IPHR International Partnership for Human Rights

STIFLED VOICES: THE SUPPRESSION OF CIVIC SPACE IN CENTRAL ASIA

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Summary

Across Central Asia, civic space is increasingly under attack, with the freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly being curtailed in violation of the Central Asian states' international human rights commitments.

This briefing provides an overview of current alarming trends in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, drawing on monitoring and documentation by International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) and its Central Asian partners.[1]

The briefing is intended to inform the actions of the EU and other international actors in their engagement with the governments of the region.

It covers the following key issues of concern:

Excessive and discriminatory restrictions on CSOs

Central Asian policymakers have used the debate surrounding the overhaul of US foreign assistance to intensify hostile rhetoric against foreign-funded CSOs and to propose new, restrictive measures. CSOs that expose corruption, document abuse or promote equality and non-discrimination have been singled out for particular attack.

Although **Kyrgyzstan's** 2024 "foreign representatives" law has not yet been enforced as harshly as feared, it has created a widespread climate of fear and self-censorship, leading CSOs to reduce public activities, avoid sensitive language, suspend programmes or – in some cases – close.

While foreign-funded CSOs in **Kazakhstan** were already subject to a stigmatising reporting regime, oversight has been further tightened and tax authorities granted expanded powers to inspect such groups.

CSOs in **Uzbekistan** face persistent registration barriers and restrictive procedures to access foreign funding, with recently approved legislation requiring regular public disclosure of foreign-sourced assets.

Hundreds of CSOs have been forced to close in **Tajikistan** in recent years, while those remaining are subject to close scrutiny and frequent inspections, including with respect to their use of foreign grants.

Turkmenistan's restrictive political framework effectively prevents independent human rights groups from operating inside the country, while registered organisations work within strictly defined boundaries.

Alongside government restrictions, CSOs experience declining funding opportunities throughout the region, leaving many struggling to sustain their work.

Widening crackdown on independent media, reporting and information-sharing

Across Central Asia, media freedom is on a marked downward trajectory due to restrictive legislation, growing state control over the information space, and mounting pressure on independent media, journalists and bloggers.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, the media climate has sharply deteriorated in the last two years: independent outlets have been subjected to raids, court-enforced closures and "extremist" designations in retaliation for their reporting, while journalists and bloggers are increasingly prosecuted and convicted on flimsy charges over material exposing abuse and criticising those in power.

In **Kazakhstan**, independent media, journalists and bloggers have also come under growing attack when addressing issues sensitive to the authorities. Tactics have included online harassment, coordinated abuse of social media content-complaint mechanisms, denial of accreditation, and the initiation of criminal cases.

In **Uzbekistan**, draft legislation could introduce new restrictions, including compulsory registration for both print and online media, similar to recent laws adopted in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Authorities continue to prosecute outspoken journalists and bloggers, and coordinated campaigns have resulted in the removal of social media accounts critical of the government.

Tajikistan's authorities interfere heavily with the media, tightly controlling content and limiting access to information amid shrinking space for independent reporting and open debate. The number of independent media outlets has declined significantly, while a record number of journalists are behind bars.

In **Turkmenistan**, fully state-controlled media provide exclusively positive coverage of the government and promote official narratives of prosperity, while pervasive internet censorship – reportedly reinforced by corruption – restricts access to independent sources of information and dissent is vigorously suppressed.

Violations of protesters' rights

Widespread impunity persists related to the use of excessive force, torture, and other serious violations committed during the 2022 suppression of mass protests in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan (Karakalpakstan), and Tajikistan (Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region – GBAO).

The number of officials convicted for torture and other abuses during **Kazakhstan's** "Bloody January" events remains low given the scale of reported violations, while penalties have often been lenient, and victims have received inadequate compensation.

An official investigation in **Uzbekistan** concluded that the Karakalpakstan protests were lawfully dispersed and participants' rights protected, and only a few officials were held accountable, despite credible independent reports of widespread violations.

Similarly, the lack of progress on ensuring accountability in GBAO in **Tajikistan** highlights the need for renewed international calls for impartial investigations, prosecutions of all perpetrators, and justice for victims of the 2022 dispersals of mass protests.

Meanwhile, the freedom of peaceful assembly continues to be curtailed in the region.

A court-sanctioned ban on protests – initially introduced in response to a request from the Russian embassy to end anti-war protests outside its premises – has repeatedly been extended in the capital of **Kyrgyzstan**.

Authorities in **Kazakhstan** continue to arbitrarily deny permission for peaceful assemblies, detain and penalise those gathering without official sanction, and round up activists ahead of feared protests as a "preventive measure".

While suppressing spontaneous expressions of discontent, authorities in **Turkmenistan** continue the practice of forcible mobilisation of citizens for state events.

Persecution of critical voices

Across the region, activists, human rights defenders, journalists and others who criticise government policies, expose violations and advocate for justice face persecution, including arrest, unfair trials, and politically motivated imprisonment.

Charges are frequently based on overly broad provisions of the criminal code, such as those related to disseminating "false" or slanderous information, "inciting" discord or riots, or alleged "extremism". Those convicted are often held in harsh detention conditions, compounding concerns about their safety and well-being.

Repression also extends beyond borders, with critics abroad increasingly targeted through transnational measures.

The briefing describes individual cases of particular concern to IPHR and its partners that form part of a broader pattern.

The decline in civic freedoms in Central Asia is reflected in the countries' ratings on the CIVICUS Monitor,[2] a global initiative with which IPHR and its Central Asian partners cooperate on tracking civic space in the region.[3] All Central Asian countries now fall into the two lowest categories of the Monitor. Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are classified as "repressed," scoring 32 and 30 (on a scale where 0 = worst, and 100 = best) while Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are rated as having a "closed" civic space, with scores of 18, 10, and 4. When new global data was published in late 2025, the scores of all five countries had deteriorated since the previous year, illustrating the negative dynamics across the region.[4]

Taken together, recent developments point to a sustained and region-wide erosion of civic space that demands a principled and consistent response by the EU and other international partners. IPHR urges these actors to place concerns about declining civic freedoms high on the agenda as they pursue strengthened partnerships with the Central Asian countries and to insist on meaningful measures to halt repressive practices, ensure accountability for violations, and improve protection for independent voices. Clearly articulated performance criteria, sustained scrutiny and credible consequences for continued violations — enforced through available and expanding cooperation mechanisms — are essential in this context.

More detailed information and recommendations are provided in the sections below.

Excessive and Discriminatory Restrictions on CSOs

Across Central Asia, CSOs face excessive and unjustified restrictions, often inspired by Russian legislation and policies, especially those targeting foreign-funded groups. Policymakers advocating such measures have also seized on the debate surrounding the current US presidential administration's moves to overhaul US foreign assistance as a justification to intensify hostile rhetoric and propose new restrictive measures. These attacks have come as many CSOs are struggling to sustain their operations due to the suspension of US-funded initiatives and declining funding opportunities.

Kazakhstan

In the past year, decision-makers in Kazakhstan – from MPs to President Tokayev – have repeatedly accused CSOs of using foreign grants to promote "alien" values and undermine the country's image.[5] In February 2025, a member of a pro-government parliamentary faction proposed adopting a "foreign agent" law, arguing that it was time to "rewrite the rules of the game with foreign donors who disguise political interests as 'media support,' 'human rights,' and 'increasing tolerance."[6] While this initiative did not advance, the government subsequently launched work on new general legislation on NGOs. The working group established for this purpose includes leaders of public associations, but there are concerns that the views of independent civil society representatives may be sidelined. [7]

At the same time, citing security concerns, the authorities have tightened an existing reporting regime for organisations receiving foreign funding for certain core activities. Under new rules that entered into force in January 2026, such organisations must report both the receipt and use of foreign funds, and a public registry will be expanded to include not only their names but also the sources and amounts of their funding. Tax authorities have also been granted expanded powers to inspect foreign-funded organisations. These developments have prompted fears of increased stigmatisation and pressure on CSOs that rely on foreign grants.[8]

Policy makers have singled out foreign-funded feminist and LGBTQI+ groups for particular criticism, accusing them of undermining national values and promoting "immoral behaviour." [9]

These groups are also facing increasing harassment, a trend reinforced by the adoption in autumn 2025 of legislation banning so-called LGBTQI+ "propaganda," despite widespread criticism from human rights organisations, international experts, and the diplomatic community. The vaguely worded ban can be applied to virtually any information related to LGBTQI+ issues, creating a high risk of arbitrary enforcement, with sanctions including the blocking of online resources, fines, and administrative detention. The legislation also entrenches stigma and discrimination and may encourage further anti-LGBTQI+ attacks.[10]

The vulnerability of CSOs promoting LGBTIQ+ rights is illustrated by the case of Feminita: the movement has been denied registration on dubious grounds, and its events have repeatedly been disrupted by anti-LGBTIQ+ activists, while police have failed to provide adequate protection, detaining representatives of the movement instead of the attackers.[11] One of Feminita's co-founders is currently facing criminal charges based on an unfounded complaint filed by an attacker (see more in the chapter on persecution of critical voices).

