

Minister Rashid Meredov
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Prospect Makhtumkuli, 83
744000, Ashgabad, Turkmenistan
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June 12, 2010

Dear Minister Meredov!

It has come to our attention that the Ministry of National Security has been questioning innocent people in the town of Dashovuz about the activities of family members of Mr. Farid Tukhbatullin, an internationally well-known human rights activist and environmentalist who was forced into exile in 2003. Mr. Tukhbatullin has been peacefully and legally working since then, after creating a new life for himself and his family.

We, the undersigned, categorically and unequivocally condemn the practice of collective punishment, which is being used in this instance to intimidate people living in Dashovuz. We ask that you immediately put a stop to this deplorable practice and demand that the Ministry of National Security desist from asking people about their knowledge of Mr. Tukhbatullin's family, and that it demonstrate its respect for the rule of law, including the right to privacy.

The Freedom House once again found Turkmenistan to be among the world's ten most repressive regimes in its 2009 assessment. We appeal to you to demonstrate that Turkmenistan is working to no longer be on this list. A first step will be to let the residents of Dashovuz live in peace.

Sincerely,

1. Kate Watters, Crude Accountability, USA
2. Mark Fodor, CEE Bankwatch Network
3. Yann Louvel, Friends of the Earth, France
4. Regine Richter, Urgewald, Germany
5. Neil Tangri, GAIA, USA
6. Christa Watters, Writer/Editor, USA
7. Erika Weinthal, Duke University, USA
8. Anne Rolfes, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, USA
9. Erika Dailey, USA
10. Stephanie Fried, Ulu Foundation, USA
11. Bjorn Engesland, Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Norway
12. Manana Kochladze, Green Alternative, Georgia
13. Dinara Oshurakhunova, Coalition For Democracy and Civil Society, Kyrgyzstan
14. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
15. Paul Donowitz, EarthRights International, USA
16. Anthony Richter, Open Society Institute, USA
17. Mazie Fitzgerald, Pacific Environment, USA
18. Rory Cox, Pacific Environment, USA
19. Audrey Wood, San Francisco, CA, USA
20. Doug Norlen, Pacific Environment, USA
21. Lewis Gordon, Environmental Defenders Law Center, USA
22. Kristen Moller, Global Exchange, USA
23. Mika Minio-Paluello, PLATFORM, United Kingdom
24. James Boissonnault, Alexandria, VA, USA
25. Fatima Tlisova, Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow, USA
26. Inessa Frants, Institute for Development Cooperation, Kazakhstan

27. Valeria Enriquez, Fundar, Mexico
28. Jimmy Dube, PhD, Democracy Fellow, National Endowment for Democracy, USA
29. Denny Larson, Global Community Monitor, USA
30. Mikhail Mikhailovich Bogomolov, Dobro-Bez Granits, Moscow, Russia
31. Xiu Min Li, Pacific Environment, USA
32. Kaisha Atakhanova, Goldman Prize Winner, Social-Ecological Fund, Kazakhstan
33. Nick Hildyard, The Corner House, UK
34. Sviatoslav Zabelin, Moscow, Russia
35. Vyacheslav Mamedov, Democratic Civil Union of Turkmenistan
36. Natalya Kravchuk, Gutta Club, Moldova
37. Mikael Danielyan, Helsinki Association, Armenia
38. Yusup Kamalov, Union for the Defense of the Aral Sea and Amudarya, Karakalpakstan
39. Albert Mikhailovich Terentev, International Sociological Union and Member of the Russian Geographical Society, Russia
40. Leanne Grossman, Oakland, CA, USA
41. Edith Mirante, Project Maje, USA
42. Inessa Shlapak, Journalist, Kazakhstan
43. Rauf Sabitov, "Gornyi Klub Zhabagly-Manas," Kazakhstan
44. Tamara Sabitova, "Tsentri sotsial'noi adaptatsii detei-sirot I vypusnikov detskikh domov Miracle," Kazakhstan
45. Aleksey Zimenko, Tsentri okhrany dikoi prirodi, Russia
46. Karin Lissakers, Revenue Watch Institute, USA
47. Iryna Holovko, National Ecological Center, Ukraine
48. Metin Bakkalci, Human Rights Foundation, Turkey
49. Askhat Kayumov, EcoCenter Dront, Russia
50. Sergey Evgenevich Fedorov, Pomorsky Center for Public Politics, Russia
51. Vitalii Chelyshev, Union of Journalists, Member of Socio-Ecological Union, Russia
52. Antonio Tricarico, CRBM, Italy
53. Mirvari Gahramanli, Oil Workers' Rights Protection Organization, Azerbaijan
54. V. V. Lagutov, Green Don, Russia
55. Svetlana Anosova, Zhasil Dala, Kazakhstan
56. Tajik Social and Ecological Union, Tajikistan
57. Vadim Novopashin, Member of the Board, Environmental Watch on the North Caucasus, journalist/lawyer, Russia
58. Sergey Kuratov, Ecological Society Green Salvation, Kazakhstan
59. Evgeniia Zatoka, former citizen of Turkmenistan

Copies to: US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton; US Embassy, Ashgabat; Natasha Basley, Turkmenistan Desk, US State Department; President Thomas Mirow, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; President Robert Zoellick, World Bank; US Congressman, James Moran; Janice Helwig, US Helsinki Commission; Ambassador Orazov, Turkmen Embassy to the United States