruled to extend their arrest for 72 hours and on 13 March the Court ruled to extend their arrest for another 30 days, in order to allow time for the Prosecutor General's Office to review the extradition requests. Kholzhigit Sanakulov has diabetes and on 11 March he asked for qualified medical assistance, but he still has not received any medical attention.

Kholzhigit Sanakulov and Sherzod Sanakulov left Uzbekistan in 2006, after they learnt that a criminal case on charges of fraud and embezzlement had been initiated against them. They believe the case to be fabricated. They fled to Kazakhstan in fear of their lives and freedom. In 2007, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Almaty recognised them as refugees and in 2008 they were resettled to the Netherlands.

Kholzhigit Sanakulov was a lecturer at several universities in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, focusing on philosophy and the history of Central Asia. Sherzod Sanakulov used to work assisting young people in Uzbekistan to find suitable study courses in Europe and in the USA and helping them with travel arrangements.

Please write immediately in Russian, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to halt the extradition proceedings of Kholzhigit Sanakulov and Sherzod Sanakulov to Uzbekistan, and allow them to return to the Netherlands without obstruction should they desire to do so;
- Urging them to ensure that Kholzhigit Sanakulov receives adequate medical care, including any specialist treatment needed for his diabetes;
- Urging the authorities to comply with their obligations under international human rights law, including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, in particular the prohibition of refoulement, and uphold the Russian Federation's Supreme Court's Decree Number 11 of 14 June 2012, not to forcibly return anyone to a country where they would be at risk of serious human rights violations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 APRIL 2014 TO:

Prosecutor General

Yurii Ya. Chaika
Bolshaia Dmitrovka 15 A
125993 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 692 17 25

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor-General

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sergei Lavrov
Ul. Smolenskaya-Sennaia pl, 32/34
119200 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 499 244 34 48
Email: 3dsng@mid.ru

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has closely monitored the human rights situation in Uzbekistan since its independence from the USSR in 1991. Amnesty International has continued to receive persistent and credible allegations of routine and pervasive torture and other ill-treatment of persons in custody by security forces during arrest, transfer, in police custody and in pre-trial detention, and by security forces and prison personnel in post-conviction detention facilities. Methods of torture or other ill-treatment in detention described by former prisoners, including released human rights defenders, include beating detainees with batons, iron rods, bottles filled with water while they are handcuffed to radiators or suspended from ceiling hooks, asphyxiation with plastic bags or gasmasks with the air supply turned off, inserting needles under finger or toenails, electroshock, dousing with freezing water, and rape of both men and women. Amnesty International's research shows that in the vast majority of cases the authorities have failed to conduct effective investigations into allegations of torture or other ill-treatment by detainees.

The use of torture and other ill-treatment in Uzbekistan has been recognised by the European Court of Human Rights. The Court has been faced with determining the risk of torture and other serious human rights violations in Uzbekistan in cases relating to challenges to orders to forcibly transfer individuals from Council of Europe Member States back to Uzbekistan. The European Court of Human Rights has issued at least 20 judgments in the past four years prohibiting the return of criminal suspects to Uzbekistan on the basis of a risk of torture.

Amnesty International's research has shown that Uzbekistan has relentlessly pursued the extradition or otherwise forcible return of hundreds of individuals it suspects of having organized or participated in a number of alleged violent acts in Uzbekistan including bomb explosions in Tashkent in 1999 and 2004; the Andizhan protests in 2005 – when security forces fired on thousands of mostly unarmed demonstrators, including women and children - and other violent acts, including bombings and shootings by armed groups, in Tashkent and the Fergana Valley in 2009. The government also has requested the extradition of political opponents, government critics and wealthy individuals out of favour with the regime. Many of these extradition requests are based on fabricated or unreliable evidence. The government has offered “diplomatic assurances” to sending states to secure the returns, pledging free access to detention centres for independent monitors and diplomats. In practice, they have not honoured these guarantees.

Name: Kholzhigit Sanakulov and Sherzod Sanakulov

Gender m/f: m

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