Kyrgyzstan

A Russia-inspired "foreign agent" law adopted in Kyrgyzstan in 2024 requires CSOs that receive foreign funding and engage in broadly defined "political" activities to register as "foreign representatives" and subject to intrusive state oversight. The law imposes harsh penalties for non-compliance, including suspension or closure. Civil society, international experts and representatives of the international community have severely criticised the law. The Council of Europe's Venice Commission concluded that it violates constitutional and international standards and warned that its implementation poses a "real risk of stigmatising, silencing and eventually eliminating" foreign-funded NGOs.[12]

The "foreign representative" law has created a widespread climate of fear and self-censorship. While it has not been enforced as harshly as feared to date and only a few CSOs have voluntarily registered under it, its chilling impact is evident. A report published by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in December 2025[13] found that after the adoption of the law some 80 percent of all CSOs – and more than 90 percent of human rights groups – have engaged in self-censorship, including by reducing public activities and avoiding sensitive language or criticism in their communications. Almost half of all CSOs reported reduced cooperation with government authorities, 37 percent downsized or paused programmes, and 7 percent self-liquidated. CSOs also described intensified surveillance and pressure from law enforcement, alongside worsening public attitudes and social media attacks.

Public statements by decision-makers have reinforced the climate of mistrust toward organisations receiving foreign funding. For example, President Japarov has accused foreign-funded organisations of spreading and sharing "false" information. [14]

In December 2025, three representatives of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), who were due to take part in a human rights film festival organised by a local member organisation, were denied entry to Kyrgyzstan without explanation. This incident raised

concerns about growing hostility toward not only domestic but also international human rights organisations.[15]

Tajikistan

The registration process for CSOs in Tajikistan is widely perceived as unpredictable, inconsistent, and subject to political influence, with applications frequently obstructed, delayed, or rejected on arbitrary grounds. As of October 2025, registration fees for public associations were doubled, creating additional barriers to registration, particularly for smaller and regional groups.[16]

These developments form part of a broader pattern that has seen the closure of hundreds of CSOs in recent years, especially following the 2021–2022 mass protests in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO), leading to a sharp decline in the sector. Organisations in GBAO have reportedly been forced to shut down under threat of serious repercussions or through politically motivated court decisions.[17] UN human rights experts have expressed alarm over the mass closure of CSOs. [18]

According to official information, in 2025, another 85 CSOs ceased their operations. Seven of them were liquidated by court order for alleged violations such as conducting activities beyond the scope of their statutes or providing educational or medical services without the required authorisation.[19]

Remaining CSOs face excessive and burdensome reporting requirements, including in relation to foreign funding, and are regularly subjected to intrusive inspections by different state bodies. A 2025 study found that nearly two-thirds of CSOs had undergone inspections, with many subjected to repeated checks, fines for minor administrative issues, or prolonged legal uncertainty due to the absence of formal inspection outcomes.[20]

There are concerns that draft legislation on non-commercial organisations could result in further restrictions on CSO operations in Tajikistan. While some CSO representatives were invited to participate in a government working group discussing the draft law in August 2025, it remains unclear whether they will be able to meaningfully influence the process. CSOs also face hostile rhetoric, online harassment, and intimidation by security services, contributing to stigmatisation, self-censorship, and a climate of fear.[21]

The challenges faced by CSOs are compounded by severe financial pressures, including sharp reductions in international donor funding, notably the 2025 suspension of USAID assistance. In a recent survey, all 50 CSO respondents reported difficulties accessing funding, resulting in staff reductions, scaled-down programmes, or organisational closures. CSOs operating in GBAO are especially affected, with many struggling to sustain even basic operations. [22]

Turkmenistan

National legislation grants authorities in Turkmenistan extensive powers to control CSOs, which are also required to register all foreign-funded projects and regularly report on their implementation to the government. The number of registered CSOs remains low. While some organisations provide important support services to vulnerable groups, no truly independent human rights organisations are registered or able to operate openly in the country — a situation criticised by the UN Human Rights Committee.[23]

Cooperation or even information-sharing with exile-based human rights and media organisations entails a high risk of persecution in Turkmenistan. Journalists and activists engaged in such cooperation have, for example, faced travel restrictions, forced hospitalisation, and politically motivated prosecution (for recent cases, see the chapter on persecution of critical voices). Representatives of exiled human rights organisations based abroad have also been subjected to intimidation and harassment. In several cases, such individuals have been denied entry to Turkey for allegedly posing a threat to national security. These decisions are believed to have been taken at the request of Turkmenistani security services in retaliation for their human rights work and criticism of the authorities.[24]

Uzbekistan

CSOs in Uzbekistan face severe obstacles to accessing foreign funding. They must obtain Ministry of Justice approval for all foreign grants exceeding USD 2,800 – a cumbersome process often leading to refusals or significant delays. They are also subject to a heavy reporting burden. In addition, many independent CSOs, especially human rights groups, are unable to access foreign funding due to difficulties with obtaining state registration – a prerequisite for receiving grants. For example, human rights defender and former political prisoner Agzam Turgunov's application to register a new NGO called Human Rights House has been rejected over a dozen times due to alleged technical mistakes.

In early 2025, a pro-government commentator proposed the adoption of a "foreign agent" law in Uzbekistan, arguing that it was needed to "control foreign financial flows". [25] While this proposal did not translate into any formal legislative initiative, it reflected entrenched negative stereotypes about foreign-funded organisations and reinforced concerns about potential new restrictions.

Moreover, amendments to several laws regulating NGOs, which were adopted in August 2025[26], introduced new, problematic requirements. Notably, NGOs were required to publicly disclose information on foreign-sourced assets on a quarterly basis. This raised concerns about excessive administrative burdens, particularly as NGOs were already obliged to submit up to 18 different reports. The amendments also require individuals and entities engaged in research and information activities to report foreign funding to tax authorities, even if they are not registered as non-commercial organisations. It is feared that this provision could be used to block the work of groups operating through alternative models in the highly restrictive civic

space. While the legislation reduced penalties for NGOs and their leaders for offences such as operating without registration, failing to notify authorities of events, or receiving foreign funding without prior government approval, it is troubling that these acts continue to be penalised in violation of international standards.[27]

It is also worrying that new rules, which entered into force in August 2025, include visits abroad among events requiring prior notification, widening the scope of undue control over NGO activities.[28]

Recommendations

Central Asian authorities should:

- Bring all oversight of CSOs into line with their international human rights obligations, including by refraining from enacting legislation that imposes undue control, discrimination, or stigmatisation of foreign-funded CSOs, and repeal or thoroughly revise existing restrictive laws.
- Ensure transparent and fair registration processes for CSOs, protect their right to access funding — including from international sources — and safeguard their ability to operate without undue interference or fear of reprisals, including when addressing human rights issues that challenge so-called "traditional" values.
- Ensure that individuals who work or cooperate with CSOs, including organisations based abroad, are not subjected to retaliation, and take effective measures to investigate and address any violations of their rights which are reported.

EU institutions, EU member states and other international partners of the Central Asian governments should:

- Publicly and consistently reaffirm their support for civil society in Central Asia amid the unprecedented challenges it faces.
- Increase accessible financial and other practical assistance to Central Asian CSOs to enable them to fulfil their vital roles in promoting human rights, the rule of law, social justice, and equality.
- Speak up in support of Central Asian CSOs, and those who work or cooperate with them, when they are subjected to pressure or reprisals for their legitimate engagement.
- Call on the Central Asian governments to implement the recommendations listed above.

Widening Crackdown on Independent Media, Reporting and Information-sharing

Across Central Asia, independent media, journalists and bloggers are subjected to growing pressure, and governments increasingly restrict free speech in violation of their international obligations.

Kazakhstan

Recent events illustrate the growing attack on independent media and journalists in Kazakhstan.

In December 2025, police raided the offices of the independent *Orda.kz* outlet, detained its staff and charged its chief editor with knowingly spreading "false" information. Media and human rights groups denounced this development as retaliation for the outlet's independent investigative reporting on corruption and other issues.[29] *KazTAG* has come under fire for its investigative reporting relating to an influential company, with its leadership facing charges of spreading "false" information, similarly to Bazhenova. These cases have reinforced concerns about the misuse of the broadly worded Criminal Code provision on "false" information to restrict legitimate reporting (see more on the cases in the chapter on persecution of critical voices).[30]

In another worrying development, the independent *Respublika.kz.news* site was blocked across Kazakhstan in November 2025, officially based on a court decision dating from over a decade ago, but in practice appearing to have been triggered by its recent coverage.[31]

A growing number of online attacks against independent media, journalists and bloggers have also taken place. These have included targeted campaigns rendering news sites inaccessible[32] and apparent abuse of content-complaint mechanisms resulting in the suspension of social media accounts.[33]

In the lead up to the referendum on constitutional changes, set for 15 March 2026, critics of the reform have faced intimidation and harassment, including online smear campaigns, detentions and, in some cases, prosecutions.[34] Those publishing interviews with critics or conducting unofficial surveys related to it have also been targeted.[35] These actions appear aimed at suppressing critical views on the government-led reform process and its rushed and non-inclusive implementation.[36]

A new media law adopted in Kazakhstan in 2024 introduced mandatory registration for both online and offline media, while providing for vague grounds for suspending or terminating media operations. [37] This creates the risk of abusive implementation, although no media outlet is known to have been denied registration or to have had their operations suspended or terminated to date.

