

EXTRA 01/98

Fear of imminent execution

7 January 1998

**TURKMENISTAN** Six women:

Genglijemal Hojakulieva, born 1952  
 Zemfira Guseynova, born 1959  
 Gizilgul Gurbangulieva, born 1963  
 Nurbibi Bayramova, born 1954  
 Aibolek Gilijova, born 1960  
 Giymet Babaeva, born 1961

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Amnesty International fears that the above six women face imminent execution in Turkmenistan. Unconfirmed reports suggest that they were sentenced to death in the second half of 1997 for drug-related offences and that their appeals against their death sentences have been turned down. Their only hope now of avoiding execution is a petition for clemency to the President of Turkmenistan.

Amnesty International has gathered evidence from unofficial sources that in Turkmenistan executions can be carried out in some cases a very short time after the initial court decision, with only the most perfunctory appeal and clemency process.

There are very few details available on these six women. They are all on death row in the investigation-isolation prison of the capital Ashgabat. Nurbibi Bayramova has six children.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and without reservation, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International is appealing to the President of Turkmenistan to exercise his constitutional authority to commute these death sentences.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A new Criminal Code was approved by the *Majlis* (parliament) in June 1997. It provided for the death penalty for 17 offences, including murder, genocide, various anti-state crimes, and a number of drug-related crimes.

Amnesty International received several reports in 1997 from unofficial sources concerning women in Turkmenistan who had been charged with offences involving narcotics, and who faced a possible death sentence. In most of the reported cases, sources indicated that trials of these women ended with them receiving long prison terms. However, in at least two cases women received a death sentence. Gulsere Dzhumayeva was reportedly sentenced to death for drug trafficking by Lebap Regional Court, and this sentence was left unchanged on appeal to the Supreme Court. Reportedly, a petition to the Presidential Clemency Commission was successful, however, and the death sentence was commuted to a long term of imprisonment. In the second case, Dunyagozel Ovezdurdyeva was sentenced to death for drug trafficking, but sources reported that she subsequently benefited from a mass commutation of 222 death sentences decreed by the President in June 1997.

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

- urging the President to use his constitutional authority and commute the death sentences passed on Genglijemal Hojakulieva, Zemfira Guseynova, Gizilgul

Gurbangulieva, Nurbibi Bayramova, Aibolek Gilijova and Giymet Babaeva, and all other death sentences that come before him;

- urging that a moratorium be imposed on death sentences and executions pending a comprehensive review of the death penalty.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Atayevich Niyazov

Turkmenistan

744000 g. Ashgabat

Apparat Prezidenta

Prezidentu Turkmenistana

NIYAZOVU S.A.,

**Telegrams: Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, Prezidentu Niyazovu**

**Faxes: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 51 12 (it can be difficult to get a connection) or at the Presidential press service + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 55 71**

**Salutation: Dear President Niyazov**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Chairman of the Clemency Commission of the Turkmenistan Majlis (parliament),  
name unknown

Turkmenistan

g. Ashgabat

Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya Majlisa Turkmenistana

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Director of the Turkmen National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights

Vladimir Kadyrov

Turkmenistan

744000 g. Ashgabat

ul. Karla Liebnehta, 47

Turkmensky natsionalny institut demokratii i prav cheloveka

Direktoru KADYROVU V.

**Fax: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 06 76 (it can be difficult to get a connection)**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Boris Shikhmyradov

Turkmenistan

744000 g. Ashgabat

pr. Magtymguly, 83

Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Turkmenistana

Ministru SHIKHMYRADOVU B.

**Fax: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 51 14 30 or 25 37 27 (it can be difficult to get a connection)**

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 February 1998.