

URGENT ACTION

TORTURE SURVIVOR RELEASED IN CHECHNYA

Murad Amriev was handed over to Russian law enforcement officers at 3am on 9 June after having been returned from Belarus where he unsuccessfully attempted to claim asylum. He has been released on bail on condition that he does not leave Chechnya.

At 12pm on 9 June the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Chechnya reported that at 3am **Murad Amriev** had been handed over to officers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Chechnya. On 10 June it was reported in the media that Murad Amriev had been released on bail on condition that he would not leave Chechnya.

Murad Amriev was filmed being reunited with his parents and he told journalists from the Meduza news website: "Now I am with my family and everything is alright. Ever since I was handed over to the police nobody has used force against me or insulted me. Of course, this whole situation has been an enormous stress for me. It has destroyed my personal and sporting plans, but there is no threat at present towards me or my family. I am saying this honestly and without any pressure at all." Murad Amriev said that he did not want to talk about his past complaint relating to having been tortured in Chechnya in 2013, nor did he want to talk about the fact that he recognized one of the police officers who attempted to return him from Bryansk in western Russia to Chechnya, a republic in Russia's North Caucasus region, as one of the officers who had tortured him in 2013. He said he would talk about that later.

Murad Amriev, a World Mixed Martial Arts Champion, fled Chechnya for Ukraine in 2013 after being tortured and lodged a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights with the assistance of the Russian NGO Committee for the Prevention of Torture. 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 for the Prevention of 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. On 7 June he was detained while crossing the Russian Belarusian border and held in Dobrush police station in Belarus until the morning of 9 June when he was handed back to Russian law enforcement officers.

Amnesty International will be monitoring the situation and will take action in future if required.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network at this point.

This is the third update of UA 127/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur49/6449/2017/en/

Further information on UA: 132/17 Index: EUR 49/6484/2017 Issue Date: 12 June 2017

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