**Case: Muhammad Bekzhanov, Uzbekistan**

*President Islam Karimov*

*Rezidentsia prezidenta*

*ul. Uzbekistanskaia 43*

*Tashkent 700163*

*Uzbekistan*

Dear President Karimov,

Muhammad Bekzhanov, a respected journalist, has spent the last 16 years in prison following an unfair trial in which he was sentenced on the basis of a confession he gave after being beaten, suffocated and given electric shocks. No proper investigation into his torture has ever been conducted and repeated calls for a fair retrial have been ignored.

Uzbekistan is party to numerous international human rights treaties, which prohibit torture and the use of torture-tainted evidence in court. In spite of this, torture continues to be used by Uzbekistani security forces to extract confessions which are used in courts to secure convictions.

President Karimov, I urge you to:

* Ensure the prompt release of Muhammad Bekzhanov.
* Ensure a prompt, impartial and effective investigation into allegations that he was tortured in custody.

Yours sincerely,