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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 206/94

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Brazil - 14 September - PLEASE NOTE THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL RELEASE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94. Details of where and when the launch will be in Brazil are to be sent to you in the next news service.

Kosovo - 19 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Indonesia - 28 September - LAUNCH OF CAMPAIGN

Algeria - first week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

France - 12 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Zaire - 14 September - Targeted for French-speaking news agencies and French-speaking African media

Togo - 15 September - See news service 168/94

Turkey - 14 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 181/94

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**UZBEKISTAN: NEW CRIMINAL CHARGE AGAINST JAILED OPPOSITION LEADER A BLATANT PLOY TO ENSURE HIS LONG-TERM IMPRISONMENT AND SILENCE**

Pulat Akhunov, an opposition leader who is currently half way through a four-and-a-half year prison term in Uzbekistan, is facing an additional three-year sentence for "wilfully disobeying" the prison administration.

Amnesty International believes that this new criminal charge is a ploy by the Uzbekistan authorities to ensure Pulat Akhunov's long-term imprisonment.

Pulat Akhunov, 32, is a deputy chairman of the now-outlawed opposition movement Birlik (Unity), and was the only Uzbek opposition member of the last USSR parliament. Arrested in July 1992, he was convicted of "malicious hooliganism", a charge which Amnesty International strongly suspects was fabricated. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison. In 1993 he was charged with illegal possession of narcotics and assaulting a prison guard, and given an additional three-year sentence. Amnesty International has repeatedly called for judicial reviews of Pulat Akhunov's criminal convictions.

For the past year Pulat Akhunov has been serving his sentence in the notorious Kyzyltepa labour camp, said to have some of the worst prison conditions in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is still using the old Soviet criminal code. The offence of "wilful disobedience" of a prison administration was introduced into the criminal code in 1983. At that time Amnesty International expressed concern that the terms of the law were open to arbitrary interpretation, that prisoners charged with this offence would not get a fair trial and that they were especially vulnerable to wrongful conviction.

Amnesty International fears that the bringing of this charge against Pulat Akhunov will result in an unfair trial.

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