



Russian Federation: Fear for safety of Mr. Yury Staroverov

Case RUS 300109

Arbitrary arrest/ Fear for physical and psychological integrity

The International Secretariat of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) requests your URGENT intervention in the following situation in the Russian Federation.

Brief description of the situation

The International Secretariat of OMCT has been informed by the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society (RCFS), a member of OMCT SOS-Torture Network, about the arbitrary arrest and risk for safety of Mr. **Yury Staroverov**, a press person of “The Other Russia” in Nizhny Novgorod and a staff member of the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society as well as of the Novaja Gazeta supplement in Nizhny Novgorod.

According to the information received, Mr. Yury Staroverov was arrested by UBOP (Department for Fighting Organised Crime) while on his way to the office of the Novaja Gazeta on 28 January 2009 but his arrest and whereabouts were only known on 29 January 2009, when he was brought to court. He was reportedly sentenced to five days of administrative detention (under article 20.1 of the Administrative Code) for alleged “cursing” (according to UBOP officer who arrested Mr. Yury Staroverov, he was cursing while standing alone in the staircase of the Novaja Gazeta office building). He is currently being detained at a police placement centre (54 Pakhomov Street) in Nizhny Novgorod.

According to the same information received, Mr. Yury Staroverov had been accused on the “Decembrists” case (peaceful seizure of the President's office in December 2004), for which he had spent one year in Federal Security Service (FSB) investigation prison and then sentenced to three years, sentence which was then suspended. His probation term was over in December 2008 but he had reportedly remained under surveillance by the Department monitoring the execution of punishment.

The International Secretariat of OMCT is concerned about the safety of Mr. Yury Staroverov, in particular as he has already been reportedly subjected to numerous threats and provocation by UBOP and FSB officers. Furthermore, OMCT is concerned with regard to this arrest and sentencing as it seems solely based at sanctioning his political activities.

Action requested

Please write to the authorities of the Russian Federation urging them to:

0. Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Yury Staroverov;
0. Guarantee access to his lawyer, family and to independent medical care;
0. Order his immediate release in the absence of valid legal charges that are consistent with international law and standards, or if such charges exist, bring him before an impartial and competent tribunal and guarantee his procedural rights at all times;
0. Order a prompt, thorough, impartial and independent investigation into these events in order to identify all those responsible, bring them to trial and apply the civil, penal and/or administrative sanctions as provided by law;
0. Guarantee adequate reparation to the victim;
0. Guarantee the respect of human rights and the fundamental freedoms throughout the country in accordance with national laws and international human rights standards.

Addresses

- Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, Kremlin, Moscow, Russia, Faxes: + 7 495 206 5173 / 230 2408, Email: president@gov.ru;
- Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation, Yuri Chayka, 125993, Moskva K-31, Ul. B. Dimitrovka, d 15a, Russian Federation, Fax: + 7 (495)692-17-25;
- Chairwoman of the Presidential Human Rights Commission of the Russian Federation, Ella Pamfilova, 103132 g. Moskva, Staraya ploshchad, d 8/5, pod 3, Russian Federation, Fax: +7 495 20 64 855;
- Vladimir Lukin, Russian Federal Ombudsman for Human Rights, Fax: +7 495 207-74-70;
- Minister of Internal Affairs, Rashid Nurgaliev, ul. Zhitnaya, 16, 117049 Moscow, Russian Federation, Telegram: Rossiia, 117049, Moskva, Fax: + 7 495 237 49 25;
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, Smolenskaya-Sennaya pl, 32/34, 121200 Moscow, Russian Federation, Telegram: Fax: + 7 495 230 21 30;
- Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations in Geneva Av. de la Paix 15, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland, e-mail : mission.russian@ties.itu.int, fax: +4122 734 40 44;

Please also write to the diplomatic representations of the Russian Federation in your respective countries.

Geneva, 30 January 2009

Kindly inform OMCT of any action undertaken quoting the code number of this appeal in your reply.

L'OMCT a son siège à Genève, en Suisse. Elle coordonne le réseau SOS-Torture composé de 282 organisations régionales et internationales dans 93 pays sur cinq continents.

Contact : omct@omct.org