

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/death in custody/
health concern

14 September 1999

TURKMENISTAN

Mukhametkuli Aymuradov, born 1946
Khoshali Garayev, born 1962

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of possible prisoner of conscience Mukhametkuli Aymuradov, following the sudden death in suspicious circumstances of his co-defendant and fellow prisoner Khoshali Garayev. Both were serving long sentences in the maximum security prison of Turkmenbashi.

Mukhametkuli Aymuradov is reportedly not receiving adequate medical attention: he is believed to be suffering from a gastric ulcer, cholecystitis and recurring inflammations of the kidneys and the bladder.

Mukhametkuli Aymuradov and Khoshali Garayev were convicted in 1995 of anti-state crimes, including "attempted terrorism", and sentenced to 15 and 12 years respectively. There was compelling evidence that the case against them was fabricated solely to punish them for their association with exiled opponents of the government. In December 1998 they were sentenced to an additional 18 years' imprisonment in connection with an alleged prison escape attempt two months before. There were allegations that the authorities had orchestrated the escape attempt so that the two men would not be transferred, under their previous sentence, from a maximum security prison to a less restrictive regime. Amnesty International believes that the second conviction may well have been another attempt to punish the two for their perceived opposition to President Niyazov.

Khoshali Garayev's family were first informed of his death on 10 September, when they reportedly received a telegram from the prison authorities asking them to collect his body. They received no death certificate and no official written explanation of his sudden death, and were apparently allowed neither to view the body nor to have an autopsy conducted. According to the prison authorities Khoshali Garayev hanged himself after he was put in solitary confinement following a fight in his cell. However, in a recent letter he appeared hopeful that he would benefit from an upcoming presidential amnesty and that he would be back with his family in the year 2000. There was no indication that he was particularly depressed or suicidal.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Russian, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety and well-being of Mukhametkuli Aymuradov, and urging the authorities to ensure that he receives appropriate medical attention;
- expressing deep regret at the death of Khoshali Garayev and calling for a full inquiry into the circumstances of his death, for the findings to be made public, and for anyone found responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with the norms of international law.

APPEALS TO:

President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Atayevich Niyazov
744000 g. Ashgabat
Apparat Prezidenta
Prezidentu Turkmenistana NIYAZOVU S.A.

TURKMENISTAN

Telegrams: Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, Prezidentu Niyazovu

Faxes: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 51 12 (it can be difficult to get a connection) or at the Presidential press service + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 55 71

Salutation: Dear President Niyazov

Procurator General of Turkmenistan, Gurbanbibi ATAJANOVA (Ms)

g. Ashgabat

ul. Seidi, 4

Prokuratura Turkmenistana

Generalnomu prokuroru ATAJANOVOY G.

TURKMENISTAN

Faxes + 7 3632 or 993 12 followed by 35 44 82 (it can be difficult to get a connection)

Telegrams: Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, Prokuratura, Gen. prokuroru Atajanovoy

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Head of the State Directorate of the Criminal Executive System (the prison service), Name unknown

g. Ashgabat

ul. Zhitnikova

Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Turkmenistana

GUUIS

Nachalniku

TURKMENISTAN

Telegrams: Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, GUUIS, Nachalniku

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

Director of the Turkmen National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights Vladimir Kadyrov

744000 g. Ashgabat

ul. Karla Liebnehta, 47

Turkmensky natsionalny institut demokratii i prav cheloveka

Direktoru KADYROVU V.

TURKMENISTAN

Faxes: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 35 06 76 (it can be difficult to get a connection)

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Boris Shikhmyradov

744000 g. Ashgabat

pr. Magtymguly, 83

Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Turkmenistana

Ministru SHIKHMYRADOVU B.

TURKMENISTAN

Faxes: + 993 12 or 7 3632 followed by 51 14 30 or 25 37 27 (it can be difficult to get a connection)

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkmenistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 October 1999.