

URGENT ACTION

TORTURE SURVIVOR AT RISK OF ARBITRARY DETENTION

Torture survivor, Murad Amriev, lodged a complaint against his torturers in Chechnya, and is currently at risk of being detained and escorted to Chechnya where he would be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Murad Amriev, a Russian national living in Ukraine and World Mixed Martial Arts Champion, was returning to Russia on 4 June to apply for a Shengen visa when he was taken off a train by transport police in Bryansk region, South West of Moscow. He was detained on the grounds that he was on a wanted list for having forged his passport and told that he would be returned to Chechnya for prosecution. Chechen police officers later arrived to escort him. He was placed in police detention in the city of Bryansk.

Murad Amriev was arrested on 25 August 2013 in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, and complained that he was tortured by Chechen police officers. He was threatened with prosecution for a crime that his older brother was accused of having committed. He fled Chechnya shortly after and moved to Ukraine. In 2013, Murad Amriev sought the assistance of the human rights NGO the Committee for the Prevention of Torture to lodge a complaint against the men who had tortured him.

A member of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture told Amnesty International that Murad Amriev's passport was originally issued with a mistake in the date of birth and that the charge of forgery was a pretext to return him to Chechnya in retaliation for the torture complaint. Murad Amriev told his lawyer that he recognized one of the police officers who came from Chechnya to escort him back as one of the men who had tortured him in 2013.

On 6 June, a court released Murad Amriev from detention and he was transferred from the police cells to the Prosecutor's office for some formalities. However, the Chechen police officers insisted on escorting him to Chechnya and prevented Murad Amriev from leaving the Prosecutor's office for several hours. Murad Amriev's friends arrived in a car several hours after the court decision on 6 June, and he evaded the Chechen police officers and drove off.

Murad Amriev's whereabouts are currently unknown but he is still at risk of being arbitrarily detained and transferred to Chechnya where he would be at risk of torture.

Please write immediately in Russian, English or your own language:

- Call on the authorities to protect Murad Amriev from arbitrary detention and from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Call for an investigation into the actions of the Chechen Ministry of Interior officers who attempted to arbitrarily detain Murad Amriev even after he had been released by a judge;
- Urge the authorities to carry a full, impartial and effective investigation into Murad Amriev's allegations that he was tortured in Grozny on 25 August 2013.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JULY 2017 TO:

Chairman of the Investigation Committee

Aleksandr Bastrykin
Investigation Committee of the Russian Federation
Tekhnicheskii pereulok, dom 2
105005 Moscow, Russian Federation
Fax: +7 495 966 97 76
Salutation: Dear Chairman

Minister of the Interior

Vladimir Kolokoltsev
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

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.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Murad Amriev explained that he was detained by three men on the 25 August 2013. 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 sought the assistance of the human rights NGO, the Committee against Torture, to lodge a complaint about torture and other ill-treatment, and 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.

Torture and other ill-treatment is widespread in Chechnya in both official detention centres and unlawful secret detention centres used by Chechen police officers. In its report on a visit in 2011, the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) reported that "a significant proportion of the detained persons interviewed by the CPT's delegation made allegations of recent ill-treatment by law-enforcement officials. The ill-treatment alleged was frequently of such severity as to amount to torture." The situation remains essentially the same.

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