

URGENT ACTION

FAMILY AT RISK IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The lives of Adnan Ibragimov, a 54-year-old man from Chechnya in the Russian Federation, and his family are in danger after he began pursuing a criminal investigation into the apparent enforced disappearance of his nephew, Said-Salekh Ibragimov.

On the morning of 21 October, 19-year old **Said-Salekh Ibragimov** left his home in the village of Goity in Urus-Martan district, to go to the nearby city of Grozny, the Chechen capital. At around 2pm, security forces personnel, believed to be soldiers and police officers, raided and searched his house. Said-Salekh Ibragimov's wife and his 80-year old disabled grandmother were in the house at the time. Alerted by other family members, **Adnan Ibragimov** came to the house from his home in Grozny. Police arrested him and Said-Salekh Ibragimov's mother, accusing them of helping members of illegal armed groups. Police showed them the dead body of an alleged insurgent who, according to the police, had been hiding in their house. Adnan Ibragimov and Said-Salekh Ibragimov's mother claimed that they knew nothing about it. The two were taken to Urus-Martan district police station where they were questioned, before being released several hours later. The house where Said-Salekh Ibragimov lived with his family was burnt down. Villagers alleged that the house started burning when local police officers were nearby.

Later that day, police officers telephoned Adnan Ibragimov, demanding that he return to the police station. When he arrived there, he was taken to the headquarters of one of the police battalions in Grozny, where officers showed him Said-Salekh Ibragimov. According to Adnan Ibragimov's testimony, his nephew had been badly beaten. The police told Adnan Ibragimov that his nephew had been welcoming terrorists into the family home and that his family should disown him. The officers said that Said-Salekh Ibragimov should be killed to avenge the death of security forces personnel who were allegedly killed in the raid on the family home. The police then took Said-Salekh Ibragimov away. His whereabouts remain unknown.

Adnan Ibragimov asked the local Public Prosecutor's office to investigate the apparent enforced disappearance. According to Adnan Ibragimov, the official investigating the case warned him that he was putting himself and his family at risk by pursuing the investigation. The official initially refused to include information about circumstances of his nephew's enforced disappearance in his report. Sources in Grozny believe that the investigation is unlikely to be thorough and impartial.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to take immediate action to protect Adnan Ibragimov and his family, including enrolling them on a witness protection scheme;
- Calling for an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the circumstances of the arrest, ill-treatment and possible enforced disappearance of Said-Salekh Ibragimov, with all those responsible brought to justice;
- Urging the authorities to conduct an immediate, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the alleged burning down by police officers of Said-Salekh Ibragimov's house.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 JANUARY 2010 TO:

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation

Yurii Ya. Chaika
Ul. Bolshaia Dmitrovka, 15a
Moscow GSP-3
125993 Russian Federation

Fax: +7 4956 9217 25

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Minister of the Interior of the Russian Federation

Rashid.G.Nurgaliev
Ul. Zhitnaia, 16
Moscow
119049 Russian Federation

Fax: +7 495 605 52 43

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

President of the Russian Federation

Dmitry A. Medvedev
ul. Ilyinka, 23
Moscow
103132 Russian Federation
Fax +7 495 9102134

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation 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

On 16 April 2009 the Russian authorities declared an end to the counter-terrorism operation in Chechnya. However, serious human rights violations continue to be committed in a climate of impunity in Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus. The civilian population continues to live in an atmosphere of lawlessness that engenders fear and insecurity. Armed opposition groups in the region continue to mount attacks. Law enforcement officials conduct counter-terrorism measures which, in many instances, entail serious human rights violations. A legitimate aim – that of tackling violence by armed groups and bringing stability to the North Caucasus – is still being pursued by means which violate international human rights law.

Relatives of those suspected of being members of armed groups are pressured to persuade their family members to lay down their arms, and in some cases to go and search for them (“in the mountains” or “in the forests”) to bring them back. Reportedly, the pressure has included intimidation, arbitrary detention, forced evictions and destruction of houses. In August 2008, President Kadyrov announced on television that “those families whose relatives are in the forest are accomplices in crime. They are terrorists, extremists...” There have been reports of the family homes of those who have joined armed groups being burned down.

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