

**Abdul Wase Abdul Karim**

01 June 2004

**Russian Federation**

On 25 March 2004 Abdul Wase Abdul Karim, a 28-year-old asylum-seeker from Afghanistan, was walking near the Chertanovskaia metro station in the south of Moscow. Moments later, a group of skinheads set upon him and began to viciously beat him with metal bars in an alleged race hate attack. Six days later, Abdul Wase Abdul Karim died in a Moscow hospital – he had not regained consciousness.

Abdul Wase Abdul Karim fled his home town of Herat in Afghanistan in May 1998. A member of the Afghan Tajik minority, he fled the Taliban regime that had captured Herat in 1995. Roughly two years after his arrival in Russia, Abdul Wase Abdul Karim was registered with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Moscow. Soon after this, he was given a "pre-registration" number by the Federal Migration Service in Moscow, although at the time of his death he had not yet entered the procedure for obtaining full refugee status. According to reports, Abdul Wase Abdul Karim had a Russian common-law wife and a three-month-old daughter.

An investigation into the assault on Abdul Wase Abdul Karim was initiated immediately after the attack under part 1, Article 111 of the Russian Criminal Code – "deliberate infliction of serious bodily harm". Following the death of the victim, the investigation was requalified by the Chertanovskaia District Procuracy under part 4 of Article 111 of the Russian Criminal Code - the deliberate infliction of serious bodily harm by a group of persons, motivated by hooliganism, resulting in death. Despite the alleged racial motivation of the attack, the aggravating circumstances of the murder are currently qualified as "hooliganism" rather than "national, racial or religious hatred or enmity". According to the Chertanovskaia District Procuracy, several suspects have been detained and are being held in custody in connection with the murder.

Discrimination on grounds of race is a reality for many members of ethnic or national minority groups in the Russian Federation. Victims whose cases have come to the attention of Amnesty International are predominantly students, asylum-seekers and refugees from Africa, but also include citizens of the Russian Federation (including ethnic Chechens and Jews), as well as people from the south Caucasus, from South, Southeast and Central Asia, from the Middle East and from Latin America.

The Russian Federation is a state party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Convention obliges the authorities to take active measures to prohibit and eliminate discrimination on grounds of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin and to guarantee to everyone equality before the law.

**TAKE ACTION NOW!**

Please send appeals immediately:

- welcoming the fact that an investigation is being conducted into the murder of Abdul Wase Abdul Karim and urging the authorities to conduct the investigation in a thorough and impartial manner;
- urging for allegations that the murder was racially-motivated to be fully investigated and duly reflected in any charges brought against suspects;

- calling on the authorities to ensure that anyone reasonably suspected as being responsible for the attack is brought to justice in the course of a fair trial in line with international standards;
- urging the Russian authorities "to strengthen its efforts to prevent racist violence and to protect members of ethnic minorities and foreigners..." as recommended by the (UN) Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in March 2003.

Send appeals to:

**Procurator General of the Russian Federation**

Vladimir Ustinov  
Ul. Bolshaia Dimitrovka, 15a  
103793 Moscow  
Russian Federation

**Fax: +7 095 292 88 48**

**Salutation: Dear Procurator General**

**Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation**

Rashid Nurgaliev  
Ul. Zhitnaia, 16  
117049 Moscow  
Russian Federation

**Fax: +7 095 237 49 25/+7 095 230 25 80**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Send copies to:

**Human Rights Ombudsman of the Russian Federation**

Vladimir Lukin  
Ul. Miasnitskaia 47  
103084 Moscow  
Russian Federation

**Fax: +7 095 207 3977**

**Salutation: Dear Ombudsman**

**Head of Federal Migration Service of Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation**

Aleksandr Chekalin  
Ul. Ogariova 6  
117049 Moscow  
Russian Federation

**Fax: +7 095 237 4925**

**Salutation: Dear Deputy Minister**