

URGENT ACTION

FORMER PROSECUTOR GENERAL RISKS TORTURE

Former Prosecutor General of Uzbekistan Rashitjon Kadirov and 12 co-defendants are standing trial in closed-door criminal proceedings. Credible reports allege that since his detention on 21 February 2018 Rashitjon Kadirov has been subjected to physical abuse, mock executions, sleep deprivation and other ill-treatment. He and his co-defendants continue to be at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

President of Uzbekistan
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Dear President,

On 7 January 2019 a closed-door criminal trial began against former Prosecutor General and former Judge of the Constitutional Court **Rashitjon Kadirov** and **12 co-defendants** in Yunusabad District Criminal Court. Rashitjon Kadirov has been charged under 12 articles of the Criminal Code including persecution of innocent persons, bribery and embezzlement.

Rashitjon Kadirov has been held in pre-trial detention since 21 February 2018. Amnesty International has received credible reports testifying that Rashitjon Kadirov has been subjected to physical abuse, death threats, sleep deprivation and threats against his relatives, to force him to testify against himself and others. Relatives have also asserted that Rashitjon Kadirov saw his family-appointed lawyer Alisher Madyarov for the first time only in August 2018, six months into his detention. They claim that Rashitjon Kadirov told his lawyer that he had sustained pressure from authorities to reject independent legal representation. Rashitjon Kadirov and his 12 co-defendants continue to be at risk of torture and ill-treatment while in detention.

I urge you to ensure Rashitjon Kadirov and his 12 co-defendants are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that they have prompt access to necessary and adequate medical care. I also urge you to launch an impartial investigation into the allegations of torture and ill-treatment against Rashitjon Kadirov and his co-defendants and hold those responsible accountable.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Rashitjon Kadirov is being held in the pre-trial detention facility of the Ministry of the Interior in the Mirabadsky district of Tashkent, Uzbekistan's capital. The closed-door trial against Rashitjon Kadirov and 12 co-defendants started on 7 January 2019. Amnesty International calls upon the Uzbek authorities to guarantee Rashitjon Kadirov and his co-defendants a free and fair trial and to open it to independent observers and experts.

A witness who requested anonymity saw Rashitjon Kadirov in detention in August 2018 and reported that Rashitjon Kadirov had a long furrow on his neck, which he believes was a sign of strangulation. The witness said that Rashitjon Kadirov was noticeably depressed, withdrawn and barely able to respond to questions. Rashitjon Kadirov reportedly told the witness that he shared a cell with three other prisoners who physically abused him under orders of prison officials. He also reportedly stated that officials held a pistol to his head to force him to confess, told him he would be hung, and the death made to look like suicide. They also reportedly kept him naked in solitary confinement without a bed or bedding, regularly deprived him of sleep between 21 February and 18 March 2018, and threatened to frame him for a murder he did not commit.

Law enforcement officials have also reportedly forced Rashitjon Kadirov to watch his son-in-law endure physical abuse to coerce him to testify against himself. Rashitjon Kadirov's access to food, medicine and the toilet has reportedly been restricted. In May 2018 Rashitjon Kadirov was taken to the prison hospital due to ill health.

Torture and the threat of torture have up until the recent past been used routinely in Uzbekistan to obtain forced confessions, punish detainees, prisoners and their relatives, or extort money. Judges have relied on confessions obtained under torture and handed down convictions based on them. They have also ignored or dismissed defendants' complaints of torture or other ill-treatment, even when presented with strong, credible evidence (including injuries that occurred in custody and cannot be "accidental").

After years of outright denial, the Uzbek authorities, including President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, publicly addressed the problem of torture in Uzbek prisons. Key presidential pronouncements and decrees in 2017-2018 unequivocally condemned the use of torture. Despite these declarations, and as detailed above, Amnesty International continues to receive reports of torture and other ill-treatment. In addition, impunity for past abuses remains one of Uzbekistan's biggest challenges.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Uzbek, Russian, English.
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 1 July 2019
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Rashitjon Kadirov (he/him)