

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of torture

8 March 1993

**TADZHIKISTAN: Mirbobo Mirrakhimov
 Akhmadsho Kamilov
 Khayriddin Kasymov
 Khurshed Nazarov**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Mirbobo Mirrakhimov, Akhmadsho Kamilov, Khayriddin Kasymov and Khurshed Nazarov, who were arrested in January 1993 and are being held at investigation-isolation prison (in Russian Sledizolator or SIZO) number one of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Dushanbe, the capital of Tadjikistan. Amnesty International fears that they are being tortured in detention.

Mirbobo Mirrakhimov is the former chairman of Tadjikistan's state radio and television company, Akhmadsho Kamilov is the former director of national television, and Khayriddin Kasymov and Khurshed Nazarov are television journalists. They fled Tadjikistan after government forces entered Dushanbe on 10 December 1992, but all were detained by local police in neighbouring states (Mirbobo Mirrakhimov in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, and Akhmadsho Kamilov, Khayriddin Kasymov and Khurshed Nazarov in Osh, Kyrgyzstan) and were handed over to the Tadjik authorities. They have all reportedly been charged with "conspiracy to overthrow the government using the mass information media". Akhmadsho Kamilov, Khayriddin Kasymov and Khurshed Nazarov have reportedly also been charged with the theft of videotapes which allegedly contained evidence of torture and killings by forces loyal to the new government of Tadjikistan, and which they were attempting to smuggle to the West via Russia. Mirbobo Mirrakhimov has also been charged with slander of a former speaker of parliament.

It is reported that all four men have been severely beaten during interrogation: Khayriddin Kasymov has reportedly suffered a broken nose and jaw and had several teeth knocked out. Furthermore, it has been alleged that for long periods Akhmadsho Kamilov is not allowed by his interrogators to sleep or to sit. All four men have reportedly been denied access to medical treatment and to lawyers.

Akhmadsho Kamilov was the subject of UA 413/92 (EUR 60/02/92, 31 December 1992, where his name is given as Akhmad Shakh Kamil) following reports that he was among people who had been extrajudicially executed in Dushanbe. A follow-up to that UA was issued February 10 1992 (EUR 57/02/93) after the government announced that he was under arrest.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Armed conflict broke out in Dushanbe in May 1992 between supporters and opponents

of President Rakhmon Nabiyev, a former Communist Party leader. This forced the President to include opposition Democratic Party and Islamic Renaissance Party representatives in a coalition government. Nevertheless, fighting spread to southern districts, and escalated after Nabiyev was forced by his opponents to resign in September. In an attempt to stop the civil war the government of acting President Akbarsho Iskandarov resigned in November and a special session of parliament, still communist dominated, was convened in the city of Khodzhent. This dismissed Iskandarov and installed Imamali Rakhmonov as parliamentary speaker and head of state. Forces apparently supporting the Islamic elements in the outgoing government refused to relinquish control of Dushanbe, which was

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besieged by forces loyal to the new government created by the Khodzhent meeting. After fierce fighting the city fell on 10 December.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Mirbobob Mirrahimov, Akhmadsho Kamilov, Khayriddin Kasymov and Khurshed Nazarov who were arrested in January and are being held in SIZO number one of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Dushanbe;

- urging that these four men are not subject to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;

- appealing for them to be granted access to lawyers and to medical treatment;

- asking for further information about the charges against them.

APPEALS TO

1) Chairman of the Supreme Council, Imamali Rakhmonov

Respublika Tadjikistan

g. Dushanbe

Verkhovny sovet Respubliki Tadjikistan

Predsedatelyu Rakhmonovu I.

Telegrams: Tadjikistan, Dushanbe, Predsedatelyu VS Rakhmonovu I.

Faxes: + 3772 22 69 71

Salutation: Dear Chairman

2) Procurator General of Tadjikistan, Mamadnazar Soliyev

Respublika Tadjikistan

g. Dushanbe

Prokuratura Respubliki Tadjikistan

Generalnomu prokuroru Soliyevu M.

Telegrams: Tadjikistan, Dushanbe, Gen. Prokuroru Soliyevu M.

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

3) Minister of Internal Affairs, Yakub Salimov

Respublika Tadjikistan

g. Dushanbe

MVD Respubliki Tadjikistan

Ministru Salimovu Ya.

Telegrams: Tadjikistan, Dushanbe, MVD, Ministru Salimovu Ya.

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister, Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov
Respublika Tadjhikistan
g. Dushanbe
Kabinet Ministrov
Premyer-ministru Abdullodzhanovu A.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rashid Olimov
Respublika Tadjhikistan
g. Dushanbe
MID Respubliki Tadjhikistan
Ministru Olimovu R.

and to diplomatic representatives of Tadjhikistan accredited to your country (these are usually to be found at the Embassy of the Russian Federation, the former Soviet embassy).

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 April 1993.