

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE CHECHEN MAN RETURNED TO RUSSIA

Chechen torture survivor Murad Amriev was handed over to the Russian authorities by Belarusian police at 3am on 9 June in what amounts to a rendition. His whereabouts are currently unknown and he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. The Chechen authorities had requested his extradition to face charges in Grozny, the Chechen capital, however there are no grounds to detain him and he must be released immediately.

After being detained on the Russian-Belarusian border on the night of 7 June **Murad Amriev** was held in a police station in the city of Dobrush, eastern Belarus, where police officers reportedly handcuffed him to a radiator, ignored his request to claim asylum and prevented him from seeing his lawyers.

Early in the morning on 9 June he was transferred in a convoy of police cars to the Russian border. His lawyers attempted to follow, but lost sight of the car transporting Murad Amriev when the police cars separated creating a decoy. Murad Amriev's whereabouts are currently unknown and his lawyers are trying to locate him. He is believed to be detained by either Ministry of Interior police or agents of the Federal Security Service. If transferred to Chechnya he is a grave risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Urging the Russian authorities to release Murad Amriev immediately as there are no legal grounds to detain him and he is currently being arbitrarily detained;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that Murad Amriev is protected from possible arbitrary detention by law enforcement officers from Chechnya;
- Reminding the authorities that as a state party to the Convention against Torture and the European Convention on Human Rights Russia has an obligation to protect those on its territory from torture and other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JULY 2017 TO:

Minister of the Interior

Vladimir Kolokol'tsev
Ul. Zhitnaya d. 16
119049 Moscow, Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 667 05 98 (wait for signal)
Or use online form in Russian: https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/request_main

Salutation: Dear Minister

Director of the Federal Security Service

Aleksandr Bortnikov
Lybyanskaya Ploshad d.2
107031 Moscow, Russian Federation
Email: fsb@fsb.ru

Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Human Rights Ombudsperson of the Russian Federation
Tatiana Moskalkova
ul. Miasnitskaia, 47
107084, Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 607 7470 / +7 495 607 3977
(to check if fax received: +7 495 607 1854)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR ALEXANDER VLADIMIROVICH YAKOVENKO, Embassy of Russia, 6-7 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QP, 020 7229 6412

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 132/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur49/6449/2017/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Murad Amriev, a World Mixed Martial Arts Champion, is originally from Chechnya and now resident in Ukraine. He alleges that he was detained by three men on the 25 August 2013 in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. The men forced him into a car and took him to a building belonging to the Ministry of Interior of Chechnya. He claimed that he was held in handcuffs for two days during which time he was beaten, tortured with electric shocks and humiliated. One of the men who detained him was a senior Chechen police officer who claimed that Murad Amriev's brother had attacked him. Murad Amriev was threatened with prosecution for a crime that his older brother was accused of having committed.

Murad Amriev managed to flee Chechnya and sought the assistance of the human rights NGO, the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, to lodge a complaint about torture and other ill-treatment. His lawyer has made repeated requests to the Chechen authorities to open an investigation. To date the investigator has refused 15 times to open an investigation into his torture allegations.

On 4 June he was travelling to Russia to apply for a Schengen visa when he was taken off a train by transport police in Bryansk region, South West of Moscow. He was detained for 48 hours before being released on 6 June. A group of Chechen police officers had arrived to escort him, but according to a lawyer for the Committee against Torture, Murad Amriev was not handed over to them because of missing documentation. Murad Amriev told his lawyer that he recognized one of the police officers who had tortured him among the officers who intended to escort him to Chechnya.

On the 6 June after being released, Murad Amriev went to the prosecutor's office in Bryansk to complete some formalities and the Chechen officers followed him and waited outside the building insisting on escorting him. Murad Amriev's friends arrived in a car and he was able to evade the Chechen police officers and drive off.

Further information on UA: 132/17 Index: EUR 46/6473/2017 Issue Date: 9 June 2017