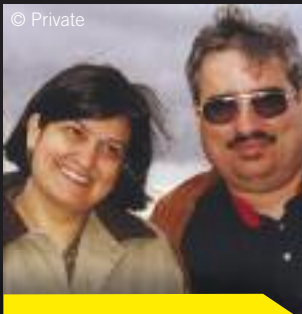


OPPOSITION ACTIVISTS BEHIND BARS

Ebrahim Sharif with his wife.

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Fourteen opposition activists in Bahrain have been given prison sentences by a military court. Their arrests followed anti-government protests in February and March 2011. Most were arrested in the night by security officers who raided their homes and took them to an undisclosed location, where they were held incommunicado for weeks.

Many of the 14 defendants say they were tortured during the early days of their detention, during interrogation by officers from the National Security Agency. Many of the charges against them were vague and may not amount to a recognizably criminal offence under international law. The 14 defendants were subjected to unfair trials and sentenced on 22 June 2011.

Seven of the activists were sentenced to life in prison. They are Hassan Mshaima, 'Abdelwahab Hussain, 'Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-

Singace, Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad, Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad and Sa'eed Mirza al-Nuri. Four people, Mohammad Hassan Jawwad, Mohammad 'Ali Ridha Isma'il, Abdullah al-Mahroos and 'Abdul-Hadi 'Abdullah Hassan al-Mukhodher were sentenced to 15 years in prison. Two people, Ebrahim Sharif and Salah 'Abdullah Hubail al-Khawaja, were given five-year prison terms while Al-Hur Yousef al-Somaikh received a prison sentence of two years. A military appeals court upheld their sentences on 28 September 2011.

Please write, expressing concern that the 14 opposition activists had an unfair and politically motivated trial before a military court. Call for a fair retrial of the activists before a civilian court, and for the immediate and unconditional release of those held as prisoners of conscience solely

for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. Send appeals to:

Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace
Manama
Bahrain

Fax: +973 1766 4587
Salutation: Your Majesty

KYRGYZSTAN

AZIMJAN ASKAROV

WORLDWIDE APPEAL

"THEY HAVE DESTROYED US"



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Azimjan Askarov is serving a life sentence in a single underground cell in Prison No.47, Bishkek. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his legitimate human rights work. He is the director of Vozdukh (Air), an independent human rights organization. For years he has documented ill-treatment by police in the Jalal-Abad region of southern Kyrgyzstan.

Azimjan Askarov was detained on 15 June 2010, after documenting violence between groups of ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks in the south of Kyrgyzstan. He reported that he was severely beaten in the first three days of his detention in an attempt to force him to confess to the murder of a police officer and to incriminate others.

Azimjan Askarov continued to be ill-treated

in pre-trial detention and, in August 2010, he was charged with various crimes including storage of ammunition and being an accomplice to murder. He denies all the charges. In November 2010 he was taken to hospital after collapsing as a result of his treatment in detention.

In June 2011, he told Amnesty International during a prison visit: "I shouldn't be here. They've taken everything that was dear to me and my wife... They've ransacked our lovely home and destroyed our garden... They burned down my office. They beat my brother so badly that he is now disabled, my wife is ill, my sons mostly in hiding. They have destroyed us."

The Supreme Court upheld Azimjan Askarov's life sentence in December 2011. Amnesty International is concerned that he is in poor

health and has not received adequate medical treatment.

Please write, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of human rights defender Azimjan Askarov, whom Amnesty International considers to be a prisoner of conscience. Send appeals to:

Almazbek Atambaev
President
Government House
Bishkek 720003
Kyrgyzstan
Fax: +996 312625012
Salutation: Dear President

MAURITANIA

14 PRISONERS

WORLDWIDE APPEAL

PRISONERS ABDUCTED FROM THEIR CELLS

On the night of 23 May 2011, 14 prisoners were taken from their cells at the Central Prison in Nouakchott by security forces. They have not been seen since. A fellow prisoner said: "Security forces came at 3am; their faces were hidden and they had a list. They were calling out names one by one... and were asking the detainees to come with them. Nobody knew what was going on."

Some of those abducted had been sentenced to death, while others were serving sentences of between five and 15 years. Amnesty International had met with most of the prisoners prior to their abduction, and had recorded that they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in the first days of their detention.

Their personal belongings, including books, blankets and clothes, were returned to their

families in June 2011 with no further explanation. In November 2011, the Minister of Justice told an Amnesty International delegation that the men had been isolated "for security reasons". No further information has been provided about the men's whereabouts.

Please write, calling for disclosure of the whereabouts of the 14 men who were moved from the Central Prison in Nouakchott to an undisclosed location on 23 May 2011. They are: El Khadim Ould Semane, Sidi Ould Sidna, Mohamed Ould Chabarnou, Maarouf Ould Haiba, Mohamed Abdellahi Ould Ahmednah Ould Mohamed Salem, Mohamed Ould Abdou, Abderrahmane Ould Areda, Mohamed Ould Chbih, Amar Ould Mohamed Saleh, Taghi Ould

Youssef, Salem Ould Hemmod, Tiyeb Ould Saleck, Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Sebty dit Dahoud Sebty and Mohamed Khaled. Urge that the men are given access to their families, lawyers and medical care. Send appeals to:

General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz
President of the Islamic Republic of
Mauritania
Presidency
BP 184 Nouakchott
Mauritania

Fax: +222 45259801
Salutation: Your Excellency

**DETAINED,
CHAINED AND
BEATEN**



Inter-regional Committee Against Torture, COPYRIGHT, 2009

Islam Umarpashaev was taken from his family home in Grozny on 1 December 2009 by men in black uniforms claiming to be police officers. His abduction came shortly after he used his mobile phone to post an angry comment about the Chechen police to an internet chat forum. His family knew nothing of his whereabouts until he was released four months later, on 2 April 2010.

