

URGENT ACTION

YOUNG MAN FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED IN INGUSHETIA

On 21 March, Ilez Gorchkhanov, 26 years old, was abducted by around 15 men wearing masks. His family believe he has been subjected to enforced disappearance by members of law enforcement agencies.

Ilez Gorchkhanov was travelling by car to Nazran, in the Republic of Ingushetia in the North Caucasus, Russian Federation, on 21 March, but has not been in contact with his family since. His car was later found abandoned at the side of the road between Magas and Kantyshevo. His brother retraced his journey the same day and spoke to eyewitnesses who provided an account of his abduction.

According to the eyewitnesses, between 2.30pm and 3.30pm, Ilez Gorchkhanov stepped out of his car which was parked near the bus station in the centre of Nazran. He was grabbed by five or six men, with around 10 others forming a circle around them holding armoured shields, such as those used by members of law enforcement agencies. Some were plain-clothed and others were wearing camouflage uniforms but with no insignia. They immediately left the scene in four cars, taking Ilez Gorchkhanov with them. They also drove his car away. Some of his abductors were speaking native Russian and others Ingush. Eyewitnesses provided some important details, including the number plate of one of the cars.

The authorities have given no details of Ilez Gorchkhanov's whereabouts to members of his family but have promised to investigate his disappearance. The family fear he may be subjected to torture and ill-treatment and, similarly to many other disappeared in Ingushetia, may never be seen again.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to conduct an immediate, effective and impartial investigation into Ilez Gorchkhanov's abduction and inform his family of its outcomes. Emphasize that sufficient details are known to identify at least one of the cars involved;
- Urging the authorities to establish promptly Ilez Gorchkhanov's whereabouts and ensure his safety;
- Pointing out that if he is held by one of the law enforcement agencies he must either be charged with a recognizable offence and granted access to a lawyer, or immediately released.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 MAY 2011 TO:

Head of the Republic of Ingushetia

Yunus-Bek B. Yevkurov
Administration of the Head of the
Republic of Ingushetia
Pr. Zyazikova, 12
Magas 386000
Republic of Ingushetia
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 (8734) 55 11 29

**Salutation: Dear Head of the
Republic of Ingushetia**

Minister of Internal Affairs

Viktor V. Pogolov Viktorovich
Ministry of Internal Affairs of the
Republic of Ingushetia
ul. Kulieva, 14
Magas 386000
Republic of Ingushetia
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 (8734) 55 01 28
Email: oios-mvd-ri@yandex.ru

Salutation: Dear Minister

Prosecutor General

Yurii Ya. Chaika
ul. B.Dimitrovka, d. 15a
Moscow, GSP-3
107048
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 (495) 692 17 25
Email: prgenproc@gov.ru

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

YOUNG MAN FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED IN INGUSHETIA

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ingushetia and the wider North Caucasus are affected by armed violence, and the security situation there is volatile. Armed groups have been launching sporadic attacks against law enforcement officials, but have also targeted civilians. The authorities' response is heavily reliant on the use of law enforcement agencies (police, the Federal Security Service, and the military) whose members operate without transparency and public accountability, and often incognito, particularly during so-called counterterrorist operations. There are widespread and persistent allegations that law enforcement officials use unlawful methods to combat armed violence with impunity, and human rights violations are systematic in Ingushetia and across the North Caucasus. Cases of forcible disappearances, unlawful detention, torture and ill-treatment, and extrajudicial execution, are regularly reported from the region.

Amnesty International has received numerous reports from Ingushetia of people being detained, in their homes or in the street, by masked members of law enforcement agencies who wear no insignia and give no explanation of their actions. While in some such cases the authorities later acknowledge that these people were detained by members of law enforcement officials, in many cases these people are "disappeared" and never heard of again, with the authorities failing to investigate effectively and establish their whereabouts. The human rights NGO MASHR, based in Ingushetia, has documented 196 cases of disappearances in Ingushetia between November 2002 and December 2010.

Relatives of Ilez Gorchkhanov organized a street protest on 23 March blocking one of the central roads in Nazran. They demanded that the authorities establish his whereabouts and put an end to forcible disappearances in Ingushetia. A number of senior Ministry of the Interior officials and the acting Head of the Security Council came to speak to the protesters promising to take steps to establish the whereabouts of Ilez Gorchkhanov. However, the protesters were not satisfied with their promises and refused to leave. The protest was dispersed by armed police who, according to eyewitnesses, used excessive force, fired warning shots in the air, and beat and detained a number of participants. Amnesty International issued a public statement calling for an investigation of allegations that Magomed Khazbiev, a prominent politician and civil society activist in Ingushetia, and his two brothers were accused of organizing "public disorder", severely beaten by police and unlawfully detained. See: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/014/2011/en>.

UA: 88/11 Index: EUR 46/015/2011 Issue Date: 24 March 2011

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

