

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION MEMBER ILL-TREATED IN DETENTION

A member of the Islamic Renaissance Party has been arbitrarily detained in Tajikistan since 30 October. His family, who still do not have access to him, claim that he has been tortured and ill-treated while in detention, has restricted access to the family's lawyers and that his medical treatment is inadequate.

Thirty-four-year-old agricultural worker and member of the opposition Islamic Renaissance Party, **Umed Tojiev**, was arrested on 30 October at a market in the Sughd Region. The media reported that he had disobeyed the police, and for this the Isfara City Court issued a remand order for his detention for ten days as an administrative punishment. However, he was reportedly being forced to confess to being a "terrorist". Between 30 October and 2 November, several officers, including the deputy head of the Isfara Department for Internal Affairs, put a plastic bag over his head, denied him sleep, food and water, and used electric shocks through wet fabric in order to avoid leaving traces of ill-treatment. As a result, Umed Tojiev jumped out of the third floor window of the police station. He said: "I am religious and understand that suicide is a sin but I did not have any choice, I needed to attract public attention as I understood that no one will help me. [...] I wanted to express protest against the unlawful actions of the police."

Umed Tojiev was hospitalized with broken legs for four days and on 5 November was placed in pre-trial isolation detention. Although he has been under the supervision of the detention medical officer, his family believes that his medical treatment has been inadequate. On 2 and 5 November, his family hired two lawyers for him. However, they were repeatedly denied access to him, while police reportedly invited their own defence lawyer to represent him during all investigation activities. Umed Tojiev was only able to see a lawyer of his choice for the first time on 13 November. One lawyer stated that Umed Tojiev was carried into the room as he could not walk, he was shaking and crying, and he said he was forced to incriminate himself under duress.

Please write immediately in Tajik, Russian, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to ensure that Umed Tojiev has unrestricted and confidential access to the lawyers appointed by his family in line with Tajikistan's national laws and international obligations;
- Calling on them to ensure that Umed Tojiev has immediate access to adequate medical treatment and to provide his lawyers with all medical records made during his detention and hospitalization;
- Urging them to launch a prompt, impartial and independent investigation into the allegations of torture and other ill-treatment of Umed Tojiev and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 JANUARY 2014 TO:

President

Emomali Rahmon
80 Rudaki Street
Dushanbe 734023
Tajikistan
Fax: +992 372 21 68 00
Email: mail@president.tj
Salutation: Dear President

Email: info@mfa.tj

Prosecutor General

Sherkhon Salimzoda
126, A. Sino Avenue
Dushanbe 734043
Tajikistan
(When sending letters through fax or email, add request "Please kindly forward this letter to the Prosecutor General")
Fax: +992 372 21 02 59

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International is concerned that human rights in Tajikistan are frequently violated in the pursuit of groups perceived as a threat to national security, and that innocent people are caught up in clampdown operations. Amnesty International's research indicates that particular targets are religious movements and Islamist groups or parties, and that people accused of being Islamist extremists are at particular risk of torture and other ill-treatment in Tajikistan.

Amnesty International is concerned about continued reports of routine torture and other ill-treatment of people detained on charges relating to national security and religious extremism, in detention facilities run by specialised departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) which include the Sixth Department (responsible for fighting organised crime); and ones run by the State Committee of National Security (SCNS). The SCNS is responsible for counter-terrorism operations, internal security, investigating fraud, and monitoring unregistered or banned groups, organizations or parties.

Although most pre-trial detention facilities and prisons were transferred from the authority of the MIA to the Ministry of Justice in 2002, detention facilities run by the SCNS were not. Lawyers report that it is particularly difficult to gain access to their clients in the SCNS detention facilities. The law establishes rules governing detention procedures which regulate the work of all law enforcement officers in Tajikistan, including those working for the SCNS. However, there are reports that in certain more sensitive individual cases, unofficial instructions to flout detention procedures are issued by senior officials in the MIA or the SCNS, which are not made public. In such cases it appears to be more difficult for a detainee to access a lawyer, or the outside world, which further deprives detainees of key safeguards against torture and ill-treatment.

Law enforcement officials from the MIA Sixth Department reportedly frequently use torture and other ill-treatment. "The Sixth Department is the worst. You come out dead or crippled", said one human rights activist on 7 April 2011.

Name: Umed Tojiev

Gender: m

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