

RUSSIA CAMPAIGN – LEAFLETS (EUR 46/026/2002) – FINAL TEXT

Front cover text:

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

JUSTICE FOR EVERYBODY

[TITLE OF LEAFLET]

COMMON TEXT FOR ALL LEAFLETS

The Russian Federation is in transition. Dramatic political and economic changes have profoundly affected the country's 144 million people.

The human rights landscape has been transformed since the 1970s. Nevertheless, serious human rights violations remain widespread.

Throughout the Russian Federation, the torture or ill-treatment of women, men and children in custody is virtually routine. Conditions in the country's pre-trial detention centres are generally so extreme that they amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

The conflict in Chechnya has been characterized by widespread and credible reports of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Russian forces, including arbitrary arrests, torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions. Chechen forces have also reportedly committed breaches of international humanitarian law, including the targeting of civilians and the execution of captured soldiers.

Those responsible for human rights abuses are rarely held to account for their crimes, and the victims are frequently denied redress.

Amnesty International is launching a major worldwide campaign to highlight the reality of widespread human rights abuses committed in a climate of impunity. It aims to put pressure on the Russian government to live up to its international obligations to protect and promote human rights so that there is justice for everybody.

[LEAFLET 1]

[Front cover title] CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ABUSED

Children detained and abused

'When you go to the procuracy, say to them that you took your child home, that he fell there and broke his vertebrae'.

Advice reportedly given to the mother of Sergei Kalinin by the police-appointed lawyer

Sixteen-year-old Sergei Kalinin (pseudonym) was arrested in the Fili-Davidkovo district of Moscow on 14 September 2000 after he allegedly stole a car to go "joy-riding".

The law states that the procurator and parents should be promptly informed when a child is arrested. Yet Sergei Kalinin was detained for 24 hours at the local police station, without the procurator or his parents being informed. During that time he was reportedly tortured.

Sergei Kalinin says that police officers beat him on his back and head, and banged his head against a wall, apparently to make him confess to stealing other cars. After his release, a medical centre found that he had compressed fractures of the vertebrae.

On 28 May 2001 the Kuntsevskii municipal court found Sergei Kalinin guilty of theft and sentenced him to three years' imprisonment in a prison colony for juveniles. He was released on a suspended sentence after an appeal before Moscow City Court on 17 July 2001.

Even though Sergei Kalinin told the court and the procuracy that he had been tortured by police, no criminal investigation has been opened into his allegations.

According to his mother, Sergei Kalinin is still in pain as a result of the torture he suffered.

CHILDREN are entitled under international standards to special protection, including against torture and ill-treatment, because their youth makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse. Yet children who are detained by Russian police are denied this special protection. For example, in cases known to Amnesty International children have been denied one of the most basic protections – having a lawyer and an adult relative present during questioning – which serves as a safeguard against torture and ill-treatment. Amnesty International has documented cases of children who have been tortured or ill-treated by police in such circumstances.

Such cases are particularly disturbing given the vast numbers of children who are arrested and interrogated by police every year.

Tens of thousands of children are being deprived of their liberty in Russia, even though the authorities are obliged, under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure that the “arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child... shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time”. Children are routinely held for months or even years in pre-trial detention and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for relatively minor offences. In mid-2001 there were more than 17,000 children serving prison sentences in 64 special colonies for juveniles, according to the Justice Ministry. Many more were held in pre-trial detention centres, where conditions are generally so appalling that they amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

In pre-trial detention centres or prisons, children are vulnerable to abuse by both guards and other inmates. Again, the authorities appear to do little to protect children in prison from abuse – allegations of torture and ill-treatment made by children rarely lead to investigations, let alone prosecutions.

A radical rethinking of the juvenile justice system is needed to restore the presumption of liberty for children and to protect them from torture and ill-treatment in custody.

[BACK COVER TEXT]

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to:

**President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, Kremlin, Moscow,
Russian Federation**

Urge him to:

- Ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses are investigated thoroughly and impartially and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.
- Ensure compliance with the obligation only to detain children as a measure of last resort.

Amnesty International is a worldwide voluntary human rights movement that campaigns for the release of prisoners of conscience, fair trials for political prisoners, and an end to torture and the death penalty, “disappearances” and political killings all over the world. Amnesty International works impartially to promote all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards.

[LEAFLET 2]

[Front cover title] ‘DISAPPEARANCES’ IN CHECHNYA

‘Still not found your husband? Then look for him in a pit!’