New accreditation rules, introduced in 2024, grant authorities broad powers to deny or revoke accreditation for foreign media and journalists.[38] In an example of the misuse of accreditation rules, the Foreign Ministry refused to renew the accreditation of 16 journalists from the Kazakh service of *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (RFE/RL) in summer 2025. Authorities claimed they had violated the law by working without valid accreditation, but RFE/RL stressed the Ministry failed to process their applications within the required two-month period, causing their permits to lapse before a decision was made.[39] The refusal was upheld on appeal.[40] Under recent legal amendments foreign media and journalists working without accreditation may face fines.[41]

New legislation banning so-called LGBTQI+ "propaganda," adopted in December 2025, poses an additional serious threat to free speech, as sharing information on LGBTQI+ issues may lead to online resources being blocked, media operations being restricted, and journalists, activists, or others being fined or detained (see also the chapter on restrictions on CSOs).[42]

Kyrgyzstan

The media climate in Kyrgyzstan has sharply deteriorated, with the country plunging to 144th out of 180 countries in the 2025 World Press Freedom Index.[43] This represents a drop of 24 places from the previous year and 62 places since 2020, when the current president first came to power.[44]

Independent outlets in Kyrgyzstan have faced mounting pressure. The organisation running the investigative platform *Kloop* was closed by court in 2024 over allegedly "negative" coverage and "sharp criticism" of the government.[45] While continuing its work through another organisation, the platform has faced renewed harassment, including the arbitrary detention and criminal prosecutions of contributors, resulting in four convictions in September 2025.[46] Following raids on the *Temirov Live* investigative group in 2024, its journalists were also prosecuted,[47] and one of them remains in prison. In another alarming development, in October 2025, a local court declared materials published by *Kloop*, *Temirov Live* and its sister project *Ayt Ayt Dese* "extremist" – without specifying what content was deemed unlawful – and banned their online activities. This means that sharing, liking, or otherwise engaging with materials produced by these platforms can now lead to criminal liability.[48]

April TV was closed by court in July 2025 for allegedly discrediting the government through "sarcasm" and "ridicule,"[49] with its contributors summoned for questioning by security services.[50] The Kyrgyz service of RFE/RL has faced renewed political attacks despite the reversal of a previous court order for its closure, compounding the challenges it faces due to funding uncertainties.[51]

A new media law adopted in Kyrgyzstan in summer 2025 requires compulsory registration for both traditional and online outlets, while granting authorities broad discretion over registration procedures. This has raised fears that it could be used to arbitrarily silence critics.[52] A previous version of the law, developed through extensive consultation with the media community, was sidelined in favour of the more restrictive version passed. The new law entered into force in August 2025, pending the elaboration of implementing rules.[53] Other recently adopted legislation, introducing vaguely worded provisions penalising the dissemination of "false" information and the possession of "extremist" materials, has also raised fears that its implementation could stifle freedom of expression and media freedom.[54]

In a trend decried by UN experts,[55] bloggers and activists in Kyrgyzstan have increasingly been prosecuted over social media posts critical of the authorities, with cases brought under overly

broad criminal offenses (for examples of such cases, see the chapter on persecution of critical voices). [56]

Tajikistan

Tajikistan was ranked 153rd among 180 countries in the 2025 Press Freedom Index, with Turkmenistan being the only Central Asian country ranked worse.[57] Authorities continue to heavily interfere with media freedoms – tightly controlling broadcast and online content – and restrict access to official information.

The number of independent media outlets has declined significantly in recent years. According to official data, around 60 independent newspapers continue to be published, but most serve as publishing platforms for CSOs, while fewer than 10 operate as active stand-alone outlets.[58] Funding difficulties, combined with government pressure, have left many independent outlets struggling, while others have been forcibly closed. For example, three publications associated with the Tajikistan Centre for Investigative Journalism ceased operations in 2025 after the Supreme Court ordered the Centre's closure over alleged violations (see also the chapter on restrictions on CSOs). Meanwhile, the establishment of new media outlets is hampered by administrative barriers, including delays in registration and requirements to provide information not foreseen by law, such as clearance from security bodies. [59]

Authorities exploit legal avenues to put pressure on independent journalists, who risk politically-motivated prosecution for allegedly "inciting" hatred, spreading "false" information, "extremism" or other vaguely defined charges. A record number of journalists are currently behind bars (see more in the chapter on persecution of critical voices), while many others have fled the country.

In autumn 2024, the Tajikistani government halted the activities of a state-civil society working group tasked with drafting a new, improved media law, accusing it of failing to pay adequate attention to issues of independence, security, and culture. The Ministry of Culture was subsequently charged with revising the draft law. It is currently not clear to what extent civil society representatives will be consulted in this process, although some initial consultations were held in 2025.

In recent years, an increasing number of people have been imprisoned in Tajikistan for promoting "extremism" and "terrorism" simply for sharing or liking social media posts. In a welcome step, in May 2025, the president signed legislation excluding criminal liability in such cases.[60] According to the General Prosecutor, this led to 400 people being freed from criminal liability in 2025, while the chair of the Supreme Court stated that courts did not receive any requests to overturn earlier convictions.[61] There have also reportedly been new cases in which social media users have been prosecuted over likes, including by being fined for allegedly offending those in power.[62]

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan again featured at the bottom in the World Press Freedom Index 2025, ranked 174th among 180 countries.[63] Authorities continue to tightly control the media, with national outlets expected to provide exclusively positive coverage of domestic developments,[64] including by reproducing official narratives of well-being and prosperity despite widespread economic hardship and serious ongoing rights violations.[65]

Despite the government's promises to improve connectivity, the internet penetration rate and internet speed remain low in Turkmenistan compared to global standards[66], while internet censorship is widespread. Independent news, social media and other online resources have been arbitrarily blocked in the country and are only accessible via so-called VPNs. At the same time, the government also campaigns against the use of these internet censorship circumvention tools through blocking measures and intimidation of those who install and use them. Recently, internet censorship has reportedly increased further amid allegations that cybersecurity officials operate controlled, profit-generating schemes selling privileged access to tools used to circumvent censorship. Such practices obstruct digital development and directly contradict the government's stated commitment to advancing digital transformation. [67]

Turkmenistani authorities continue to persecute journalists, bloggers, and other government critics both domestically and abroad, reinforcing a climate of censorship and fear. In November 2025, a popular blogger known for covering everyday issues affecting citizens on his TikTok channel disappeared shortly after posting a video sharply critical of rising food prices. According to the Turkmen service of RFE/RL, he is believed to have been detained, tortured and subsequently to have died from the injuries sustained. The service's journalists later discovered his grave, substantiating these allegations.[68] This case illustrates that the authorities' campaign against dissent targets all those who dare to question official narratives.

Uzbekistan

Contrary to official claims, authorities in Uzbekistan increasingly suppress media freedoms, including by shutting down information platforms and prosecuting journalists and bloggers – often on charges of publishing insulting, defamatory, or "false" information.[69]

In January 2026, several independent Uzbekistani media platforms, including *Hook.Report* and *Sarpa Media*, as well as individual bloggers reported that their Instagram accounts had been disabled due to alleged violations of community rules. This was believed to have been the result of coordinated campaigns.[70] The social media accounts of exile-based organisations were also deactivated on similar grounds. The Telegram channel of the online *Eltuz* outlet was suspended for allegedly publishing personal data without consent,[71] while the YouTube channel of the Association for Human Rights in Central Asia (AHRCA) was taken down after three complaints alleging copyright infringements related to videos aimed at raising awareness of the human rights situation in Uzbekistan.[72]

Although some of the targeted accounts were later restored, these incidents heightened concerns about the misuse of social media content-complaint mechanisms to restrict independent reporting and free speech. Commentators highlighted, in particular, an abusive practice in which attackers re-upload materials posted by accounts covering issues sensitive to those in power and then file copyright complaints against the originals, exploiting automated enforcement to have the creators' channels shut down. These kinds of attacks have created a growing threat to social media accounts critical of Uzbekistani authorities.[73]

A draft Information Code could result in further restrictions on the media in Uzbekistan by imposing broad grounds for limiting content and suspending or terminating media activities. In a legal opinion from 2024, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights concluded that a number of provisions raise serious concerns, as they do not correspond to international standards and good practices.[74] In particular, the OSCE experts raised concerns that print and online media would have to undergo compulsory registration, and that media outlets, journalists, and bloggers would be required not only to check the accuracy of information but also to guarantee its truthfulness. They warned that these provisions, coupled with legal liability for disseminating "false" information, are overly broad and disproportionate and could be misused to restrict media freedom. The current status of the draft law remains unclear.

Other recent problematic legal initiatives include draft legislation currently under consideration in Parliament that would introduce fines and short-term detention for vaguely defined offences of using "insulting" or "indecent" language online.[75] Presented as a response to an alleged rise in "offensive" behaviour on social media, this legislation could lead to new undue restrictions on freedom of expression and the targeting of outspoken bloggers.

Another law, adopted in 2024, allows authorities to designate foreign citizens as "undesirable" and bar them from entering the country if they are deemed to undermine state sovereignty or discredit the state. This law could potentially be used against foreign journalists, bloggers, and others exercising their freedom of expression to speak out on issues which are sensitive to the authorities, although thankfully this has not happened so far.[76]

Recommendations

Central Asian authorities should:

- Repeal or amend restrictive laws and practices that undermine freedom of expression and media freedom, and safeguard the rights of independent media outlets, journalists, and bloggers to work without interference or fear of reprisals.
- Ensure unhindered access to both online and offline information, and refrain from suppressing the exchange of information and public debate under the pretext of combating disinformation, defamation, societal discord, or threats to national cultural values.

EU institutions, EU member states and other international partners of the Central Asian governments should:

- Express serious concern about pressure on independent media in Central Asia and excessive restrictions on free speech.
- Raise these issues as matters of urgency in bilateral and multilateral dialogues and call for concrete steps to address them, including by implementing the recommended measures outlined above.

