

Title

One year on, Andizhan victims deserve justice

Summary for torture homepage

On 13 May 2005 Uzbekistani security forces fired indiscriminately on demonstrators in Andizhan, killing hundreds, mostly unarmed civilians. The government has failed to conduct proper investigations and to bring to justice those responsible.

Feature

"Today, the fight against international terrorism, extremism and radicalism is the key area uniting the states of the world. Uzbekistan fully supports the world community's uncompromising fight against this evil of the 21st century."

President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan, 28 January 2005

On 13 May 2005 Uzbekistani security forces fired indiscriminately on demonstrators, who had gathered in the city of Andizhan in eastern Uzbekistan to complain about repressive government policies and widespread poverty, killing hundreds, mostly unarmed civilians. Hundreds fled to neighbouring Kyrgyzstan in search of refuge. Hundreds suspected of involvement in the events were detained, and many were allegedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated.. Dozens were tried and sentenced in an unfair trials.

One year on, the authorities in Uzbekistan have continued to reject calls of the UN, the European Union and other members of the international community for an impartial, independent and thorough international investigation. They have refused to take effective measures to investigate the violations by the security forces and to bring to justice those responsible.

Instead, the authorities have imprisoned human rights activists and gagged the independent media in an attempt to bury the truth about the Andizhan killings. They have tried to conceal the fact that repressive practices such as arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment, unfair trials, and lack of freedom of expression and association – that led to the Andizhan protests - continue unabated.

Several prominent human rights defenders, including **Mutabar Tadzhibaeva**, **Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov** and **Dilmurod Muhiddinov**, have been sentenced to long prison terms after trials that fell far short of international fair trial standards. These prisoners of conscience – detained solely for trying to tell the truth about Andizhan – should be released immediately.

Respect for universal human rights is the only way to properly underpin our security. Fair trials and an absolute ban on torture are among the most potent weapons in the fight against terrorism. .

You can make a difference.

Take action now!

Documents related

Cases - -

Report: *Andizhan: Impunity must not prevail*

You can make a difference!

Human rights activist **Saidzhakhon Zainabidinov** has been reportedly sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in Uzbekistan after a secret trial held in early January 2006. His current whereabouts are unknown; his family are distraught and fear for his safety.

Take action! Write to President Islam Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Web action - Title

Uzbekistan: Release human rights activist who tried to tell the truth about Andizhan

Web action - Text

Since the killing of hundreds of people during protests in Andizhan, Uzbekistan, in May 2005 the government has cracked down heavily on civil society. The safety of human rights defenders - who have tried, at great personal risk, to speak out against human rights violations in the country - is of particular concern.

Human rights activist Saidzhakhon Zainabidinov has been reportedly sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in Uzbekistan after a secret trial held in early January 2006. He was convicted of several charges, including "slander" and "spreading information with the aim of causing panic".

His current whereabouts are unknown and his family are distraught and fear for his safety. Uzbekistan has a long history of subjecting individuals to torture and other ill-treatment, including in the name of national security, and, since September 2001, in the name of the "war on terror".

The sentencing of Saidzhakhon Zainabidinov confirms fears that the Uzbekistani authorities are continuing to prevent human rights defenders and journalists from carrying out their legitimate and peaceful work, in particular, those who have tried to publicize the apparent indiscriminate and excessive use of force by security forces in Andizhan.

Amnesty International considers Saidzhakhon Zainabidinov a prisoner of conscience and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

Take action!

Write to President Islam Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

- Calling on the Uzbekistan government to allow a thorough, independent and impartial international investigation into the full circumstances of events in Andizhan on 12-13 May 2005.
- Urging that Saidzhakhon Zainabidinov and other human rights defenders, who AI believes to have been imprisoned solely for reporting human rights violations, be released

immediately.

- Calling on the government to stop human rights violations being carried out in the name of national security.
- Urging President Islam Karimov to publicly condemn torture and ill-treatment.

Find out more about the [killings in Andizhan](#)

Letter

Dear President Karimov,

I am deeply concerned at reports that Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment after a secret trial on 5 January, and that the judgment rendered in his case was not made public immediately. Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov was arbitrarily detained by law enforcement officers on 21 May 2005. He was held incommunicado for much of the time leading up to what was effectively a secret trial on 5 January 2006. Neither his lawyer nor family were present. This constitutes a grave violation of Uzbekistan's international obligations to ensure fair trials, as a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Uzbekistan's use of torture and other ill-treatment in prison is well-known and there are fears for Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov's safety. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture has described the use of torture and ill-treatment in Uzbekistan as "systematic" and has called upon the highest authorities to take action. Your immediate and public condemnation of torture and other ill-treatment in your country would be a significant first step and I ask you to do this.

I wish to remind you that human rights defenders including Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov and others such as **Mutabar Tadzhibaeva** and **Dilmurod Muhiddinov** have a right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Amnesty International considers Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov, imprisoned solely for carrying out his peaceful human rights work., to be a prisoner of conscience. I appeal to you to ensure his immediate release.

Yours sincerely

Images

<https://intranet.amnesty.org/adam/en/7159/detail.html> - id: 7159

<https://intranet.amnesty.org/adam/en/5158/detail.html> - id: 5158

<https://intranet.amnesty.org/adam/en/7170/detail.html> - id: 7170

1.

A woman cries near small numbered plaques allegedly marking anonymous graves of victims in a cemetery on the outskirts of Andizhan, Uzbekistan, copyright Misha

Japaridze/AP/EMPICS 2005

2.

Uzbekistani soldiers take positions in downtown Andizhan, Uzbekistan, Friday, May 13, 2005, to disperse protesters massed on the square outside the administration building.

3.

Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov, copyright private, April 2005