

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: EUR 46/041/2004**

**21 July 2004**

**Further Information on UA 352/02 (EUR 46/066/2002, 4 December 2002) - Fear of deportation/fear of torture**

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION/UZBEKISTAN      Mannopzhon RAKHMATULLAYEV (m), aged 53**

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Uzbek national Mannopzhon Rakhmatullayev was abducted from his house in the Russian Federation on 21 July. If, as is feared, the men who abducted him were working on the instructions of the Uzbek authorities, he could be returned to Uzbekistan at any time, where he would be at risk of torture.

Mannopzhon Rakhmatullayev, who has lived in the Russian Federation for many years, was detained in October 2002 after the Uzbek authorities requested that he be deported. It is now known that he was released in August or September 2003, after the Russian authorities refused to hand him over, and returned to his home in the town of Marx, where he had worked as an imam (Islamic leader) at the mosque. He has since applied for Russian citizenship, but a decision has not yet been taken on this.

In the morning of 21 July three masked men arrived at Mannopzhon Rakhmatullayev's house in a white car. They hit him and his wife several times and pushed him into their car without saying who they were, or where they were taking him. When his lawyer made inquiries later that day, the regional authorities said they had not received a fresh extradition request from the Uzbek authorities.

The Uzbek authorities have accused him of "religious extremism" and "attempting to overthrow the constitutional order of Uzbekistan", as well as possession of firearms. His supporters insist the accusations are groundless and that the case is politically motivated.

According to the director of the Central Asia department of the Moscow-based human rights organization *Memorial*, "The danger he could end up in Uzbekistan is very real. Rakhmatullayev's son-in-law Rivazhiddin Rakhmonov was abducted in Russia last year and was tried in Uzbekistan in January this year." Rivazhiddin Rakhmonov is now believed to be in prison in Uzbekistan. He too had been accused of "religious extremism" and the Russian authorities had refused to hand him over to the Uzbek authorities. He had been living in the Russian Federation and was detained in May 2003. On the day of his release in July 2003 he "disappeared" and was later found to be in custody in Uzbekistan.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has documented many cases of people forcibly returned to Uzbekistan on the request of the Uzbek authorities who have subsequently been tortured or sentenced to death and executed.

Uzbekistan has detained and imprisoned thousands of people on accusations of "religious extremism". Among them are members and presumed members of independent Islamic congregations, members of banned Islamist and secular opposition parties and movements, and their relatives. Amnesty International has received persistent allegations that police have tortured many of those arrested to extract 'confessions'. Heavy sentences, including death sentences, have been imposed after trials which appear to have been grossly unfair.

Russia is a party to the United Nation Convention against Torture, which prohibits "the return of a person to a country or territory where they may face serious human rights violations" and as a member of the Council of

Europe Russia has committed itself not to deport anybody to a country where she or he would be at risk of torture or execution.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Russian or your own language:**

- expressing concern that Uzbek citizen Mannopzhon Rakhmatullayev, a resident of the town of Marx in Saratov region, was abducted by three masked men on 21 July 2004;
- urging the authorities to take immediate steps to locate Mannopzhon Rakhmatullayev and to ensure that he is not returned to Uzbekistan, where he would be at risk of torture and ill-treatment;
- reminding the authorities of their obligations as a member of the Council of Europe and other international treaty obligations.

**APPEALS TO:**

Procurator General of the Russian Federation,

Vladimir Ustinov

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya, 103793 g. Moskva K-31

Ul. B. Dimitrovka, d15a

Prokuratura Rossiyskoy Federatsii Generalnomu prokuroru

USTINOVU V.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**Fax: + 7 095 292 88 48**

**Salutation: Dear Procurator General**

Head of the Extraditions Unit of the International Legal Affairs department at the office of the General Procurator, Sergey Gorlenko

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya,

103793 g. Moskva K-31,

Ul. B. Dimitrovka, d 15a,

Prokuratura Rossiyskoy Federatsii, Otdel ekstraditsii Mezhdunarodno-pravovogo upravleniya, Nachalniku

GORLENKO S.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**Fax: + 7 095 292 85 62 / 292 28 48**

**Salutation: Dear Director**

**COPIES TO:**

Chairwoman of the Presidential Human Rights Commission of the Russian Federation,

Ella Pamfilova,

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya,

103132 g. Moskva,

Staraya ploshchad, d 8/5, pod 3,

Predsedatelnitse Komissii po pravam cheloveka pri Prezidente, PAMFILOVOY Elle

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**Fax: + 7 095 206 4855**

and to diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 September 2004.