Violations of the Rights of Protesters

There are ongoing concerns about the lack of impartial, thorough, and effective investigations into widespread allegations of excessive force, torture, and other serious violations committed by authorities during the suppression of mass protests and unrest in Kazakhstan, the Republic of Karakalpakstan in Uzbekistan, and GBAO in Tajikistan in 2022. Authorities have consistently rejected calls for international investigations into these tragic events, which resulted in significant loss of life and other casualties. The measures taken to investigate and address violations of protesters' rights have failed to ensure adequate accountability.

More than 30 security and law enforcement officials have been convicted for torture and other abuses committed during the "Bloody January" 2022 events in **Kazakhstan**, when authorities harshly suppressed mass protests for social and political change and evolving unrest.[77] While comprehensive, up-to-date statistics are not available, it is clear that the number of convictions remains low given the scale of violations, with hundreds of complaints about abuse having been filed by detained protesters. Many investigations were prematurely closed due to an alleged lack of evidence, while cases reaching court have often been marred by fair trial concerns, lenient penalties, and inadequate compensation for victims. For example, in January 2025, six police officers convicted of brutally torturing several dozen people in a detention centre in Almaty region received mere three-year prison sentences, and victims' requests for compensation were only partially granted. Lawyers also raised concerns that the trial began before all perpetrators had been identified. The verdict was later upheld on appeal without changes.[78]

Civil society concerns about the lack of accountability related to the January 2022 events have been echoed by international human rights bodies, including the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights[79], as well as the UN Human Rights Committee.[80]

In **Uzbekistan**, authorities have yet to ensure an independent investigation into the July 2022 events in Karakalpakstan, when authorities put down mass protests against proposed constitutional amendments that would have deprived Karakalpakstan of its constitutionally protected status.[81] A parliamentary commission set up to investigate these events, under the Human Rights Commissioner, presented its findings in December 2024.[82] The commission concluded that law enforcement agencies had used internationally recognised methods to disperse the protests,[83] and that the rights of those accused of involvement in the protests were

fully protected. However, this contrasts with credible independent reports of the excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, and torture of protesters. According to the commission, only three law enforcement officials were held accountable for human rights violations,[84] compared to nearly 10,000 protesters convicted for allegedly breaking the law, with penalties ranging from warnings to imprisonment. The commission's findings highlight the need for further, impartial and thorough investigations into the July 2022 events and for effective measures to hold all perpetrators, including high-ranking officials, accountable for violations.

In **Tajikistan**, there has been no progress on ensuring accountability for the serious human rights violations committed by security and law enforcement officials during the suppression of mass protests in GBAO in May 2022 and – prior to this – in November 2021. Reported violations include the excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, torture and ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, and unfair trials of dozens of people charged in relation to the GBAO events. [85] UN experts have criticised the government's heavy-handed response to end protests in GBAO through arrests and the excessive and unlawful use of force.[86] They have also deplored the criminal prosecution of human rights defenders and journalists in the aftermath of these events.[87]

Meanwhile, the right to peaceful assembly continues to be violated across the region. In **Kyrgyzstan**, a court-sanctioned ban on protests in central Bishkek— first initiated in response to a request from the Russian embassy to end anti-war protests outside its premises in 2022[88] – has been repeatedly extended.[89] Protesters have been instructed to instead gather in a specifically designated park, while official events are exempted from the ban, illustrating its discriminatory nature. Authorities have claimed the ban is necessary to prevent potential unrest, but in practice, it has hindered citizens from exercising their right to peaceful assembly near government buildings and other key locations.

In **Kazakhstan**, the Constitutional Court ruled in January 2025 that requests to hold peaceful protests must not be automatically denied on the grounds that the proposed venue is occupied but that appropriate alternatives must be offered. Despite this ruling, authorities continue to reject requests on dubious grounds, such as the alleged provision of incorrect or incomplete information.[90] At the same time, people taking part in occasional peaceful protests held without official approval face detention and penalties.[91] Preventive detentions of activists ahead of planned or potential protests also persist. For example, ahead of Republic Day in October 2025 – when protests were feared following a call from an exile-based government opponent – dozens of activists were detained across the country and subjected to short-term arrests and fines. [92] This ongoing clampdown has further restricted the already limited space for exercising the right to peaceful assembly in the country.

In **Turkmenistan**, while suppressing spontaneous protests to express grievances, authorities forcibly mobilise citizens for state-organised mass events, threatening reprisals for non-participation. These events and lengthy rehearsals often result in significant disruptions to work and studies, while also exposing participants to health risks due to the intense nature of the

programme and harsh weather conditions – such as events held outdoors despite extreme heat.[93]

Recommendations

Central Asian authorities should:

- Undertake independent, thorough, and effective investigations into the 2022 suppression of mass protests and all alleged human rights violations, ensuring that those responsible are held accountable through fair trials, given appropriate penalties, and that victims receive adequate compensation.
- Protect the right to peaceful assembly as guaranteed by international human rights standards, refrain from imposing unjustified restrictions, and ensure that peaceful protests can take place without hindrance.

EU institutions, EU member states and other international partners of the Central Asian governments should:

- Reiterate calls for independent and transparent investigations into the 2022 crises, ensuring the participation of international experts to guarantee comprehensive accountability.
- Insist on effective measures to ensure accountability for reported violations and to safeguard the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.
- Increase support for local human rights defenders and civil society organisations working to monitor and document violations of peaceful assembly rights and to support victims of such violations.

Persecution of Critical Voices

Throughout Central Asia, civil society activists, human rights defenders, journalists, and others who criticise government policies, expose human rights violations, and advocate for justice, face persecution. They are subjected to smear campaigns, surveillance, threats, and attacks, and are arrested, convicted and imprisoned after unfair trials because of their exercise of the freedoms of expression, association, and assembly. Those prosecuted often face charges initiated under broadly worded Criminal Code provisions used to suppress free speech, such as those related to disseminating "false" or slanderous information, "inciting" discord, calling for riots or "disobedience" to authorities, or alleged "extremism". Others are charged with fabricated offenses like extortion or fraud.

There are serious concerns about individuals serving politically motivated prison sentences in harsh conditions. Forced psychiatric confinement is also sometimes used against outspoken individuals.[94]

Moreover, repression extends beyond borders, with government critics abroad increasingly targeted through transnational measures and requests for their forcible return.

Additionally, intimidation and harassment frequently extend to family members, creating a pervasive climate of fear and silencing dissent in the region.

The cases described below, which are of particular concern to IPHR and partners, illustrate the broader trend of persecution:

Kazakhstan

The use of criminal prosecution as a tool of retaliation has recently increased, and more than two dozen people are currently behind bars on charges considered politically motivated by Kazakhstani human rights defenders. Among them are the following individuals:

The leader of the unregistered Alga Kazakhstan! party, **Marat Zhylanbaev** is serving a seven-year prison sentence on extremism-related charges, issued in 2023 in retaliation for his peaceful opposition activities.[95] In April 2025, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded that his deprivation of liberty violated Kazakhstan's international obligations and called for his release.[96] Zhylanbaev has reportedly faced ongoing pressure in prison, his contacts with lawyers and family have been restricted on various pretexts, and extended hunger strikes have further weakened his health, compounding the effects of harsh detention conditions. According to his family, in February 2026, he was transferred to a stricter detention regime – characterised by further restrictions on his contacts with the outside world – due to alleged violations of prison rules.[97] While dismissing reports about Zhylanbaev's declining health, authorities have also targeted those drawing attention to his situation.[98]

Journalist-activist **Duman Mukhamedkarim** was similarly sentenced to seven years in prison on extremism-related charges following a closed trial in 2024. In violation of the legal requirement that prisoners serve their sentences in their home regions, he is held in a facility about 1,000 kilometres from his home in the Almaty region.[99] The activist has reportedly held several hunger strikes to protest his treatment and there are ongoing concerns about his health.[100]

Journalist and activist **Aigerim Tleuzhan** is serving a four-year prison sentence, which was issued for her alleged involvement in the seizure of Almaty airport during the January 2022 events following a flawed and politically motivated trial.[101] She has experienced serious health problems in prison but, according to her lawyer, prison authorities have failed to ensure prompt access to adequate medical assistance. The prison where she is held is reportedly characterised by overcrowded barracks, poor ventilation, extreme temperatures, and constant surveillance.[102]

Recent criminal prosecutions of concern include:

Orda.kz's editor-in-chief, **Gulnara Bazhkenova**, was detained in December 2025 and placed under house arrest pending investigation of charges of deliberately distributing "false" information. Media and human rights groups have raised alarm over the case against

Bazhkenova, which is widely viewed as retaliation for *Orda.kz*'s investigative reporting and followed months of harassment against the outlet, including cyberattacks, threats and disinformation campaigns.[103] In a further worrying development, in January 2026 Bazhkenova's lawyer, Murat Adam, was stripped of his licence to practise law after reporting procedural violations in the case[104] — a move that appeared aimed at penalising him for his legitimate representation of his client. [105]

The editor-in-chief, **Amir Kassenov**, and general director, **Aset Mataev**, of the *KazTAG* news agency have also been charged with knowingly disseminating "false" information. The charges relate to investigative reporting on alleged fraudulent schemes involving an influential company managed by a Russia-born tycoon. The investigation has reportedly been marred by procedural violations, reinforcing concerns that the case is politically motivated. [106]

Zhanar Sekerbaeva, co-founder of the feminist and LGBTIQ+ organisation Feminita, is facing "assault" charges based on a complaint filed by a well-known anti-LGBTIQ+ activist. The charges relate to an incident in November 2025, when the activist intruded into a private gathering of LGBTIQ+ activists and verbally harassed those present (see more in the chapter on restrictions on CSOs). Despite the lack of any substance to the charges, Sekerbaeva was informed in February 2026 that she had been formally declared a suspect. She considers the charges to be retaliation for her long-standing human rights work and LGBTIQ+ advocacy. [107]

Nineteen activists affiliated with the **Atajurt movement** faced charges of "inciting national discord" after holding a peaceful protest in November 2025 to highlight the persecution of ethnic Kazakhs in China's Xinjiang region, demand the release of a co-activist detained there, and express concern about China's growing influence in Kazakhstan. During the protest, participants burned Chinese flags and a portrait of the Chinese president, chanted slogans such as "Down with China!", and shared video recordings on social media, prompting an official diplomatic protest from China.[108] Thirteen activists were placed in detention and six under house arrest pending the outcome of the trial, which started behind closed doors in late January 2026[109]. Human rights groups, including IPHR and KIBHR, called for the charges to be dropped and for the activists' release, stressing that the case reflects a broader pattern of pressure against Atajurt activists and violates Kazakhstan's international human rights obligations.[110]

With the next hearing scheduled for mid-March 2026, the court has reportedly refused to allow one of the defendants, Nazigul Maksutkhan, to attend the trial online, although she recently gave birth through surgical intervention and the trial is being held some 300 kilometres away from her home. Other defendants have reportedly experienced deteriorating health problems in pre-trial detention, while activists supporting those on trial have been subjected to intimidation.

