

Presidents of Turkmenistan
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Dear President,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern over the safety of opposition activist Azat Isakov whose whereabouts are unknown since he went missing from Nikonovo, a village in Moscow region in Russia, on 20 October 2021. He is believed to be held by the Ministry of National Security of Turkmenistan.

Azat Isakov, a Turkmen labour migrant living in Russia, has been a vocal critic of the Turkmenistan government since 2019 and joined the opposition movements Turkmenia, Unite! On 20 October Isakov sent a message to a trusted contact explaining that he feared Russian policemen were about to arrest him. Since then all messages have stopped.

On 9 November a member of Turkmenia, Unite! received a formal response to their inquiry from the Russian Ministry of Interior indicating that Azat Isakov left the country on 22 October. Azat Isakov could not have left the country through his own means because he did not possess the necessary travel documents.

Since 2020 Azat Isakov and his family members living in Turkmenistan have reported receiving constant threats from officers of the Ministry of National Security of Turkmenistan, including threats of abduction and rape of family members.

I respectfully urge you to do everything in your power to:

- Ensure the urgent disclosure of information on the fate and whereabouts of Azat Isakov;
- If he is in the custody of Turkmenistani law enforcement, ensure that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that he has access to his family and any medical care he might require;
- Moreover, unless there is sufficient credible evidence to charge him with an internationally recognized criminal offence, ensure that Azat Isakov is released immediately.

Yours sincerely,