

# URGENT ACTION

## HUNGER STRIKE PRISONER FACES FORCE FEEDING

**After announcing a hunger strike on 19 May, Mansur Mingelov, 39, who was sentenced to 22-year imprisonment after unfair trial, is being threatened with force feeding.**

On 19 May **Mansur Mingelov**, who is serving 22-year sentence in LBK/11 prison in Seidi, Lebap province in eastern Turkmenistan, informed the head of the prison about his refusal to eat or drink. Mansur Mingelov is demanding a meeting with the representatives of the Prosecutor General's office and the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan and retrial of his case. A day later, on 20 May, a prosecutor from Turkmenabat, eastern Turkmenistan, visited Mansur Mingelov in prison. He threatened Mansur Mingelov with force feeding if he did not stop his hunger strike. Force feeding a mentally competent hunger-striker without medical supervision and without any plausible medical rationale is unjustifiable. Force feeding under these circumstances could constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

According to a confidential source Mansur Mingelov denies all charges and maintains his innocence. Mansur Mingelov has faced increased pressure in prison after he spoke out about the unfairness of his trial and his possible illegal transfer to the high security prison Ovadan-Depe. Prison authorities threatened to cut off visits with his family and limit the size of parcels. On 29 April, officers of the State Service for Security Protection of Healthy Society of Turkmenistan (former State Drug Control Service) visited Mansur Mingelov's father. The officers took away his mobile telephone, copied all of the contacts and text messages and then left.

Mansur Mingelov was first arrested in connection to a criminal case involving his brother on 6 June 2012, a day after his brother had been arrested. On 6 June Mansur Mingelov was allegedly beaten by officers of the State Service for Security Protection of Healthy Society of Turkmenistan. He also witnessed his brother being beaten by security services during interrogation. On 10 September 2012 both were sentenced after an unfair trial.

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

- Calling on the authorities to respect the right of prisoners to freedom of expression, and not to seek to punish them for carrying out a hunger strike or to coerce them to end it and to ensure that any hunger striking prisoner has access at all times to adequate health care;
- Calling on the authorities to instigate a prompt retrial of Mansur Mingelov in line with international fair trial standards, including allowing him access to a lawyer of his choice;
- Urging the authorities to initiate a prompt, impartial and effective investigation into all allegations of torture and that any State Drug Control Service officers found responsible for torture and/or ill-treatment are brought to justice;
- Calling on the authorities to stop harassment and intimidation of Mansur Mingelov and his relatives.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 JULY 2014 TO:**

#### Prosecutor General

Amanmyrat Khallyyev  
Ul. 2005 (Seidi) 4  
744000 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

**Salutation: Prosecutor General**

#### President of Turkmenistan

Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov  
Presidential Palace  
744000 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan  
Fax: +993 12 93 51 12 (please keep  
trying between 10-1500 GMT)

**Salutation: Dear President**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Minister of Interior

Isgender Mulikov  
Ul. 2033 (pr. Mahtumkuli) 85  
744000 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan  
Fax: +993 12 39 1944 (please keep  
trying between 10 - 1500 GMT)

**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. This is the first update of UA 97/14. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR61/002/2014/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mansur Mingelov and his brother were sentenced after an unfair trial on 10 September 2012 on charges of involving minors in socially inappropriate actions, production and distribution of pornography, contraband, production or distribution of drugs under articles 156,164, 254 and 292 of the Criminal Code of Turkmenistan. According to a confidential source Mansur Mingelov reports that he only saw his state-appointed lawyer twice, once when they first met and then during the trial itself. During the investigation and trial he was not allowed to call his relatives nor change his lawyer. After his arrest, Mansur Mingelov was forcibly moved to a regional drug rehabilitation centre and kept there for 15 days, and released on 22 June 2012. He then lodged complaints about his brother's torture and ill-treatment with the Prosecutor General's Office and the President of Turkmenistan. Two police officers were subsequently dismissed. From 25 June and up until 2 August 2012, when Mansur Mingelov was arrested again, he collected evidence of torture and ill-treatment from other individuals, most of whom were of Baloch origin living in Mary province, south-east Turkmenistan.

Mansur Mingelov has recorded 11 incidents of the torture and other ill-treatment from within the Baloch ethnic community in Mary province. He recorded the information on CD disks and sent them to the US Embassy in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Prosecutor General's Office. According to Mansur Mingelov these reports of torture and other ill-treatment included allegations of law enforcement officers using chisels on detainees' bones, pulling of the scrotum with pliers, electric shocks, and the use of chair legs and plastic bottles for beatings. He described seeing a case with tools explicitly meant for torture at the State Service for Security Protection of Healthy Society of Turkmenistan in Ashgabat.

According to some Turkmenistani human rights defenders and journalists in exile, torture and ill-treatment is widespread in Turkmenistan. However the climate of fear is such that few people dare report incidents of torture and ill-treatment that occur in detention, or even talk about it following their release from detention.

There have reportedly been no cases of any criminal prosecutions for the crime of torture in Turkmenistan and similarly no cases where evidence obtained through torture or other ill-treatment has been excluded from court proceedings. In its Concluding Observations on Turkmenistan, the UN Committee against Torture (CAT) noted that "the absence of comprehensive or disaggregated data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions and convictions in cases of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement personnel severely hampers the identification of possible patterns of abuse requiring attention", and recommended that the Turkmenistani authorities compile and provide clear statistical data on such issues.

Other methods of torture and other ill-treatment reported to Amnesty International over the past ten years have included: pushing needles under fingernails; electric shocks; asphyxiation using a plastic bag or gas mask with the air supply cut; sexual violence; forcibly administering psychotropic drugs; beating with batons, truncheons, or plastic bottles filled with water; punching; kicking; food and drink deprivation; and exposure to extreme cold. Amnesty International has also received recent reports of beatings, rape and forced administration of drugs occurring inside prisons.

In its Concluding Observations in June 2011 the UN CAT expressed concern at reports of violations of fundamental safeguards against torture such as the right of prompt access to a defence lawyer upon detention.

Name: Mansur Mingelov  
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 97/14 Index: EUR 61/004/2014 Issue Date: 22 May 2014