

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 254/93 (EUR 62/22/93, 4 August 1993) and follow-up EUR 62/25/93, 18 August 1993 - Legal Concern and new concern: Fear of ill-treatment

UZBEKISTAN
(in cyrillic

Pulat AKHUNOV
_____)

Amnesty International fears that political activist Pulat Akhunov, who is a probable prisoner of conscience, is at serious risk of being ill-treated in detention. Currently serving a total of four and a half years' imprisonment for allegedly fabricated criminal charges, Pulat Akhunov has reportedly been transferred recently to a prison camp for especially dangerous criminals. Amnesty International fears that this transfer was organized by the authorities deliberately to place Pulat Akhunov at risk of violence from his fellow inmates.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pulat Akhunov is a deputy chairman of the opposition Birlik (Unity) movement and a former deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet. He was born in 1962 and is a teacher of biology by profession. He was arrested in July 1992 and tried in December in Andizhan Regional Court for "malicious hooliganism", for which he was sentenced to 18 months in a labour camp. It has been alleged that the case, which concerned an alleged assault, was fabricated because of Pulat Akhunov's opposition political activities. While in prison in Andizhan pending the outcome of an appeal against this conviction he was charged in February 1993 with illegal possession of narcotics and with assaulting a prison guard.

It has been alleged that these charges were also fabricated. Pulat Akhunov was tried on these additional charges and sentenced in August to an additional three years' imprisonment.

Pulat Akhunov was apparently ordered to serve his sentence at a "reinforced regime" corrective labour colony (there are four kinds of labour colony in the Uzbekistan penal system, which increase in severity: "ordinary", "reinforced", "strict" and "special"). However, he was reportedly sent in September to a corrective labour colony in Kyzyltepinsky district, Navoi Region, which is classified as either "strict" or "special regime", and which is used to detain especially dangerous criminals.

During the period when there were large numbers of prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union, Amnesty International learned of numerous instances when prisoners of conscience were subjected to physical attack by criminal prisoners, acting with the connivance or protection of the authorities. Amnesty

International fears that the Uzbekistan authorities may have deliberately placed Pulat Akhunov in the colony in Kyzyltepinisky district in order to expose him to the risk of such physical attack from fellow prisoners. Furthermore, the general conditions in this colony are said to be among the worst in Uzbekistan.

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

- asking the authorities to confirm that Pulat Akhunov is being held at a corrective labour colony in Kyzyltepinisky district, Navoi Region, which is classified as either "strict regime" or "special regime", and if so, to state the reasons for this;

- expressing concern for the physical safety and well-being of Pulat Akhunov, and urging the authorities to ensure that he is not subject to any ill-treatment;

- calling on the authorities to conduct judicial reviews of Pulat Akhunov's criminal convictions for malicious hooliganism, illegal possession of narcotics and assaulting a prison guard.

APPEALS TO:

1. 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 or + 7 3712 39 54 00 or + 7 3712 55 10

Telexes:116116 BAHOR SU

Salutation: Dear President Karimov

2. Minister of Internal Affairs, Zakirzhan Almatov

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

ul. G. Lopatina, 1

MVD Respubliki Uzbekistan

Ministru Almatovu Z.A.

Telegrams:Uzbekistan, Tashkent, MVD, Ministru Almatovu Z.A.

Salutation:Dear Minister

3. Procurator General of Uzbekistan, Buritosh Mustafojev

Respublika Uzbekistan

g. Tashkent

ul. Gogolya, 66

Prokuratura Respubliki Uzbekistan

Generalnomu prokuroru Mustafojevu B.

**Telegrams:Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Prokuratura, Generalnomu prokuroru
Mustafojevu B.**

Salutation:Dear Procurator General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Saidmukhtar Saidkasymov

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 10 December 1993.