

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

UZBEKISTAN

Muhammad Bekzhanov

'CONFESSION' FORCED BY BEATING AND ELECTROCUTION

In 1999 journalist Muhammad Bekzhanov was sentenced to 15 years in prison after being tortured into confessing to 'anti-state' offences by security forces. He was due to have been released in February 2012, but shortly before that date he was sentenced to an additional four years and eight months for allegedly violating prison rules. His health has declined sharply in prison. Muhammad was editor-in-chief of the banned Erk political opposition party newspaper when he left Uzbekistan in 1993 due to persecution, harassment and intimidation, only to be forcibly returned from Ukraine in 1999. He is one of the world's longest-imprisoned journalists. An effective investigation into any of the allegations of torture has yet to be conducted.

+ www.amnesty.org.uk/muhammad



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'I was lying in a pool of blood for days – no water, no food. I was trying to remember all the good things in my life: my children, my wife. Mentally I was preparing myself that I was going to die.'

Muhammad Bekzhanov

SEND A SOLIDARITY CARD TO:

Otryad 12
KIN 64/48
Zarafshan
Navoi region
Uzbekistan



+ **Language:** Uzbek or Russian (Prison authorities will not pass messages if they cannot read them)

+ **Salutation:** Dear Muhammad (in Uzbek or Russian)

+ **Suggested message:** Please try to include some messaging in Uzbek or Russian (below or through Google Translate) to increase the chances of the guards passing on the letters to Muhammad Bekzhanov. Alternatively, you could send drawings or images that do not need translation (although keep these neutral – nothing that could be perceived as culturally insensitive, anti-Islamic or religious).

Things such as postcards from cities around the world with a little description could brighten his days in prison.

'Siz doim bizning uilirimizda' /

'Сиз доим бизнинг ўйларимизда' ('Our thoughts are with you'). 'Biz doim siz hakingizda uilaimiz' /

'Биз доим сиз хақингизда ўйлаймиз' ('We are thinking of you') 'Держитесь!' ('Hold on!')

CAN I

- ☒ Send a religious card or message?
- ☒ Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty?
- ☒ Include my name and address?

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER:

Write to: President Islam Karimov
Rezidentsia prezidenta
ul. Uzbekistanskaia 43
Tashkent 700163
Uzbekistan

Salutation: Dear President

In your letter: Call for the release of Muhammad Bekzhanov on the grounds that repeated calls for a fair retrial in his case have gone unheeded for more than 15 years; call for a prompt, impartial and effective investigation into allegations that he was tortured in custody; urge that anyone found responsible for torturing and ill-treating Muhammad Bekzhanov be brought to justice.



Amnesty International

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www.amnesty.org.uk/write