

PUBLIC

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UA 224/07 Fear for safety/torture/enforced disappearance

30 August 2007

**RUSSIAN
FEDERATION Ibragim Mukhmedovich Gazdiev (m), born 1978
(Ingushetia)**

Ibragim Gazdiev, who is an ethnic Ingush, was reportedly seized by armed men in camouflage, at about 12.54pm on 8 August in Karabulak, in the Russian Republic of Ingushetia. He has not been seen or heard from since and according to unofficial information, is being held in incommunicado detention in Ingushetia or in a neighbouring North Caucasus republic. The authorities however have denied that Ibragim Gazdiev is being held in detention and Amnesty International fears that he is in real danger of being tortured or killed.

According to a witness, Ibragim Gazdiev was seized by armed men of ethnic Russian appearance who were travelling in "Gazel" and "Mercedes" cars. They reportedly surrounded him 30-40 metres from the town hall and forced him into the "Gazel" car, before driving him away. Ibragim Gazdiev had been travelling in his brother's car, a silver coloured VAZ 21010, registration number C 327 TM 06, which has also gone missing. The armed men are alleged to have been law enforcement officials and it is thought that the Federal Security Service (FSB) might have been involved in the abduction.

The prosecutor's office is reported to have opened a criminal investigation into Ibragim Gazdiev's abduction. The President of Ingushetia, Murat Ziazikov, has reportedly ordered the heads of law enforcement structures in Ingushetia to solve this case as soon as possible.

Ibragim Gazdiev had reportedly graduated from the economics faculty of the Ingushetia State University, and was working as a manager of a shop selling building materials. He had been planning to get married at the end of August.

BACKGROUND:

There are ongoing serious human rights violations including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and abductions, torture, and extrajudicial executions reported to be taking place in Ingushetia. The human rights violations are attributed by many to a spread of the armed conflict in Chechnya to Ingushetia.

Between 10 and 22 ethnic Ingush men are reported to have gone missing in Ingushetia and in neighbouring North Ossetia so far in 2007. While in some of these cases there are no reported witnesses to any abduction or detention, unlike in the case of Ibragim Gazdiev, the relatives of the missing men believe they may have been detained by security services and subsequently disappeared. On 29 June 2007 protestors blocked the federal highway near Nazran to call for a halt to arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, and killings by law enforcement structures in Ingushetia.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- expressing concern for the safety of Ibragim Gazdiev, who was reportedly abducted by armed men in camouflage on 8 August in Karabulak, Ingushetia;
- calling for a full, thorough and independent inquiry into allegations that the armed men were law enforcement officials;
- urging the authorities to establish what has happened to Ibragim Gazdiev, and where he is being held;
- urging that he be released immediately and unconditionally if he is found to be in detention, if he is not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence in line with internationally recognized standards of fair trial;

- reminding the Russian federal and Ingush authorities that Ibragim Gazdiev should be accorded full protection of Russian and international law, if he is being detained, including immediate access to a lawyer of his choice and to his family.

Appeals to:

Prosecutor General

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Salutation: Dear Minister

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals 11 October 2007.