Advice given by Russian soldiers to Zura Mandykhadzhiyeva, whose husband Shamil “disappeared” in November 2001

On 9 November 2001 Russian soldiers entered a house in the village of Serzhen-Yurt in Chechnya in which five girls and two women were sleeping.

The two women – Aset Yakhiaeva (also known as "Zargan"), aged 45, and Milana Betirgirieva (also known as "Ainat"), aged 21 – were staying in the village to help with preparations for the wedding of a neighbour's daughter.

The soldiers were taking part in a raid on the village.

According to witnesses, the soldiers cut the electricity to the house. When the terrified girls cried out the soldiers threatened to shoot them and then shone torches in their faces while discussing which of them they were going to rape.

One of the girls told Amnesty International that an officer entered the room and ordered the soldiers not to touch them.

After the soldiers left, the girls went to the room where Aset Yakhiaeva and Milana Betirgirieva had been sleeping. It was empty. The girls found some of the women's clothes, including a skirt and blouse, outside the house on the street. There has been no news of either woman since then. They have "disappeared".

The current conflict in Chechnya, which began in September 1999, has been characterized by widespread and credible reports of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by Russian forces.

Hundreds of Chechen civilians are believed to have "disappeared" after being detained by Russian forces. The victims include women and girls suspected of being related to fighters or of assisting them. The bodies of some of the "disappeared" have subsequently been found in unmarked dumping sites. Many appear to have suffered torture, including rape, or violent death.

Most people who are detained by Russian forces are picked up during identity checks on civilian convoys travelling from Chechnya to neighbouring Ingushetia or during military raids (so-called zachistki or "clean-up" raids) on populated areas.

These raids are accompanied by widespread human rights abuses against the civilian population. There have been numerous, compelling and credible reports that men, women and children have been abducted, subjected to rape and other forms of torture, and shot.

Detainees have been denied access to relatives, lawyers or the outside world. Survivors have said that torture is routine and systematic. They have reported the rape of male and female detainees, beatings with hammers and clubs, electro-shock torture and exposure to tear gas. Some detainees have said they were held in facilities that were little more than pits in the ground.

Investigations into allegations of extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", torture and ill-treatment by Russian forces are inadequate and hardly ever result in those responsible being prosecuted.

Amnesty International is calling on the Russian authorities to fulfil their obligations to provide the victims with an effective remedy and reparation and to bring those responsible for human rights abuses to justice.

[BACK COVER TEXT]

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to:

**President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, Kremlin, Moscow,
Russian Federation**

Urge him to:

- Ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses are investigated thoroughly and impartially and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.**
- Ensure that impartial investigations are conducted into all reports of "disappearances" and that the names and whereabouts of all those detained in Chechnya are made public.**

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[LEAFLET 3]

[Front cover title] ETHNIC MINORITIES UNDER ATTACK

Joseph Peter (above), a Sudanese national, was attacked and beaten with metal bars on 16 June 2001 by up to 20 "skinheads". He had been filming with a video camera in a Moscow park when he was attacked and pushed into a pond. Frightened and seeing

other “skinheads” running towards him, Joseph Peter tried to get out of the pond but was again beaten. However, he was able to film some of his attackers.

After the intervention of a passer-by, Joseph Peter was able to get home and called an ambulance. Doctors at the hospital diagnosed a broken rib and concussion.

Joseph Peter sent a written statement about the attack to the duty police officer at his local police station for Kuzminki - Liublino districts. Three police officers came to Joseph Peter's hostel and told him that in order for them to investigate the case further, he would have to sign a statement significantly changing the details of the attack and removing allegations that it was racially motivated.

The video tape of the incident clearly showed the faces of three of the attackers. Joseph Peter gave his only copy to police officers, who watched it in his presence and reportedly promised to return the cassette within two weeks. The police have still not returned it to Joseph Peter and there has been no further progress in the case.

AMNESTY International continues to receive reports of ethnically motivated violence by private individuals and gangs (non-state actors) in Moscow, St Petersburg and other cities across the Russian Federation.

The victims are often students and refugees from Africa. Other victims include people from the Caucasus (including ethnic Chechens), Central Asia, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. Jews have been subjected to anti-Semitic verbal abuse and physical attacks.

Some victims, particularly asylum-seekers and refugees whose identity documents are often not accepted as valid by police, have told Amnesty International that they are reluctant to report such attacks out of fear that police would subject them to harassment and attempt to extort money.

In several cases documented by Amnesty International, police investigators were reluctant to classify the attacks as racially motivated, reportedly insisting that the victim state the perpetrators were drunk.

