

# URGENT ACTION

## JOURNALIST AT RISK OF TORTURE IN TURKMENISTAN

**Rovshen Yazmuhamedov, a Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist, was detained on 6 May in Turkmenistan by local police. Though the charges against him have not been disclosed by the authorities, there are fears that he may have been targeted in connection with his work and that he is at grave risk of torture.**

According to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), **Rovshen Yazmuhamedov**, 30, has been working with the Turkmen service since September 2012. He is a correspondent and mainly covers social issues. On 9 May his family informed RFE/RL of his detention. According to his family, Rovshen Yazmuhamedov, has been interrogated by security services several times in the past. He is currently being held in a temporary detention facility run by the department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs involved in the fight against organized crime and terrorism-related cases. His family has also told RFE/RL that the authorities have begun to install surveillance cameras around their home.

RFE/RL is one of the few remaining sources of independent information about life in Turkmenistan, despite the Turkmen authorities' continued attempts to silence its journalists and other perceived critics. A correspondent with RFE/RL, Ogulsapar Muradova, was detained and died in custody in disputed circumstance in 2006. No effective and independent investigation appears to have been conducted into her death. In light of these circumstances, there are fears that Rovshen Yazmuhamedov might have been arbitrarily detained, is at immediate risk of torture and other ill-treatment and that he may be a prisoner of conscience.

### **Please write immediately in Turkmen, Russian, English or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to ensure that Rovshen Yazmuhamedov is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and that his family is not subjected to any pressure or reprisals;
- Urging the authorities to immediately disclose the charges against him and release him immediately if no recognizable criminal charges are brought against him;
- Stating that if it becomes clear that he was detained because of his journalist work, Amnesty International will adopt him as prisoner of conscience and call for his immediate and unconditional release.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JUNE 2013 TO:**

#### President of Turkmenistan

Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov  
Presidential Palace  
744000 Ashgabat  
Turkmenistan  
Fax: +993 12 93 5112 (please try a couple of times between 10-1500 GMT)

**Salutation: Dear President**

#### Minister of Foreign Affairs

Rashid Meredov  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
83 pr. Magtymguly  
744000 Ashgabat  
Turkmenistan  
Email: [mfatm@online.tm](mailto:mfatm@online.tm)  
Fax: +993 12 93 4241 (please try a couple of times between 10-1500 GMT)

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

Name: Rovshen Yazmuhamedov (m), Ogulsapar Muradova (f)

Gender m/f: both

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INTERNATIONAL**

