

URGENT ACTION

TAJIK JOURNALIST FOUND GUILTY

On 14 October, a court in northern city of Khujand in the Soghd region, Tajikistan, found BBC journalist, Urunboy Usmonov, guilty of charges brought against him, which implicate him in criminal activities related to banned religious groups.

Tajik journalist **Urunboy Usmonov** was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on 14 October but released immediately under an amnesty. He will be appealing against the verdict.

Urunboy Usmonov, who works for the BBC, was arrested on 13 June 2011. He was initially charged with participation in a banned extremist organization, Hizb-ut-Tahrir, an Islamic organization which is banned in all five Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan.

He was released on bail on 14 July. The initial charges were changed but still implicated Urunboy Usmonov in criminal activities related to banned religious groups and carried a sentence of between two and five years' imprisonment.

Urunboy Usmonov maintained that his contact with the organization was in order to report on the causes for the organization's increasing popularity. Amnesty International maintains that he is innocent and that he was targeted for his legitimate work as a journalist and for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

His wife was only able to visit him once during his detention. Allegations that he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention remain a concern.

Amnesty International will continue to monitor his case.

Many thanks to all who took action on behalf of Urunboy Usmonov. No further action is requested from the UA network at this time.

This is the second update of UA 211/11. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR60/004/2011/en and www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR60/007/2011/en

Name: Urunboy Usmonov
Gender M

Further information on UA: 211/11 Index: EUR 60/012/2011 Issue Date: 19 October 2011

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