The following case highlights concerns about transnational repression:

There has been no meaningful progress in ensuring accountability for the July 2024 killing of Kazakhstani opposition journalist **Aidos Sadykov** in Kyiv. Kazakhstani authorities have failed to meaningfully cooperate with the investigation by Ukrainian prosecutors, who have identified two Kazakhstani citizens as the suspected perpetrators. One suspect was initially detained in

Kazakhstan but was reportedly later released under a travel ban, while no active steps appear to have been taken to locate the second. Sadykov had faced years of harassment and criminal charges in absentia after fleeing Kazakhstan.[111] Following his death, his wife Natalia Sadykova, who is also a journalist and has continued to run a YouTube channel critical of the government, has reported ongoing intimidation and surveillance. This has prompted concerns about her safety.[112]

Kyrgyzstan

In an alarming trend, journalists, bloggers and civil society activists in Kyrgyzstan have increasingly faced prosecution on retaliatory charges. UN Special Rapporteurs have raised concerns about this pattern, warning that it has a "profound chilling effect" on free expression and civic activism in Kyrgyzstan.[113]

The following cases are all part of this trend:

Journalist **Makhabat Tazhibek Kyzy** from the investigative platform Temirov Live – known for exposing corruption – remains imprisoned after being handed a six-year sentence in October 2024 on charges of allegedly calling for "disobedience" to authorities and riots.[114] IPHR and 10 other human rights NGOs called the charges "a textbook example of retaliation against investigative journalism and reporting on high-level corruption".[115] In an opinion published in October 2025, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded that Tazhibek was imprisoned unlawfully in retaliation for her journalistic work and called for her immediate release. It described the provision under which she was prosecuted as "impermissibly broad and vague" and found that the court conflated criticism of the government with inciting disobedience.[116] A petition filed by Tazhibek's lawyers to reopen her case in light of the Working Group's opinion is pending with the Supreme Court.[117]

In September 2025, former Kloop video operators **Aleksander Aleksandrov** and **Joomart Duulatov** were sentenced to five years in prison for allegedly calling for "disobedience" and riots. Authorities accused them of involvement in producing and distributing videos labelled "destructive" and "false", even though experts found no direct calls for unrest. Along with other human rights NGOs, IPHR condemned the convictions, saying they marked a new peak in the authorities' campaign of retaliation against Kloop, and sent a chilling message to all those engaged in independent journalism in the country.[118] In November 2025, Aleksandrov's and Duulatov's sentences were changed to three years' probation on appeal, resulting in their release.[119] Nevertheless, the fact that they were convicted in the first place remains of serious concern.

In July 2025, independent journalist, **Kanyshay Mamyrkulova** was sentenced to four years' probation, entailing wide-ranging restrictions on her movement and online activities for allegedly calling for riots and inciting inter-ethnic discord. The charges concerned social media posts criticising the government's lack of transparency over a border demarcation deal with Tajikistan.[120] IPHR and its partners stated that her case "sends yet another warning signal" that the authorities "are willing to use overly broad criminal provisions to silence critical

journalism."[121] UN human rights experts also concluded that she appeared to have been targeted for her legitimate exercise of freedom of expression.[122] In February 2026, an appeals court reduced Mamyrkulova's sentence to three years' probation[123] but violating the conditions of her release could still result in imprisonment.

Human rights defender **Rita Karasartova** was arrested in April 2025 after posting an appeal on social media from a persecuted opposition activist, who was later forcibly returned to Kyrgyzstan under unclear circumstances.[124] In September 2025, following several months in pre-trial detention, she was convicted in a trial held behind closed doors and sentenced to five years' probation for allegedly organising riots and calling for the forceful seizure of power.[125] Both human rights groups[126] and international experts[127] raised concerns about the proceedings against her and the criminalisation of her due to her human rights engagement. However, in December 2025, her sentence was upheld unchanged on appeal.[128]

Musician-poet **Askat Zhetigen** was sentenced to three years in prison in July 2024 on charges of calling for the forceful seizure of power—a sentence later upheld by the Supreme Court.[129] He was prosecuted after harshly criticising President Japarov and government policies on social media.[130] In early March 2025, Zhetigen was ordered to spend 15 days in a punishment cell for alleged breaches of prison rules. He viewed the measure as retaliation, as it came shortly after he reported alleged violations of the rights of detainees, including corruption and ill-treatment. The development attracted wide media and social media attention, and he was eventually released early from the punishment cell following the intervention of the head of the prison service. The Ombudsperson's office said it would investigate the actions against him and assess their lawfulness.[131]

In a recent case that also appears to form part of the pattern of misusing overly broad criminal code provisions to stifle criticism[132], activist and blogger **Aibek Tenizbaev** was detained in December 2025 on charges of inciting interethnic hatred. Security services alleged that he had "systematically" posted "provocative" content on social media and that expert assessments had identified "signs" of incitement in his materials.[133] Tenizbaev was initially placed in pre-trial detention but was later released under travel restrictions pending further investigation. His detention came after he had criticised Russian influence and Kremlin-linked media in Kyrgyzstan. In particular, he had accused Nomad – a recently-launched TV channel that rebroadcasts programmes from a leading Russian TV channel – of spreading "propaganda."[134]

Exile-based critical voices from Kyrgyzstan have also been targeted, using tactics such as smear campaigns, intimidation of relatives, "extremist" designations[135], Interpol requests[136], and other measures aimed at forcing their return on retaliatory charges.

Tajikistan

Following the May 2022 events in GBAO, the Tajikistani authorities launched a widening crackdown, targeting journalists, bloggers, civil society activists, and human rights defenders both in and outside this region.[137] UN human rights experts have deplored this crackdown,

highlighting concerns about the misuse of anti-extremism legislation to silence critical voices, trials marred by gross violations, allegations of torture and ill-treatment, and inadequate detention conditions.[138]

The following case is of particular concern to IPHR and partners:

Manuchehr Kholiqnazarov, human rights defender and laureate of the Martin Ennals Award, remains imprisoned in retaliation for his work to promote human rights and justice in GBAO. After the November 2021 crackdown on protests in GBAO, he provided legal advice to the detained and joined a commission of civil society and law enforcement representatives set up to investigate these events. However, in May 2022 a renewed crackdown derailed the commission's activities and Kholiqnazarov was arrested. In December 2022, the Supreme Court sentenced him to 16 years in prison on unsubstantiated charges of participation in a criminal and banned organisation after an unfair trial.[139] In addition to human rights NGOs, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has concluded that he was unlawfully detained and called for his immediate release.[140] IPHR and partners are seriously concerned about his health and well-being in prison.

Many of those imprisoned on charges considered politically motivated in Tajikistan are journalists. In a global survey published by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in January 2026, Tajikistan was included on a top ten list of jailers worldwide, with a total of nine journalists currently behind bars.[141] These include, among others:

Journalists **Daler Bobiev** and **Abdullo Ghurbati** were both arrested in June 2022 and subsequently sentenced to lengthy prison terms on anti-state charges following closed trials. Bobiev, who ran a YouTube channel that frequently covered controversial issues such as allegedly unlawful housing demolitions and mismanagement by local authorities, was sentenced to 10 years in prison in October 2022.[142] That same month Ghurbati, an award-winning video operator who cooperated with Ghurbati, received a 7.5-year sentence.[143] Both human rights organisations and UN experts have raised serious concerns about their cases. [144]

Journalist **Rukhshona Khakimova** was sentenced to eight years in prison in February 2025 on charges of high treason reportedly linked to her research into China's influence in Tajikistan. When issuing the sentence, the Supreme Court failed to consider her personal circumstances, including the fact that she has two young children. The Supreme Court also ordered the seizure of her property, leading to the confiscation of her bank savings, amounting to approximately 21,000 EUR.[145] The verdict against the journalist sparked significant public outcry in Tajikistan and internationally, with civil society, journalists, IPHR[146] and other international NGOs[147], and the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders[148] all urging a review or reversal of her sentence. However, despite this, her sentence was upheld on appeal.[149]

Khakimova is now serving her sentence in a women's colony in the city of Norak and rarely sees her children, who live with relatives. In a petition from prison, she asked the president to help ensure justice in her case, stressing that she had been convicted merely for conducting interviews with experts on Tajikistan–China relations who shared their personal views, and that there was no tangible evidence she collected or transferred classified information to a foreign

entity. In response, the General Prosecutor's Office claimed that her sentence was lawful and that there were no grounds to repeal or change it.[150]

In the following case, a human rights lawyer has been imprisoned for his professional activities for over a decade:

Buzurgmehr Yorov was first arrested in September 2015 after representing political opposition leaders. Following legal proceedings marred by due process violations, he was subsequently handed a 23-year prison sentence on extremism and multiple other charges. Later authorities have repeatedly brought new trumped-up charges against him, resulting in a further extension of his sentence. He has been tortured and ill-treated in detention and his family pressured. On the 10th anniversary of his arrest in September 2025, 12 human rights NGOs called on the Tajikistani authorities to quash Yurov's conviction and release him immediately and unconditionally.[151] The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has also called for his release, finding his detention in violation of international law.[152]

The Tajikistani government continues to use transnational repression against critical journalists, bloggers, and opposition members living abroad, seeking their return based on international arrest warrants issued through Interpol.[153]

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistani authorities continue to persecute those who criticise the government and demand the protection of rights both in- and outside the country.

