

PUBLIC

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Fear for Safety / Disappearance

4 March 1998

KAZAKSTAN Madel Mukhamedinovich Ismailov

There are fears for the safety of Madel Ismailov, chairman of the opposition "Workers' Movement", who was reportedly detained by police on 27 February 1998 following a conference of political opposition groups. His whereabouts are currently unknown but it is feared he may be detained at a National Security Committee prison where he may be at risk of ill-treatment and torture.

Opposition leaders reported that despite making inquiries at all of the prisons in Almaty, where the conference had taken place, they had not been able to establish Madel Ismailov's whereabouts.

According to reports Madel Ismailov was one of two political opposition leaders taken into police custody at the close of the conference in which several opposition groups had joined forces to create the People's Front of Kazakstan. It's aim is to compete in presidential elections scheduled for the year 2000. Madel Ismailov had been elected deputy chairman of this coalition.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1997 Madel Ismailov spent three and a half months in pre-trial detention charged with "organizing mass actions disturbing public order" in relation to a demonstration which had taken place in front of Almaty City Council on 30 May.

During his time in detention Madel Ismailov claimed he was beaten on his arms and back, ill-treated and humiliated by prison officers and officials conducting the investigation into his criminal case. He stated in court that he was forced to squat on swollen and painful legs and locked in a so-called "glass", i.e. a one-by-one metre cell. He also alleged that he was placed in solitary confinement where he was not able to sit or lie down and where he was forced to wash the floor with his bare hands and drink water from the toilet bowl.

There were serious concerns that the ill-treatment he allegedly suffered may have been an attempt to punish him for his peaceful political opposition to the Kazakstani regime and to frighten him into stopping his political activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian, English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the detention of Madel Ismailov on 27 February 1998;
- urging that his whereabouts be immediately established and made known;
- urging that he be protected from any form of ill-treatment and that he be allowed immediate access to his family and legal representatives;
- stating that should he be detained solely for exercising his fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression he should be released immediately and unconditionally.

APPEALS TO:

Please note: fax tones can be difficult to obtain, particularly out of office hours when they may be switched off

1) Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakstan
Kairbek SULEYMENOV

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Salutation: Dear Minister

2) Procurator General of the Republic of Kazakstan

Stepan SHUTKIN

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Salutation: Dear Procurator General

COPIES TO:

Chairman of the Presidential Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Kazakstan

Yerkesh NURPEISOV

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Komissiya po pravam cheloveka pri Prezidenta Respubliki Kazakhstan
 Predsedatelyu NURPEISOVU Ye.

KAZAKSTAN

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President of the Republic of Kazakstan, Nursultan NAZARBAYEV

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and to diplomatic representatives of Kazakstan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 April 1998.