

URGENT ACTION

WHEREABOUTS OF DETAINED CHECHEN UNKNOWN

Imran Salamov was forcibly returned from Belarus to Russia on 5 September. On 11 September, the authorities in Grozny, the Chechen capital, confirmed that he was in their custody but his exact whereabouts have since not been disclosed.

Imran Salamov, who claimed he fled Chechnya after he was tortured on numerous occasions, was handed over by the Belarusian authorities to Chechen security services in Smolensk, Russia, on 6 September. He had been held in detention in Belarus since April after Russia placed him on an interstate wanted list.

On 11 September, the Chechen authorities confirmed that he was in police custody. On that day, his lawyer and family were able to meet with him at the city police headquarters in Grozny, but this was in the presence of Chechen security officers. Soon after, he should have been transferred to a pre-trial detention facility but there has been no official confirmation of where he is being held since 11 September. Neither his family nor his lawyer have been told where he is, nor have they had any communication with him despite their repeated requests to meet with him.

On 23 September, Imran Salamov's family were invited to visit the city police headquarters in Grozny. When they arrived, they were not informed of Imran Salamov's whereabouts but they were told that he was fine.

Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Calling on the Russian authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Imran Salamov and give him immediate and unhindered access to his lawyer;
- Urging the Russian authorities to ensure that Imran Salamov's mental and physical integrity is protected;
- Urging them to ensure that due process is followed and Imran Salamov's fair trial rights are upheld, in accordance with Russia's international human rights obligations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 NOVEMBER 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

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation
Yuriy Yakovlevich Chaika
Prosecutor General's Office
ul. B. Dmitrovka, d.15a
125993 Moscow GSP- 3
Russian Federation
Fax: +7495 987 58 41/ +7495 692 17 25
Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

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 first update of UA 208/17. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur49/7081/2017/en/

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Imran Salamov, 40, was forcibly returned from Belarus to Russia on 5 September having been held in a detention facility in Brest, Belarus. He had been in the city of Brest with his wife and four children, and since March they had repeatedly left Belarus for Poland to claim asylum there. Each attempt was unsuccessful and they were sent back to Belarus by Polish border guards, despite clearly expressing their intention to seek asylum. The Polish authorities' refusal to give due consideration to their request for protection constitutes a violation of international human rights law and defiance of Poland's duties as an EU member state. Imran Salamov claims he had been tortured several times while in Chechnya and the reason for him and his family leaving was to escape further persecution.

During their last failed attempt to enter Poland, Imran Salamov was detained on 13 April by Belarusian border guards and, on the same day, the local migration services made a decision to forcibly return him to Russia on the basis that he had been placed on an interstate wanted list issued by Russia on 5 April. He is accused of participating in an illegal armed group under Article 208 part 2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. He denies the allegations. In an effort to prevent his forcible return to Russia, Imran Salamov applied for asylum in Belarus soon after the decision to return him was announced but his application was rejected on 24 August. He had 15 days to appeal and was in the process of doing so when he was handed over to the Russian authorities. When his lawyer went to visit him in detention in Brest on the morning of 6 September, the lawyer was told that Imran Salamov had been returned to Russia at 5pm on 5 September.

On 26 September, the Prosecutor's Office in Brest confirmed that it had conducted an investigation into Imran Salamov's case. The investigation concluded that there had been a violation of Belarusian law and that Imran Salamov had been prematurely expelled from Belarus. Disciplinary action is being taken against a number of officials linked to his expulsion.

Further information on UA: 208/17 Index: EUR 46/7195/2017 Issue Date: 29 September 2017