Those who cooperate with foreign-based media and human rights groups work at persistent risk, as illustrated by these two cases:

Journalist **Nurgeldy Khalykov** was previously imprisoned after sharing a photo of a WHO mission visiting Turkmenistan with the Netherlands-based outlet Turkmen.News, which led authorities to uncover his cooperation with the group. Following his release in 2024, he was placed on a list of individuals banned from leaving the country, preventing him from travelling abroad to take up a new job. He has engaged in extended efforts to legally challenge the ban.[154] After months of legal proceedings, in October 2025 a local court ordered the migration service to disclose the legal basis of the ban. In response, the service stated that his departure from the country "contradicts national security interests," clearly indicating the involvement of the security services in the case.[155]

Soltan Achilova, a journalist and human rights defender who cooperates with the Austria-based Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR) – a long-term IPHR partner – faces ongoing surveillance and intimidation. In November 2024, she was forcibly hospitalised for an alleged infection – preventing her, for the second time, from travelling to Geneva to attend a human rights award ceremony and speak about her work.[156] Achilova also reported suspected poisoning attempts prior to her hospitalisation, leading the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders to express concern for her right to life.[157] In a joint communication from March

2025, several UN special procedures called on the government to guarantee Achilova's safety, allow her to travel freely, and to ensure accountability for the violations of her rights.[158]

The use of imprisonment as a tool of retaliation remains of serious concern:

Human rights activist **Mansur Mingelov** has been imprisoned for over a decade after being handed a 22-year sentence on multiple charges in 2012, following his efforts to expose ill-treatment of members of the ethnic Baloch community.[159] He has suffered serious health problems in prison believed to be linked to beatings he was subjected to upon his initial detention. Alongside human rights groups, UN human rights bodies and experts have condemned his detention and called for his release. [160]

While Turkmenistani authorities have acknowledged that Mingelov suffers from a serious medical condition, they have failed to secure his release on these grounds. In October 2025, authorities rejected a petition from his family requesting early release for medical reasons, claiming that available information did not justify such a move, even though his diagnosed condition is included on an official list of diseases making prisoners eligible for release.[161] Contrary to calls by human rights groups[162], Mingelov was also not included among those pardoned and released by the president in connection with the 30th anniversary of Turkmenistan's state neutrality in December 2025.

Civil society activist **Murat Dushemov** was due to be released in June 2025 after serving an unjust four-year prison sentence imposed in 2021.[163] Instead, he was hit with new charges over an alleged fight with a co-prisoner – an incident believed to have been staged to incriminate him in retaliation for his efforts to defend his rights in detention.[164] His family only learned of his whereabouts several days after his original sentence expired, were denied visits, and subjected to intimidation. Both human rights groups[165] and the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders[166] criticised the new charges and called for Dushemov's release. However, following a closed trial, he was sentenced to eight additional years in prison in September 2025.[167]

In a pattern criticised by the UN Committee against Torture,[168] Turkmenistani authorities have increasingly sought the forcible return of outspoken activists and bloggers based abroad, particularly in Turkey.[169] This a recent case of serious concern:

In April 2025, Turkmenistani bloggers **Alisher Sakhatov** and **Abdulla Orusov** were detained in Turkey and ordered to be deported for allegedly threatening public order and security.[170] Both had previously applied for international protection in Turkey and were at real risk of torture, arrest, and politically motivated imprisonment if returned to Turkmenistan due to their criticism of its authorities. Following appeals, in July 2025, Turkey's Constitutional Court suspended their deportation pending further assessment of these risks.[171] However, later that month, their lawyer and families lost contact with them after their reported release from detention,[172] with Turkish police failing to determine their whereabouts.[173] According to reports from family and human rights groups, the two bloggers were in fact forcibly returned to Turkmenistan under circumstances suggesting the direct involvement of Turkmenistani authorities.[174] This raised serious concerns for the bloggers' safety and well-being.[175]

Uzbekistan

Following the July 2022 protests in Karakalpakstan, authorities launched a widening crackdown on dissent in the region, targeting protest participants and other critical voices. A list of political prisoners compiled by an expert group of human rights defenders, which was published in December 2024, features the names of 30 individuals deemed to have been imprisoned in politically motivated trials for standing up for the retention of the republic's constitutionally protected status.[176] Since then there have been additional convictions.

The following case is of particular concern to IPHR and partners:

Lawyer, blogger and human rights defender **Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov** is serving a 16-year prison sentence on multiple charges brought in retaliation for his peaceful participation in the 2022 mass protests in Karakalpakstan. The authorities have sought to depict him as a protest leader. Tazhimuratov has allegedly been repeatedly subjected to torture and ill-treatment in detention, forced to carry out hazardous prison labour without appropriate protective equipment, and denied access to adequate medical assistance. According to his family, his health has significantly deteriorated behind bars.[177] Concerns for his safety and well-being were further heightened in February 2026, when prison authorities reportedly initiated his transfer to more restrictive, higher-security detention conditions and initiated new charges against him for allegedly disrupting prison work. If he is convicted on these charges, his prison sentence could be extended with up to ten years.[178]

Tazhimuratov's case has attracted sustained attention from both human rights groups and international experts. In an opinion issued in November 2024, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention deemed his detention unlawful and called for his immediate release.[179] In January 2026, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders Mary Lawlor reiterated that call, expressing deep concern about his continued detention, new allegations of abusive treatment, and the failure to address his complaints.[180]

Authorities have also brought criminal charges against Karakalpak activists based abroad in retaliation for their peaceful activism and sought their return to Uzbekistan, such as in this case:

Rinat Utambetov was arrested in Kazakhstan in April 2024 at the request of Uzbekistani authorities[181] and extradited to Uzbekistan in December 2024 over his alleged role in the July 2022 protests.[182] He was subsequently sentenced to 2.5 years in prison on charges of encroaching on the constitutional order and disseminating materials threatening public security – reportedly for sharing video appeals by Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov and other public figures related to the July 2022 protests through a private Telegram group.[183] In October 2025, the highest court in the Republic of Karakalpakstan rejected an appeal in Utambetov's case, leaving his sentence unchanged.[184]

Others targeted in the ongoing crackdown in Karakalpakstan have received non-custodial sentences under broadly worded criminal code provisions, such as those prohibiting the dissemination of materials threatening public security.[185] In several cases, social media users

have been targeted over posts expressing support for Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov and calling for sovereignty for Karakalpakstan.[186]

Outside Karakalpakstan, human rights defenders, bloggers and others who criticise authorities also continue to face reprisals, including arrest, prosecution and imprisonment.[187] This case – featuring the Soviet-era practice of misusing psychiatric detention as a tool to silence dissent – is highly alarming:

Shahida Salomova, human rights defender and blogger, was forcibly confined to a psychiatric hospital in 2023 after being arrested on defamation charges related to her posts about the president and his relatives. Her detention has repeatedly been extended and she has reportedly been medicated against her will and cut off from the outside world, while her health conditions — including diabetes, asthma, and high blood pressure — have deteriorated.[188]

Uzbekistani authorities have also brought charges against several bloggers living abroad after they criticised members of the presidential family and high-ranking officials.[189]

Moreover, human rights defenders who represent vulnerable groups of the population, such as victims of forced evictions, are at heightened risk of intimidation and harassment.[190]

Recommendations

Central Asian authorities should:

- Stop intimidating and harassing civil society activists, human rights defenders, journalists, bloggers, and others who criticise the authorities, using the tactics outlined above.
- Drop charges and release individuals prosecuted in retaliation for peacefully and legitimately exercising their fundamental freedoms, including those described above.
- Ensure that imprisoned activists are treated in accordance with international standards and protected from abuse while in detention.
- Revise broadly worded provisions in the Criminal Code that suppress free speech, such as those related to disseminating "false" or slanderous information, "inciting" discord, calling for "disobedience" to authorities, and involvement in "extremism."

EU institutions, EU member states and other international partners of the Central Asian governments should:

- Use every opportunity to express concern over the persecution of activists, human rights defenders, journalists, bloggers, and other government critics in Central Asia.
- Raise individual cases of concern, including those described above, through both public and private channels, insisting on justice for those affected.
- Press for a revision of legislation that is misused to suppress criticism of those in power, in line with recommendations made by international experts, as well as for other concrete measures consistent with the recommendations outlined above.

