

Director Wang Jiang

Prison Administration Bureau of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
No 380, Huanghe lu,Urumqi
830000, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
People's Republic of China

Dear Director Wang:

I write to express my concern for **Nagy Muhammed**, an ethnic Kazakh writer convicted of "separatism" and sentenced to life imprisonment in September 2020 for peacefully exercising his human rights.

There are no official documents about the verdict, but Nagy Muhammed's family report that he was convicted because he gathered with his friends on Kazakhstan Independence Day, expressed opinions on Xinjiang's "bilingual education" policy and encouraged Kazakhs living in Xinjiang to move to Kazakhstan, all of which are peaceful acts protected by international human rights law and standards.

I also find it distressing that Nagy Muhammed has been denied his right to a fair trial as he was not able to be represented by a lawyer of his choice. During the court hearing, Nagy Muhammed was represented by a government-appointed lawyer. As documented by Amnesty International, with similar cases of long imprisonments on vague charges, few lawyers are willing to take up Xinjiang-related cases because these cases are deemed too sensitive.

It is further disturbing to learn that the court has not dealt with Nagy Muhammed's claims during the trial that he had been beaten and burned by cigarettes during interrogations, which raises concern as to whether his conviction may have been based on evidence obtained through torture and other ill-treatment. Detained incommunicado since March 2018, I am deeply concerned about his current and future wellbeing.

I therefore call on you to:

- **Release Nagy Muhammed unless there is sufficient, credible and admissible evidence that he committed an internationally recognized offence and is granted a fair trial in line with international standards**
- **Pending his release, ensure Nagy Muhammed is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.**

Yours sincerely,