

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 46/11/97

UA 123/97 Execution / Fear of further executions

29 April 1997

CHECHEN REPUBLIC, RUSSIAN FEDERATION Ibrahim (family name not known)

Ibrahim, an ethnic Chechen from the settlement of Bachi-Yurt, was publicly executed in the Chechen Republic last week. His execution - by having his throat slit by a group of hooded men - was reportedly shown throughout the Chechen Republic on public television. Ibrahim had earlier been found guilty of the murder of three people, reportedly while he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Sharip Yusupov, the official representative of the Chechen Republic in Moscow, is reported as saying that Ibrahim was "a brute, who got everything he deserved", and that the execution was televised in order to demonstrate the "inevitability of punishment". He added that relatives of the victims were among the executioners.

Amnesty International does not know when or where the trial took place, whether Ibrahim had access to a defence lawyer of his own choice, and whether he was able to appeal against the sentence to a court of higher jurisdiction.

A new Criminal Code developed in the Chechen Republic recently introduces the rules and regulations of the Islamic religious tradition, the Shari'a law, into the judicial practice of the Chechen republic. According to newspaper reports, this was the first public execution conducted in the Chechen Republic by the Islamic Shari'a court.

Amnesty International fears that other people may face similar public execution in the near future.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In August 1996 a peace agreement ended the hostilities in the armed conflict in the Chechen republic, which began in 1991 when the Chechen Republic claimed its independence. Under this peace agreement the region's final political status has been deferred for five years, but the Chechen leadership has insisted upon Chechnya's independence from the Russian legal and governmental institutions, including the laws of the Russian Federation.

However, regardless of its current legal status, the Chechen republic still remains bound by the international human rights obligations of the Russian Federation, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture. Amnesty International does not promote or oppose any particular system of justice, urging only that it conforms to internationally accepted standards.

Amnesty International is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and without reservation on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian, English or your own language:

- expressing outrage at the execution of Ibrahim;
- expressing sympathy with the victims of violent crime and their families, but referring to the 1988 Study for the United Nations on the death penalty

which concluded that the death penalty is not an effective deterrent for violent crime;

- urging the Chechen authorities to amend all articles in the Criminal Code which provide for the death penalty, and replace them with punishments which do not violate international human rights standards;
- urging the authorities to abolish the death penalty and grant clemency to all death row prisoners;
- condemning the public broadcasting of the execution on television, as this only serves to perpetuate a circle of violence.

APPEALS TO:

The president of the Chechen Republic, Aslan Maskhadov
Russian Federation
Chechenskaya Respublika Ichkeriya
Grozny

Administratsiya Presidenta
Prezidentu Maskhadovu

**Telegrams: Rossiskaya Federatsiya, Chechenskaya Respublika Ichkeriya,
Chechnya, Prezidentu**

Salutation: Dear President

The Representative of the Chechen Republic in Moscow, Sharip Tahaievich Yusupov
Russian Federation
Moskva 121002

Denezhny pereulok d.12

Predstavitelstvo Chechenskoy respubliky Ichkeriya

Chrezvychainomu i Polnomochnemu Predstavitel'yu Chechenskoy respubliky

Ichkeriya v Rossiskoy Respublike

Yusupovu Sh. T.

**Telegrams: Rossiskaya, Moskva 121002, Predstavitelu Chechenskoy Respubliki
Ichkeriya Yusupovu**

Fax: +7 095 241 73 80

Salutation: Dear Sharip Tahaievich

NO COPIES

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after **20 June 1997**.