Holding the Russian authorities accountable for abuses by non-state actors is crucially important in the struggle to defend the human rights of racial minorities and others facing discrimination.

The Russian government is obliged under international human rights treaties to tackle discrimination in all its forms. It also has a responsibility to take effective measures to ensure the right of all to be free from torture and ill-treatment. Such measures include repealing discriminatory legislation which facilitates torture and denies equal access to justice, and providing effective protection against violence in the broader community. It also means ensuring that the laws and institutions of the state address the root causes of discrimination.

[BACK COVER TEXT]

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to:

**President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, Kremlin, Moscow,
Russian Federation**

Urge him to:

- **Ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses are investigated thoroughly and impartially, and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.**
- **Initiate reviews of policing operations to ensure that they are not conducted in a discriminatory way.**

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[LEAFLET 4]

[Front cover title] TORTURE AND KILLINGS IN CHECHNYA

‘Despite strong evidence of rape and other sexual violence committed by Russian forces in Chechnya, the Government of the Russian Federation has failed to conduct the necessary investigations or to hold anyone accountable for the vast majority of cases.’

UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, February 2001

Kheda (Elza) Kungaeva was taken from her home in Tangi-Chu, south of the Chechen capital, Grozny, on 26 March 2000 by Russian soldiers under the command of Colonel Yury Budanov. Her family never saw her alive again.

Colonel Budanov took 18-year-old Kheda Kungaeva to his tent, allegedly for interrogation, and strangled her. Her body was found dumped in her home village. An official post-mortem carried out by a Ministry of Defence pathologist stated that Kheda Kungaeva had been anally and vaginally raped approximately one hour prior to her death.

Colonel Budanov was arrested on 30 March 2000. During the investigation he reportedly admitted killing Kheda Kungaeva, stating that he strangled her in a state of temporary insanity. He was charged with "abuse of power" and "homicide". The prosecution has ignored the evidence of rape.

Colonel Budanov has reportedly undergone several psychiatric evaluations during the course of the trial. One examination, conducted by the state-run Serbsky Institute in September 2001, supported his claim of temporary insanity. This finding means that, if convicted, he could receive a greatly reduced sentence.

Colonel Budanov’s trial began in February 2001. Colonel Budanov was the first Russian officer to be tried for crimes against civilians since the renewed conflict began in 1999.

Although Colonel Budanov has admitted killing Kheda Kungaeva, he still enjoys public and military support. For example, during the first week of Colonel Budanov’s trial, General Vladimir Shamanov came to the court to shake hands with him. This attitude is indicative of the huge obstacles victims of grave human rights violations in Chechnya and their relatives face in gaining justice.

The disregard for human rights and dignity, long experienced throughout the Russian Federation, has reached alarming levels in Chechnya.

The current conflict has been characterized by widespread and credible reports of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Russian forces.

Russian security forces have been responsible for attacks on civilians, "disappearances" extrajudicial executions and torture, including rape.

One of the key factors which allows abuses to persist is the failure of the Russian authorities to bring those in its forces who are responsible for such acts to justice.

Fear is also an important factor in preventing abusers from being brought to justice. Many Chechens fear further abuses if they lodge a complaint about human rights violations committed by Russian troops. The Russian authorities have failed to take adequate steps to counter their fear.

Amnesty International is calling on the Russian authorities to fulfil their obligations to provide the victims with an effective remedy and to bring those responsible for human rights abuses to justice.

'... the current level of destruction suggests that Grozny has been the target of indiscriminate, disproportionate bombardment by the Russian forces.'

Lord Judd, member of the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, April 2000

[BACK COVER TEXT]

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to:

Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on Human Rights and Freedoms in the Chechen Republic,

Abdul-Khakim Sultygov, Staraiia ploshad, d.2, pod. 6, 103132 Moscow, Russian Federation

Urge him to:

- **Ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses are investigated thoroughly and impartially and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.**
- **Ensure that all victims of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law are able to obtain redress and have an enforceable right to fair and adequate reparation.**

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[LEAFLET 5]

[Front cover title] VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

State fails to protect women

‘They beat me about the head, on the neck from behind so I wouldn't move my head. They punched me and hit me on the ribs constantly. One would rape me while the other held me down, pushing my face into the bed.’

Marina T.

Police stopped 20-year-old Marina T. (not her real name) in a car on 5 March 1999 in the city of Yaroslavl'. They accused her of being drunk and took her to a police-run sobering-up facility. Marina T. said that at the facility officers forcibly stripped her naked, hit her head against a wall and punched her in the face. She said that four men raped her and that men took turns to force their penises into her mouth.

