

# URGENT ACTION

## REFUGEE RELEASED AND NO LONGER AT RISK

Migrant rights defender **Valentina Chupik** was released from detention at the Sheremetevo airport in Moscow and was allowed to board a flight to Armenia on 2 October. She had been held in the transit lounge of the airport since 25 September, stripped of her refugee status in Russia and threatened with imminent forcible return to Uzbekistan, where she would have been at risk of human rights violations.

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

On 2 October **Valentina Chupik's** lawyer confirmed that she had been issued with a new passport and was free to travel to a destination of her choice. Valentina Chupik later posted a picture of herself on board a flight to Armenia.

Valentina Chupik is the founder of the organization Tong Zhakhoni, which offers legal assistance to migrants from Central Asia in the Russian Federation. She was detained at Sheremetevo airport in Moscow on 25 September as she was returning to the Russian Federation from Armenia. Border guards informed her that she had been stripped of her refugee status and banned from entry to the Russian Federation until September 2051, arguing she had purportedly “presented false information and forged documents”. She was threatened with imminent forcible return to Uzbekistan, a country that she fled 16 years ago because of justified fears of arbitrary prosecution in connection with her human rights work, and where she would have been at risk of arbitrary arrest, unfair trial, and torture and other ill-treatment. Valentina Chupik was granted refugee status in the Russian Federation over 10 years ago and renewed her documents in March 2021.

Amnesty International welcomes the release from detention of Valentina Chupik and the fact she was not forcibly sent to Uzbekistan, a country where she would have been at risk of human rights violations. However, the withdrawal of Valentina Chupik's refugee status and the threat of refoulement are a breach of Russia's obligations under international human rights law and set an extremely worrying precedent.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Valentina Chupik (she/her)

**THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 102/21**

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur46/4813/2021/en/>

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