Following his abduction, Islam Umarpashaev was shown a print-out of his internet message and interrogated about whether he had links with Chechen armed groups. He was reportedly beaten during interrogation, and spent three and a half months chained to a radiator, ill-treated and threatened. He believes he was held in the basement of a building belonging to the Chechen riot police force, OMON (Special Police Force).

He was released from detention following interim measures issued by the European Court of Human Rights. An application had been made to the Court on his behalf by the Russian human rights organization Nizhnii Novgorod Inter-Regional Committee Against Torture. Since his release, Islam Umarpashaev and his family have had to relocate outside Chechnya for their safety. Members of the investigation team have also received threats from members of the Chechen police in connection with this case.

Please write, welcoming the ongoing investigation into Islam Umarpashaev's case by the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation. Express your concern over the ability of the investigation team to carry out their work unimpeded and without intimidation,

and urge that investigators working on his case and members of his legal team are given adequate protection. Urge that all those responsible for his abduction, unlawful detention and ill-treatment are identified and brought to justice. Send appeals to:

Chairman of the Investigation Committee
Aleksandr Ivanovich Bastrykin
Investigation Committee of the Russian Federation
Tekhnicheskii pereulok, dom 2
105005 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7499 2659077 or +7499 2659775
Salutation: Dear Chairman of the Investigation Committee

**ACTIVIST AT RISK
OF TORTURE**



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Anas al-Shogre (or al-Shogri), aged 23, has been detained incommunicado since 14 May 2011. Amnesty International has received reports that he is in poor health and is concerned that he may have been tortured in detention.

Anas was the first person to call for anti-government demonstrations in the Syrian city of Baniyas on 18 March 2011. He spoke in the mosque after prayer, saying: "Whoever would like to call for freedom, join us. Whoever does not, go home. I'm going to the street even if I have to do it on my own." People followed him, marking the beginning of demonstrations in Baniyas. The Syrian authorities have stated that Anas al-Shogre is a terrorist and leader of an armed group. However, his family and local human rights activists believe he was arrested for

leading peaceful protests and for reporting on human rights violations in Baniyas to the media, including the BBC Arabic service.

Former detainees told Anas' family that he was held in the Military Security branch in the city of Tartus, and later transferred to a branch of the State Security (controlled by the Ministry of Interior) in Damascus. One former detainee at the Military Security branch said they heard Anas call out "I don't want to live, let me die", raising concerns that he was tortured. Torture and other ill-treatment are widespread in Syria. A reliable source said Anas is unwell and has lost a lot of weight. No further information was forthcoming, and the authorities have refused to confirm where he is being held or the precise reasons for his arrest.

Please write, calling for Anas al-Shogre to be released immediately and unconditionally, or charged with a recognizably criminal offence and tried in accordance with international fair trial standards. Send appeals to:

Minister of Interior
His Excellency Major General Mohamad Ibrahim al-Shaar
Ministry of Interior
'Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Fax: +963 112119578 (keep trying)
Salutation: Your Excellency

**INTERNET ACTIVIST
IMPRISONED**



© Amnesty International

Pro-democracy activist and Catholic priest Nguyen Van Ly is serving an eight-year prison sentence for "conducting propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam". He is sentenced to a further five years under house arrest after he completes his prison sentence. At his trial in March 2007, he did not have legal representation and he was manhandled by guards and gagged in court. Four co-defendants received either suspended sentences or prison sentences with house arrest on release.

Official accusations against Father Ly included involvement in banned political groups and the internet-based pro-democracy movement Bloc 8406, which he co-founded. He and four co-defendants also published a dissident journal, *Tu Do Ngon Luan* (Freedom and Democracy). Since the late 1970s, Father Ly has spent some 15

years in prison for advocating human rights and criticizing government policies on religion. Amnesty International first adopted him as a prisoner of conscience in 1983.

Father Ly was temporarily released from prison in March 2010 in order to receive medical care for a stroke, which left him paralyzed on one side of his body, and for a brain tumour. He was returned to Ba Sao prison, Ha Nam province, in July 2011 despite still being in poor health. The authorities claimed that he had distributed anti-government leaflets during his release period. Since his return to prison, Father Ly has been on periodic hunger strike in protest at his detention.

Please write, calling for Father Nguyen Van Ly to be released from prison immediately and

unconditionally. Note that Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of speech and association. Call for him to be provided with adequate medical care while in detention. Send appeals to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Pham Binh Minh
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1 Ton That Dam
Ha Noi
Viet Nam
Fax: +844 3825 9205
Email: bc.mfa@mofa.gov.vn