The following morning Marina T. appeared before the Zavolzhskii district court, which fined her 800 rubles (around US\$25) for being drunk in public and for violent conduct towards officers. She was then released.

Later that day she filed a complaint with the local procuracy, where officials noted the bruising on her face.

A criminal case was opened on 9 March 1999 against three police officers for torture and ill-treatment, but the charges were dropped on 18 May 2000 for “lack of evidence”. The case remained open, however, on charges of abuse of office, inflicting bodily harm and negligence – charges that carry lighter sentences than those for ill-treatment or rape.

The case was sent back and forth for investigation several times before the final hearing in March 2002 at the Zavolzhskii district court. The court found one officer guilty of premeditated infliction of bodily harm; he was released immediately under an amnesty covering non-serious offences. Two other officers were found guilty of abuse of office with the use of violence and threats of violence. They were given suspended sentences and stripped of the right to work as police officers for two years.

The procuracy and Marina T.'s lawyer challenged the verdicts. In April 2002 the Yaroslavl' regional court annulled the verdicts and sent the case back to the Zavolzhskii court for retrial. As at mid-2002, the retrial of the three officers was still pending.

THE AUTHORITIES in Russia are failing to protect women from violence by state agents. There are regular reports of ill-treatment and torture, including rape and other sexual abuse, of women in police stations and prisons. Such abuses are facilitated by the failure of the authorities to ensure that women in custody are attended by women staff and have a lawyer present during interrogation, as well as by the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators.

Many women who have suffered such abuses do not seek redress because they fear further involvement with the authorities and because of the social stigma associated with sexual crimes. Those who do pursue justice are confronted by a system that largely ignores violence against women and protects perpetrators. As a result, state officials believe that they can continue abusing women in their charge without risk of punishment.

The state is also failing to protect women from violence in the home. Men who beat or rape their wives are unlikely to face prosecution. The law does not recognize domestic violence as a distinct crime. The authorities acknowledge the prevalence of domestic violence – they have stated that 14,000 women die every year at the hands of their husbands or other relatives. Yet they have done little to address the problem. Nearly 50 versions of a national law to address domestic violence have failed to make any progress in parliament.

[BACK COVER TEXT]

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to:

**President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, Kremlin, Moscow,
Russian Federation**

Urge him to:

- **Ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses are investigated thoroughly and impartially and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.**
- **Take steps to make domestic violence a distinct criminal offence, and to ensure that law enforcement officials are trained to recognize and prosecute violence against women, including domestic violence.**

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PHOTO CAPTIONS FOR RUSSIA LEAFLETS (EUR 46/026/2002)

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ABUSED

Boys in a pre-trial detention centre, visited by an Amnesty International delegate in 1999

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'DISAPPEARANCES' IN CHECHNYA

Cover: A woman waits at the gate of an official Russian office in Znamenskoe, Chechnya, where families of the "disappeared" seek assistance in locating their loved ones, July 2000.

© Leo Erken/Panos Pictures

Right: Astemir Murdalov, father of Zelimkhan Murdalov, with dozens of letters and other documents relating to his son's "disappearance" after he was detained by Russian forces in Grozny in January 2001. Astemir Murdalov still does not know what happened to his son and continues to search for any clues to his fate and whereabouts.

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ETHNIC MINORITIES UNDER ATTACK

Sultan Akhmedova and her husband Begzadi are Meskhetians, a largely Muslim group who were deported from southwest Georgia in 1944. Many of those who settled in Uzbekistan were subsequently forced to flee to Russia in 1989. As citizens of the former Soviet Union who were permanently residing in the Russian Federation when the 1992 citizenship law was adopted, they are by law Russian citizens. However, the authorities in Krymsk Region of Krasnodar Territory have persistently denied local Meskhetians their legal rights and their rights to citizenship. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has described them as "de jure citizens, de facto stateless". In practice this means that people like Begzadi and Sultan Akhmedov are denied access to pensions, state medical care and legal employment and cannot officially register house or land purchases, marriages or deaths.

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TORTURE AND KILLINGS IN CHECHNYA

Cover: Kheda Kungaeva's mother standing at the entrance to the tent where she and her family live, 2001.

Left: Kheda Kungaeva's parents with photographs of their daughter as they remember her and as she was found.

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WOMEN

Inside an official sobering-up centre in Moscow, 1998

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