

TO: HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
FROM: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

APPEAL FOR ACTION

SHAMKHAN AZIEV MUST HAVE URGENT SURGICAL TREATMENT IN RUSSIA

Shamkhan Mukhidovich Aziev (b.1979), a prisoner in FBU IK-2 in Chernokozovo, the Chechen Republic, is suffering from Pott's disease (TB infection of the spine), and must be provided with urgent surgical treatment as recommended by his doctors to prevent serious consequences to his health.

In April 2011 Russian human rights NGO Memorial received information that Shamkhan Aziev is suffering from a serious case of Pott's disease and needs urgent surgery according to prison medical records. On 29 April 2011 the Public Monitoring Commission for Oversight of Places of Detention in Chechnya visited detention centre FBU IK-2, spoke with Shamkhan Aziev and saw his medical records. The documents confirmed that Shamkhan Aziev "suffers from Pott's disease [at] L5-S1 with compression of the dural sac, constant lumbodinia, [and] bilateral radicular syndrome." The members of the Commission learned that Shamkhan Aziev has been confined to bed for over three months, can hardly move his legs and suffers from severe back pain. Shamkhan Aziev has been living with this condition for more than a year while detained at FBU IK-2. During this time he has not been provided with effective medical treatment.

Shamkhan Aziev told the Commission members that he was being prepared for a transfer to prison hospital LIU-7 in the Astrakhan region where the recommended surgery could reportedly be undertaken. This information was confirmed by the Head of the medical unit of FBU IK-2. He also confirmed that due to Shamkhan Aziev's poor condition they judged it necessary to transfer him by a special prisoner transport accompanied by a medical professional. The transfer was planned for May 2011.

However, up to now Shamkhan Aziev has not been transferred to the hospital; neither has he been provided with any other medical help apart from local injections to control the pain. Reportedly, his medical records were transferred to LIU-7 in the beginning of May. However, shortly after that the prison received a phone call from LIU-7 with a refusal to take Shamkhan Aziev, allegedly because of the lack of appropriate facilities in LIU-7. The authorities at FBU IK-2 asked the authorities at LIU-7 to confirm this refusal in writing so that they could proceed with a request to Federal Penal Service in Moscow to allow urgent surgery in a civilian hospital in Chechnya. However, the authorities of LIU-7 responded only on 17 June and, instead of providing the above-mentioned confirmation, asked for additional medical information on the case. Doctors from the Penal Service for the Chechen Republic have told the Commission members that at least another 40 days will be spent completing tests required by LIU-7 and then waiting for their reply. More time will then be needed to receive permission from Moscow to operate on Shamkhan Aziev in Chechnya.

A possible consequence of the failure to effectively treat Pott's disease is a permanently deformed spine and paralysis. Untreated TB is also a serious, potentially fatal, health risk that requires sustained anti-microbial therapy.

Amnesty International urges the Russian authorities to respect their international obligations and protect Shamkhan Aziev's right to health including through the arrangement of urgent surgery. The organization calls on the Head of the Russian Penal Service to immediately provide medical treatment including, if necessary, surgical treatment to Shamkhan Aziev and to implement measures to prevent further deterioration of his health.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian or your own language to the addresses below:

- Explaining that you are a health professional concerned about human rights;

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- Expressing grave concern at reports that Shamkhan Aziev is not being provided with necessary and urgent medical treatment he requires;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that arrangements are immediately made for Shamkhan Aziev to either be transported to a medical facility within the penal system where he can be provide with appropriate treatment, or to be provided with necessary medical treatment at a civilian hospital in Chechnya.
- Calling on the authorities to cover the costs of such transportation and treatment, as required by the United Nations Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 31 AUGUST 2011 TO:

Director of the Federal Penal Service

Colonel-General Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Reimer
Federal Penal Service
ul. Zhitnaya 14,
GSP-1
119991 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 982 19 50;
+7 495 955 59 12
Salutation: **Dear Director**

Head of the Penal Service for the Chechen Republic

Major-General Ali Zaindinovich Iriskhanov
Penal Service for the Chechen Republic
Grozny, Chechen republic
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8712 22 34 92
Salutation: **Dear Major-General**

Head of FBU LIU- Colonel I.F.Karshgaliev

FBU LIU-7
Ul.Ulianova,8
416360 g.Kamyziak,
Astrakhan Region
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 8512 39 44 63
Salutation: **Dear Colonel**

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

IF YOU RECEIVE NO REPLY WITHIN SIX WEEKS OF SENDING YOUR LETTER, PLEASE SEND A FOLLOW-UP LETTER SEEKING A RESPONSE. PLEASE SEND COPIES OF ANY LETTERS YOU RECEIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, ATTENTION OF THE HEALTH TEAM, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 0DW OR E-MAIL: health@amnesty.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International regularly receives reports of torture or other ill-treatment in places of detention across the Russian Federation, including in penal colonies, and of the frequent failure of the authorities to investigate such allegations and to bring those found responsible to justice. In February 2007, the UN Committee against Torture expressed its concern regarding the inadequate health care provided to people in pre-trial detention centres and prison colonies.

The denial of medical care may be considered to be torture and other ill-treatment, and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners require that "sick prisoners who require specialist treatment ... be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals" (para. 22 [2]).