Additional Information

Additional information about the issues covered in this briefing can be found in the following publications by IPHR and partners:

- Briefing paper for the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, prepared by IPHR and Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law (KIBHR), February 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/civic-space-under-pressure-in-kazakhstan-key-concerns-and-recommendations-for-eu-dialogue/
- Update on Kyrgyzstan, prepared by IPHR for the CIVICUS Monitor, October 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-un-experts-warn-of-chilling-impact-as-assault-on-media-journalists-and-activists-intensifies/
- Country focus report on Tajikistan, prepared by IPHR in the framework of the EU SEE initiative, January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-country-focus-report-assesses-civil-society-environment/
- Update on Turkmenistan, prepared by IPHR and Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR) for the CIVICUS Monitor, December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-enforced-prosperity-narratives-corruption-driven-internet-censorship-and-repression-of-dissent-at-home-and-abroad/
- Update on Uzbekistan, prepared by IPHR and Association for Human Rights in Central Asia (AHRCA) for the CIVICUS Monitor, July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/freedoms-under-threat-as-uzbekistan-continues-to-put-pressure-on-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/ (A new update is currently being finalised).

[1] The briefing is an updated and expanded version of a document published in October 2025.
[2] The CIVICUS Monitor can be found at: https://monitor.civicus.org/
[3] Regular updates on Central Asia, prepared by IPHR and partners for the CIVICUS Monitor are available at: https://iphronline.org/articles/?mark[]=civicus-monitor
[4] See more about the changes in the Central Asia scores at: https://iphronline.org/articles/civicus-monitor-the-silencing-of-critical-voices-deepens-in-central-asia/
[5] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-renewed-attacks-on-foreign-funded-ngos-protest-restrictions-despite-protective-court-ruling-and-ongoing-prosecution-of-critics/
[6] https://www.zakon.kz/obshestvo/6466831-vvesti-v-kazakhstane-zakon-ob-inostrannykh-agentakh-predlozhili-deputaty.html, https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/deputat-predlojila-prinyat-v-kazahstane-zakon-ob-inoagentah-562299/
[7] See more about such concerns in the following article: https://orda.kz/inoagenty-po-kazahstanski-i-sila-goskontrolja-chto-vlasti-gotovjat-v-novom-zakone-ob-npo-406049/
[8] For more information, see IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[9] https://orda.kz/detej-uchat-byt-gomoseksualistami-i-lesbijankami-v-kazahstane-ozabotilis-lgbt-propagandoj-399948, https://orda.kz/feministki-lgbt-i-jemo-razlagajut-obschestvo-schitajut-v-mazhilise-399954/
[10] For more information, see IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[11] For more information, see IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-renewed-attacks-on-foreign-funded-ngos-protest-restrictions-despite-protective-court-ruling-and-ongoing-prosecution-of-critics/; and IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[12] The opinion is available at: https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2024)033-e
[13] The OHCHR report is available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/public-report-impact-law-non-commercial-organizations-civil-society
[14] See media report on statements made by Japarov from December 2024: https://www.vb.kg/doc/441652_sadyr_japarov:_smi_zaiavliaushie_o_nehvatke_svobody_sami_ee_lisheny.html, and August 2025: https://ru.kabar.kg/news/sadyr-zhaparov-sankcii-protiv-bankov-kyrgyzstana-shag-bez-dokazatelstv/
[15] See FIDH press release: https://www.fidh.org/en/region/europe-central-asia/kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan-fidh-delegation-barred-from-entering-kyrgyzstan-following
[16] See more in Tajikistan Country Focus Report, prepared by IPHR for the EU See initiative, January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-country-focus-report-assesses-civil-society-environment/
[17] See more in IPHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from February 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistans-crackdown-on-dissent-erosion-of-rights-and-civic-space/
[18] See joint letter by UN Special Rapporteurs sent to the government in February 2024: https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownLoadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=28770
[19] See more in the following AsiaPlustj.info post: https://www.instagram.com/p/DUr1-o4DBWz/
[20] See more in Tajikistan Country Focus Report, prepared by IPHR for the EU See initiative, January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-country-focus-report-assesses-civil-society-environment/
[21] See more in Tajikistan Country Focus Report, prepared by IPHR for the EU See initiative, January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-country-focus-report-assesses-civil-society-environment/
[22] See more in Tajikistan Country Focus Report, prepared by IPHR for the EU See initiative, January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-country-focus-report-assesses-civil-society-environment/
[23] See concluding observations issued by the Human Rights Committee in April 2023: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR%2FC%2FTKM%2FCO%2F3&Lang=en
[24] For examples of such cases, IPHR-TIHR briefing for the EU-Turkmenistan Human Rights Dialogue, June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-ngo-briefing-for-eu-turkmenistan-human-rights-dialogue/
[25] https://politik.uz/novosti/zakon-ob-inoagentah-nuzhen-v-uzbekistane-bahtiyor-ergashev
[26] The legislation was adopted by Parliament in April 2025 and signed by the president in August 2025: https://lex.uz/docs/7700523
[27] See more in the following detailed analysis of the amendments by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law: https://www.icnl.org/post/news/uzbekistan-new-law-on-amendments-to-nno-related-legislation
[28] https://tashkenttimes.uz/national/15365-ngos-to-be-required-to-notify-justice-authorities-in-advance-about-foreign-travels

[29] See joint statement by nine human rights groups from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-journalism-free-expression-in-further-peril/
[30] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[31] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[32] For example, in February 2026, targeted online attacks against several news sites were reported, resulting in difficulties in accessing the sites. See statement issued by the Adil Soz foundation on 4 February 2026: https://adilsoz.kz/news/zayavlenie-fonda-adil-soz-po-povodu-novoy-volny-kiberatak-na-kazahstan.html
[33] See joint statement by nine human rights groups from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-journalism-free-expression-in-further-peril/
[34] See more, for example, in the following media reports: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/travlya-protivnikov-novoy-konstitutsii-kazahstana/33689645.html, https://vlast.kz/novosti/68510-obsestvennyj-deatel-orazaly-erzanov-zaderzan-za-prizyvy-bojkotirovat-referendum-po-konstitucii-policia.html, https://vlast.kz/politika/68283-nedela-v-kazahstane-obsuzdajte-konstituciu-no-molca.html, and https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/kritikovavshego-novuyu-konstitutsiyu-zhitelya-astany-arestovali-na-15-sutok/33685142.html
[35] See, for example: https://tirek.info/sajt-agentstva-kaztag-okazalsya-nedostupen-cherez-ryad-provajderov-iz-za-kritiki/, https://vlast.kz/politika/68283-nedela-v-kazahstane-obsuzdajte-konstituciu-no-molca.html
[36] See more about the constitutional reform process in IPHR-KIBHR briefing for EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, February 2025: https://iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/iphr-kibhr-briefing-for-eu-kazakhstan-human-rights-dialogue-february-2026.pdf
[37] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from December 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-crackdown-on-dissent-over-nuclear-power-plant-controversial-media-accreditation-rules-and-anti-lgbtqi-propaganda-measures/
[38] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from December 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-crackdown-on-dissent-over-nuclear-power-plant-controversial-media-accreditation-rules-and-anti-lgbtqi-propaganda-measures/
[39] https://vlast.kz/novosti/65698-mid-kazahstana-otkazal-v-akkreditacii-ese-devaterym-sotrudnikam-radio-azattyk.html
[40] https://www.occrp.org/en/news/watchdog-urges-action-as-kazakhstan-delays-rferl-ruling?utm_source=OCCRP&utm_campaign=ca25f9ef0b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_08_21_12_43&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-ca25f9ef0b-712336089
[41] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[42] See more about the law in IPHR-KIBHR briefing for the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, February 2026: https://iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/iphr-kibhr-briefing-for-eu-kazakhstan-human-rights-dialogue-february-2026.pdf
[43] https://rsf.org/en/country/kyrgyzstan
[44] https://rsf.org/en/rsf-2020-index-eastern-europe-and-central-asia-clampdown-continues
[45] See joint NGO statement from September 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-overturn-decision-to-liquidate-kloop-media/
[46] See joint statement by IPHR and nine other NGOs from June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-end-renewed-crackdown-on-independent-kloop-media-platform/; and IPHR statement from September 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-convictions-of-kloop-contributors-highlight-escalating-assault-on-media-freedom/
[47] See joint NGO statement from October 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-drop-charges-against-11-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/
[48] See more in Kloop article from 28 October 2025: https://kloop.kg/blog/2025/10/28/sud-priznal-materialy-kloop-i-temirov-lajv-ekstremistskimi-v-izdaniyah-ne-znali-ob-etom-dele-i-namereny-obzhalovat-prigovor/
[49] https://24.kg/proisshestvija/335757/
[50] http://t.me/kloopnews/33185
[51] See more in IPHR update for CIVICUS Monitor from May 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-a-growing-climate-of-fear-and-self-censorship/
[52] See joint NGO statement from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-president-should-step-in-to-halt-the-erosion-of-freedom-of-expression/
[53] See more in IPHR update for CIVICUS Monitor from October 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-un-experts-warn-of-chilling-impact-as-assault-on-media-journalists-and-activists-intensifies/
[54] See more in IPHR update for CIVICUS Monitor from October 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-un-experts-warn-of-chilling-impact-as-assault-on-media-journalists-and-activists-intensifies/

