

EXTRA 68/00

Imminent execution/Ill-treat

UZBEKISTAN Marat Rakhmanov (_____), aged 28
Andrey Zolotykh (_____), aged 22
Semyon Kimalov (_____), aged 24
Ruslan Gudimovich (_____), aged 21

The four men named above could be executed at any time, after their appeals were turned down by the Supreme Court. Their only hope now is to be pardoned by President Islam Karimov. Amnesty International is particularly concerned at allegations that one of them confessed under torture.

The four were all convicted of premeditated, aggravated murder, in separate criminal cases, by Samarkand Regional Court.

According to his lawyer, Marat Rakhmanov was severely beaten by police while he was in custody awaiting trial, at police station No. 6 in Samarkand on 17 August 1999. The lawyer also alleges that he only confessed under torture. To Amnesty International's knowledge, the authorities have done nothing to investigate these allegations.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and without reservation, as 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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Premeditated, aggravated murder is one of eight offences that carry the death penalty in Uzbekistan. In 1998 the *Oliy Majlis* (parliament) removed the death penalty from the criminal code as a punishment for five other offences.

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights in Uzbekistan, Sayora Rashidova, informed Amnesty International that this development was part of Uzbekistan's policy to "abolish the death penalty by stages". Since the beginning of 1999 Amnesty International has learned of at least 55 death sentences and 20 executions in Uzbekistan. However, as information on the death penalty is regarded as a state secret, the real number of those sentenced to death and executed may be much higher. The UN Committee against Torture asked the Uzbek government delegation for these figures at its November 1999 session, but did not receive them.

Amnesty International has consistently pressed the Uzbek authorities to reduce the scope of the death penalty as a step towards total abolition. The organization has also asked that Uzbekistan impose a moratorium on death sentences and executions pending a review of this punishment and that they publish comprehensive statistics on the application of the death penalty.

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

- urging the President to use his constitutional authority to commute the death sentences passed on Marat Rakhmanov, Andrey Zolotykh, Semyon Kimalov and Ruslan Gudimovich, as well as all other death sentences that come before him;
- urging the authorities to enter a new stage of their "policy to abolish the death penalty by stages" and impose a moratorium on death sentences and

executions pending a comprehensive review of the death penalty, in line with the international trend towards abolition of the death penalty;

- expressing concern at allegations that Marat Rakhmanov's confession was extracted under torture, and that he was ill-treated in custody;
- asking the authorities to launch an independent and impartial investigation into the allegations of ill-treatment;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of crime and their families, but pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments, and is brutalizing to all those involved in its application.

APPEALS TO (Please note that fax numbers are difficult to obtain. If a voice answers, repeat 'fax' until connected; otherwise it is advisable to leave your fax machine on auto-redial):

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Respublika Uzbekistan; 700163 g. Tashkent; ul. Uzbekistanskaya, 43; Rezidentsia prezident; Prezidentu Respubliki Uzbekistan KARIMOVU I.A.; UZBEKISTAN

Telegrams: Prezidentu Karimovu, 700163 Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Faxes: + 998 71 139 53 15 / 139 53 25

e-mails: uzinfo@uzinfo.gov.uz

Salutation: Dear President Karimov

Head of the Clemency Department at the President's Office

Respublika Uzbekistan; 700000 g. Tashkent; Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki Uzbekistan; Otdel po voprosam pomilovaniya; Zaveduyushchemu otdelom, AKHMANOVU N.; UZBEKISTAN

Telegrams: Akhmanovu N., Otdel pomilovaniya, 700000 Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Salutation: Dear Mr Akhmanov

Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Respublika Uzbekistan; 700183 g. Tashkent; ul. Abdulla Kodiri, 1; Verkhovny Sud Respubliki Uzbekistan; Predsedatelyu MINGBAYEVU U., UZBEKISTAN

Telegrams: Mingbayevu U., Verkhovny sud, 700183 Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Salutation: Dear Mr. Mingbayev

COPIES TO:

Oliy Majlis Commissioner for Human Rights

Respublika Uzbekistan; 700035 g. Tashkent; Oliy Majlis Respubliki Uzbekistan; Upolnomochennoy po pravam cheloveka pri Oliy Majlis, RASHIDOVU S.; UZBEKISTAN

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Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Respublika Uzbekistan; 700029 g. Tashkent; pl. Mustakillik, 5; Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Respubliki Uzbekistan; Ministru KOMILOVU A.Kh.; UZBEKISTAN

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and to diplomatic representatives of Uzbekistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 September 2000.