



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Uzbekistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 22 May 2015

Information on current human rights abuses

Human Rights Watch in May 2015 states:

“The Uzbek government has imprisoned thousands of people on politically motivated charges, targeting human rights and opposition activists, journalists, religious believers, artists, and other perceived critics” (Human Rights Watch (12 May 2015) *Addressing the human rights situation in Uzbekistan at the UN Human Rights Council 10 years after the Andijan massacre*).

This report also notes:

“Many people in prison for political reasons experience torture, denial of access to counsel, incommunicado detention, solitary confinement, lack of appropriate medical care, and arbitrary extension of their prison sentences for many years...” (ibid).

It is also pointed out in this document that:

“Uzbek authorities severely curtail the freedom of religion, imposing tight restrictions on the freedom of worship, conscience, and belief” (ibid).

This document also notes that:

“The Uzbek government severely represses civil society activities and actively harasses and prosecutes independent rights defenders and journalists on a wide array of trumped-up charges. Authorities criminalize independent human rights work, journalism, and peaceful political activism. The vast majority of peaceful activists in Uzbekistan have been either imprisoned, fled the country, or been forced to withdraw from their work due to government persecution over the past two decades” (ibid).

A report released in May 2015 by the International Federation for Human Rights notes that:

“...human rights organisations estimate that there are between 10,000 and 12,000 people detained on politically motivated charges in Uzbekistan. The exact number is hard to establish and information about detentions is scarce as State repression makes it impossible for human rights organisations to carry out monitoring activities” (International Federation for Human Rights (11 May 2015) *Uzbekistan: Ten years after the Andijan massacre, the human rights situation is worse than ever*).

In April 2015 an *Amnesty International* report states that:

“Torture is endemic in Uzbekistan’s criminal justice system” (Amnesty International (15 April 2015) *Uzbekistan: Secrets and Lies: Forced confessions under torture in Uzbekistan*, p.8).

In February 2015 *Amnesty International* produced a report reviewing events of 2014 which include noting that:

“Torture and other ill-treatment in detention facilities remained routine and pervasive. The authorities continued to reject allegations of torture committed by law enforcement and National Security officers and failed to effectively investigate credible and persistent reports of such human rights violations. Prison sentences of individuals convicted of anti-state and terrorism offences were arbitrarily extended and many were denied necessary medical attention. Those forcibly returned from abroad were at real risk of torture and other ill-treatment” (Amnesty International (25 February 2015) *Amnesty International Report 2014/15*).

A report released in January 2015 by *Human Rights Watch* commenting on events of the previous year notes that:

“Uzbekistan’s atrocious rights record did not discernibly improve in 2014. Authoritarian President Islam Karimov, who entered his 25th year in power, continued to employ a widespread security apparatus to monitor and crack down on activities of real and perceived opponents. Authorities repress all forms of freedom of expression and do not allow any organized political opposition, independent media, free trade unions, independent civil society organizations, or religious freedom. Those who attempt to assert rights, or act in ways deemed contrary to state interests, face arbitrary detention, lack of due process, and torture. Forced labor of adults and children continues” (Human Rights Watch (29 January 2015) *World Report 2015: Uzbekistan*).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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European Country of Origin Information Network
Freedom House
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