

I am writing this to express my grave concern on prominent human rights lawyer Emil Kurbedinov , who was sentenced on 26 January to 10 days' "administrative detention" by the Zheleznodorozhny Distric Court, in Simferopol, the capital of Crimea. He has been drawing international attention to human rights violation in Crimea and has been acting as defence lawyer of Crimean Tatars targeted by the de facto and the Russian authorities.

On 26 January, he was brought to the court and found guilty under Article 20.3 of Russia's Code of Administrative Offences. Another charge against him relates to a social media post in which he shared a video of a meeting of the Muslim organization Hizb ut-Tahrir in Crimea. However, the post dates back to 5 June 2013, which predates Russian occupation and annexation of Crimea. Hizb ut-Tahrir is not a banned organization under Ukrainian law, and its members' meeting which the video depicts was a peaceful assembly.

So I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Emil Kurbedinov from administrative detention as he is being solely targeted as a reprisal for his human rights activities.

I also urge you t to fully respect and protect the human rights of lawyers and implement in law, policy and practice protections provided for by international law and standards, in particular by the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.

The last, but not the least, I urge you to ensure that all human rights defenders in Crimea are able to carry out their legitimate activities free of harassment and without fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Your prompt attention on this matter would be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,