



**HELŚIŃSKA FUNDACJA PRAW CZŁOWIEKA
HELSINKI FOUNDATION for HUMAN RIGHTS**

00-018 Warszawa, ul. Zgoda 11
tel./fax: (48 22) 828-10-08, 828-69-96
e-mail: hfhr@hfhrpol.waw.pl
konto: PKO BP SA I O/Centrum
58 1020 1013 0000 0502 0002 9165
swift: BPKOPLPW

ZARZĄD FUNDACJI
Prezes: Marek Antoni Nowicki
Wiceprezes: Danuta Przywara
Sekretarz: Andrzej Rzepliński
Skarbnik: Elżbieta Czyż
Członek Zarządu: Zbigniew Hołda

d. dz. 500/07

Warsaw, 12.02.2007

**President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Mr. Islam Karimov
Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Mr. Bahodir Matlubov
General Prosecutor Mr. Rashitjon Kodirov
Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights Ms Sayora Rashidova**

Open letter

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Warsaw, Poland) strongly objects to the detention of the human rights defender Ms. Umida Niyazova. This is an example of the inadmissible practice carried out for some time now by Uzbek authorities, which consists in prosecuting individuals benefiting from the Helsinki Foundation's educational programs.

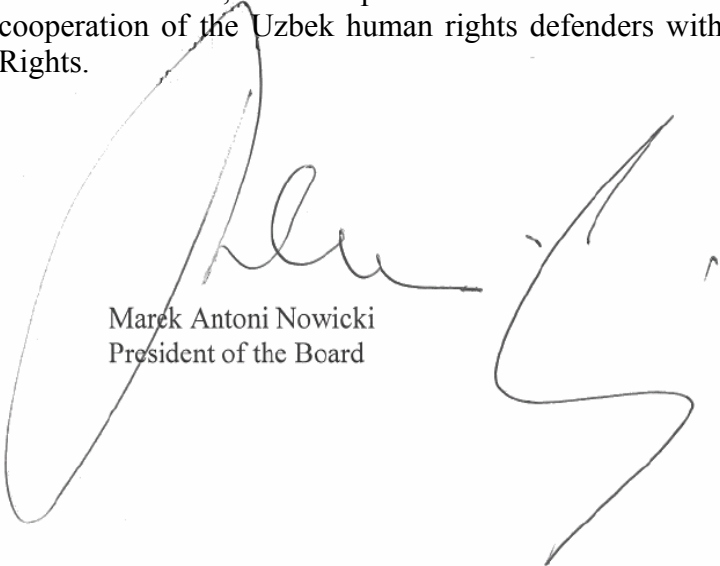
In accordance with the information received from different sources Ms. Umida Niyazova was arrested under the far-fetched pretext of "smuggling religious and extremist literature and materials". She had been detained in a pre-trial detention in Andijan until January 22, and on January 26 she was transported to a pre-trial detention of the Transport Prosecutor's Office in Tashkent. Ms. Umida Niyazova has been interrogated for fifteen hours a day, with the use of torture. Law-enforcement bodies have been exerting psychological pressure on her; it has been noted that attempts have been made to give her psychotropic pills. Poisonous gas has been introduced several times into the cell in which she is locked up. Ms. Umida Niyazova cannot communicate with the outside world. Legal representatives have not been allowed to see her.

Information received indicates that at the time of her visit to Kyrgyzstan some time ago, Ms. Umida Niyazova applied to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Office in Bishkek, where she was registered as a person in need of protection. She returned to Uzbekistan after she had received confirmation from Uzbek law-enforcement bodies that an administrative case against her had been closed. It turned out that in practice this case has been "requalified" as a criminal case.

All these facts testify that the actions of the Uzbek authorities violate basic human rights of Ms. Umida Niyazova. The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights expects the Uzbek

authorities to release Ms. Umida Niyazova immediately, to cease the criminal prosecution against her and punish the law enforcement officers in charge of her case.

At the same time, we call upon the Uzbek authorities to desist from hampering contacts and cooperation of the Uzbek human rights defenders with the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.



Marek Antoni Nowicki
President of the Board

