

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 46/003/2004

30 January 2004

Further Information on 21/04 (EUR 46/001/2004, 14 January 2004) "disappearance"/fear of torture and ill-treatment

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Khamzat Osmaev

Khamzat Osmaev, who "disappeared" on 12 January 2004, was returned to his family in Ingushetia on 27 January, a day after his 50th birthday. He and his family are grateful for the worldwide support they received, which they believe was crucial in securing his release.

A member of the Russian human rights organization Memorial spoke to Khamzat Osmaev yesterday, who said that for most of the time he had been kept handcuffed and with a bag over his head, in a dark and damp cellar. He said it was very difficult to lie down, and he was beaten and suffered other forms of torture and ill-treatment. He was questioned about his involvement with a Chechen field commander, who appears in a photograph from the early nineties next to Khamzat Osmaev.

Khamzat Osmaev was taken back to Ingushetia and released near his village. The soldiers who took him there apologized, saying that they found out he was not a supporter of the field commander.

No further action is requested from the Urgent Action network. Thank you very much for all your support in helping to release Khamzat Osmaev.