

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 233/93 Prisoners of conscience

16 July 1993

UZBEKISTAN: Babur Shakirov
Khazratkul Khudayberdi
Salavat Umurzakov
Olim Karimov
Otanazar Aripov
Abdulaziz Makhmudov

(in cyrillic

_____)

Amnesty International is concerned that the above six men, who went on trial in the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan on 1 July 1993, would be prisoners of conscience if convicted. They face a minimum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, and possibly the death penalty. With the trial now underway and the prospect of sentencing being imminent, it is vital that the maximum possible pressure is exerted on behalf of all six defendants. Amnesty International is therefore appealing to the authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of those currently in detention, Babur Shakirov, Khazratkul Khudayberdi and Salavat Umurzakov, and pointing out that all six men will be considered prisoners of conscience if convicted.

They are charged under Article 62 of the criminal code with "organization activity directed towards commission of especially dangerous state crimes, and participation in an anti-government organization". The charge relates to their membership of a non-violent social organization-in-formation called Milli Mejlis (National Council), the draft statute of which envisaged it as a parliamentary-style forum uniting opposition parties and movements. If convicted under Article 62, these men face a minimum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, and possibly the death penalty. Babur Shakirov, Khazratkul Khudayberdi and Salavat Umurzakov are currently in detention and are already considered by Amnesty International to be prisoners of conscience.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since mid-1992 a clampdown against government opponents has been intensifying.

In addition to the subjects of this Urgent Action, other opposition activists have been prosecuted for slandering the President, or convicted on possibly falsified criminal charges. Government opponents have been beaten by unknown assailants on the streets, and the authorities appear to have taken few steps

to investigate. The home of a human rights activist has been bombed, that of a well-known journalist burned down in suspicious circumstances.

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

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Babur Shakirov, Khazratkul Khudayberdi and Salavat Umurzakov, on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience;

- pointing out that if convicted, all six defendants in the Milli Mejlis case will be considered prisoners of conscience;

- calling on the Government of Uzbekistan to stop harassment of opposition activists for exercising non-violently their fundamental human rights to freedom of expression, opinion and association.

APPEALS TO

The President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov:

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

pl. Mustakillik

Apparat Prezidenta

Prezidentu Karimovu

**Telegrams: Uzbekistan, Tashkent, apparat Prezidenta, Prezidentu Karimovu
I.A.**

Faxes: + 7 3712 39 55 25, + 7 3712 39 54 00

+ 7 3712 55 10

Telexes: 116116 BAHOR SU

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1. Chairman of the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, Ubaydulla Mingbayev:

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

ul. Kodiri, 1

Verkhovny sud Respubliki Uzbekistan

Predsedatelyu Mingbayevu U.

2. Procurator General of Uzbekistan, Buritosh Mustafoyev:

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

ul. Gogolya, 66

Prokuratura Respubliki Uzbekistan

Generalnomu prokuroru Mustafoyevu B.

3. Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Sadyk Safayev:

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

Ministerstvo inostrannykh del

Ministru Safayevu S.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 August 1993.