

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 138/05 (EUR 62/012/2005, 25 May 2005) and follow-up (EUR 62/001/2006, 13 February 2006) – Fear of torture or ill-treatment/Prisoner of conscience

UZBEKISTAN

Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov (m), human rights defender

Human rights defender Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov was released on 4 February under a presidential amnesty.

He had been serving a seven-year sentence, handed down in January 2006 after what was in effect a secret trial, for "slander," "spreading information with the aim of causing panic" and other offences.

The chairperson of the independent human rights group *Apelliatsia* (Appeal), he had been monitoring protests in the eastern town of Andizhan which escalated on 12-13 May 2005. Troops allegedly fired indiscriminately into the crowd, killing and wounding many, mainly unarmed civilians. The government said that 170 people were killed, but unofficial sources, including *Apelliatsia*, estimated the death toll as at least 500. International media coverage cited Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov's account of the events, providing a stark contrast to the official account provided by the authorities

No further action is requested from the UA Network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.