

URGENT ACTION

CHECHEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER JAILED

On 18 March the Shali City Court sentenced Oyub Titiev, head of the Memorial Human Rights Center's office in Grozny, Chechnya, to four years in penal colony under fabricated drug-related charges. Prior to the sentencing, he spent one year and two months behind bars in pre-trial detention.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Prominent Chechen human rights defender **Oyub Titiev** was sentenced on 18 March to four years in penal colony. The charge under which he has been convicted has been requalified from grave to moderate crime, taking into account the absence of previous convictions and Oyub Titiev's age. Also, the time Oyub Titiev has spent in pre-trial detention since January 2018 will be counted as time served. This allows him to apply for an early release on parole after having served 1/3 of his sentence, which will be in May 2019.

Oyub Titiev was arrested by police on 9 January 2018 and falsely accused of drug possession and remanded in pre-trial detention. The hearing on his case started in Chechnya's Shali City Court on 19 July and concluded on 11 March 2019 when the prosecution requested four years and a fine of 100,000 roubles (US\$ 1,550). The trial has been marred by numerous irregularities and Oyub Titiev's right to a fair trial has been repeatedly violated. During the court hearings, it became apparent that the prosecution's case did not stand up to basic scrutiny.

The joint efforts by Oyub Titiev's numerous supporters from within and outside Russia, including fellow human rights defenders, journalists, diplomats and others, including Amnesty International activists, have provided crucial visibility to the case and put pressure on the authorities. These efforts have also provided a level of protection to Oyub Titiev against torture and other ill-treatment frequently used in Chechnya and throughout Russia to extract "confessions". International attention to this case has allowed Oyub Titiev's lawyers to travel safely to Chechnya and avoid harassment and other forms of pressure from the authorities which lawyers often encounter in the North Caucasus (for additional information see: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR46/003/2013/en/>). It has also put pressure on the authorities in Chechnya to allow international observers, human rights defenders, journalists, Oyub Titiev's relatives and friends to attend the trial without obstruction.

Amnesty International will continue campaigning in support of Oyub Titiev and demand his immediate and unconditional release. His conviction should be overturned as he is a prisoner of conscience imprisoned solely for his human rights work in Chechnya. As Oyub Titiev said in his final statement in court on 11 March "we will fight to the end, until my innocence is fully recognized and those responsible are punished."

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Oyub Titiev (he/him)

THIS IS THE SIXTH AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 5/18

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR46/9904/2019/en/>