[55] See joint communication by UN special rapporteurs published in September 2025: https://srdefenders.org/kyrgyzstan-arbitrary-detention-and-criminal-prosecution-of-rita-karasartova-and-kanyshai-mamyrkulova-joint-communication/
[56]See more in IPHR update for CIVICUS Monitor from October 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-un-experts-warn-of-chilling-impact-as-assault-on-media-journalists-and-activists-intensifies/
[57] https://rsf.org/en/country/tajikistan
[58] See Asia Plus article from 26 January 2026: https://www.ozodi.org/a/vazorati-farhang-guft-ki-charo-rasonahoi-mustaqil-dar-tojikiston-kam-shudaand/33660277.html
[59] See Asia Plus article from 26 January 2026: https://www.ozodi.org/a/vazorati-farhang-guft-ki-charo-rasonahoi-mustaqil-dar-tojikiston-kam-shudaand/33660277.html
[60] See Asia Plus article from 12 April 2025: https://www.facebook.com/asiaplustj/posts/pfbid0fLQqH79gtuR9Dhk8pnPjy5ZgZRzmLCRnpQNvvATpDWEVnZK9qvc2UwjuTQCVYxfcl
[61] See the following media article from 17 February 2026: https://asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/laworder/20260217/v-tadzhikistane-405-chelovek-osvobozhdeni-ot-otvetstvennosti-za-laiki
[62] See the following media report for an example of such a case: https://www.currenttime.tv/a/v-tadzhikistane-zhitelya-gornogo-badahshana-oshtrafovali-na-500-za-layk-pod-postom-s-kritikoy-vlasti-v-feysbuke/33536917.html
[63] https://rsf.org/en/country/turkmenistan
[64] For more information, see IPHR-TIHR submission for EU-Turkmenistan Human Rights Dialogue, June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-ngo-briefing-for-eu-turkmenistan-human-rights-dialogue/
[65] See IPHR-TIHR update for the CIVIVUS Monitor from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-enforced-prosperity-narratives-corruption-driven-internet-censorship-and-repression-of-dissent-at-home-and-abroad/
[66] https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-turkmenistan
[67] See IPHR-TIHR update for the CIVIVUS Monitor from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-enforced-prosperity-narratives-corruption-driven-internet-censorship-and-repression-of-dissent-at-home-and-abroad/
[68] See RFE/RL coverage: https://rus.azathabar.com/a/zhurnalisty-nashli-mogilu-turkmenskogo-blogera-kotoryy-propal-vsled-za-kritikoy-tsenovoy-politiki/33640513.html; https://rus.azattyq.org/a/zhurnalisty-nashli-mogilu-blogera-kritikovavshego-situatsiyu-v-turkmenistane/33641117.html
[69] For examples of such cases, see reports prepared by IPHR and AHRCA for the CIVICUS Monitor: https://iphronline.org/countries/uzbekistan/?mark[]=civicus-monitor
[70] See the following news report from 31 January 2026: https://anhor.uz/news/meta-instagram/; and the following RFE/RL article from 12 February 2026: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/usilenie-tsenzury-i-zapugivanie-kritikam-tashkenta-udalyayut-akkaunty-v-sotsialnyh-setyah-chto-eto-znachit/33675185.html
[71] https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/usilenie-tsenzury-i-zapugivanie-kritikam-tashkenta-udalyayut-akkaunty-v-sotsialnyh-setyah-chto-eto-znachit/33675185.html
[72] See AHRCA statement from 28 January 2026: https://ahrca.ru/uzbekistan/pravozashchitniki/1005-zayavlenie-ob-udalenii-youtube-kanala-assotsiatsii-prava-cheloveka-v-tsentralnoj-azii
[73] See RFE/RL article from 12 February 2026: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/usilenie-tsenzury-i-zapugivanie-kritikam-tashkenta-udalyayut-akkaunty-v-sotsialnyh-setyah-chto-eto-znachit/33675185.html
[74] See legal analysis prepared by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, May 2024, https://legislationline.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/2024-05-29%20-%20ODIHR-RFoM%20Joint%20Opinion_%20Draft%20Information%20Code_%20Uzbekistan.pdf
[75] https://www.instagram.com/p/DUfekYvCFoR/
[76] See more in joint statement issued by more than 30 NGOs in July 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/uzbekistan-international-human-rights-organisations-call-on-president-mirziyoyev-to-veto-undesirable-foreigners-law/
[77] For more background about these events, and the human rights violations committed see IPHR-KIBHR update from March 2022: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-widespread-violations-reported-during-bloody-january/, and joint report issued by IPHR, KIBHR, Kazakhstan's NGO Coalition against Torture and OMCT in January 2023: https://iphronline.org/articles/we-don-t-even-cry-anymore/
[78] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-renewed-attacks-on-foreign-funded-ngos-protest-restrictions-despite-protective-court-ruling-and-ongoing-prosecution-of-critics/
[79] See comprehensive ODIHR trial monitoring report published in May 2025: https://odihr.osce.org/odihr/590375
[80] See the Committee's concluding observations from its review of Kazakhstan in June 2025: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR%2FC%2FKAZ%2FCO%2F3&Lang=en
[81] For more background on these events, see joint statement by IPHR, AHRCA and OMCT from July 2022: https://iphronline.org/articles/uzbekistan-karakalpakstan/
[82] https://parliament.gov.uz/news/nukus-voqealari-boyicha-tuzilgan-komissiya-axboroti-oliy-majlisga-taqdim-etildi

[83] For more background on these events, see joint statement by IPHR, AHRCA and OMCT from July 2022: https://iphronline.org/articles/uzbekistan-karakalpakstan/
[84] According to media reports, in August 2023, three law enforcement officials were convicted in relation to the July 2022 events in Karakalpakstan. Two of them were sentenced to seven years in prison for torture, while the third one was given a three-year sentence for failure to render aid, leading to death. See: Radio Ozodi report from 8 August 2023: https://rus.ozodi.org/a/32538641.html
[85] For more information, see IPHR update from September 2022: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-civicus-2021-2022/, and briefing paper by IPHR and partners from October 2022: https://www.iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Briefing-paper-on-key-concerns-in-Central-Asia-October-2022.pdf
[86] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/04/tajikistan-un-experts-sound-alarm-about-tensions-gbao-urge-protection-pamiri, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/05/tajikistan-un-expert-fears-crackdown-against-pamiri-minority-could-spiral
[87] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/tajikistan-un-experts-deplore-criminal-proceedings-against-human-rights
[88] See more in update for the CIVICUS Monitor from November 2022: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-widening-campaign-against-false-information/
[89] Most recently, it was prolonged through March 2026. See more in the following media article: https://24.kg/vlast/358087/
[90] See more in IPHR-KIBHR briefing for the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, February 2026: https://iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/iphr-kibhr-briefing-for-eu-kazakhstan-human-rights-dialogue-february-2026.pdf
[91] For more information and examples of cases in which the right to protest has been violated, see IPHR-KIBHR updates for the CIVICUS Monitor from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-renewed-attacks-on-foreign-funded-ngos-protest-restrictions-despite-protective-court-ruling-and-ongoing-prosecution-of-critics/, as well as from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[92] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[93] For recent examples of the suppression of spontaneous expressions of discontent and forced mobilisation, see IPHR-TIHR updates for the CIVICUS Monitor from June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/forced-loyalty-fear-and-censorship-turkmenistans-relentless-assault-on-civic-freedoms/; and from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-enforced-prosperity-narratives-corruption-driven-internet-censorship-and-repression-of-dissent-at-home-and-abroad/
[94] For two recent examples in Uzbekistan, see joint appeal by AHRCA, IPHR and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee from 11 March 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-appeal-to-french-president-macron-raise-pressing-human-rights-concerns-during-uzbek-president-mirziyoyevs-visit/
[95] See IPHR-KIBHR statement from 1 December 2023: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-harsh-sentence-for-opposition-party-leader-shows-lack-of-real-political-modernisation/
[96] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session102/a-hrc-wgad-2025-18-aev.pdf
[97] See appeals from his family: https://www.instagram.com/p/DU8gqsTjILV/, https://www.instagram.com/reel/DVBfu2VDKQw/?utm_source=ig_embed
[98] For example, in summer 2025, prominent human rights defender Bakhytzhan Toregozhina was fined for allegedly spreading “false” information and later detained for questioning in a criminal case after raising concerns about Marat Zhylanbaev’s health on social media. See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[99] See IPHR-KIBHR statement from 1 December 2023: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-harsh-sentence-for-opposition-party-leader-shows-lack-of-real-political-modernisation/
[100] See more in the following KIBHR update: https://bureau.kz/novosti/vnutrikamernyj-hlopok-i-konstituczionnaya-golodovka/
[101] See more in IPHR-KIBHR briefing paper for the 2024 EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue: https://iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/briefing-paper-for-eu-kazakhstan-hr-dialogue-april-2024.pdf
[102] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[103] See more in IPHR-KIBHR briefing paper for the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, February 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/civic-space-under-pressure-in-kazakhstan-key-concerns-and-recommendations-for-eu-dialogue/
[104] https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/sud-v-almaty-lishil-advokata-murata-adama-litsenzii/33650511.html
[105] See statement by the International Commission of Jurists: https://www.icj.org/kazakhstan-drop-licence-revocation-proceedings-against-lawyer-adam-murat/, and Vlast interviews with representatives of the legal community: https://vlast.kz/obsshestvo/68180-eto-posecina-vsemu-advokatskomu-soobsestvu.html

[106] See more in IPHR-KIBHR briefing paper for the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue, February 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/civic-space-under-pressure-in-kazakhstan-key-concerns-and-recommendations-for-eu-dialogue/
[107] https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/aktivistka-zhanar-sekerbaeva-stala-podozrevaemoy-po-ugolovnomu-delu-po-state-poboi/33681472.html; www.azattyqasia.org/a/aktivistka-zhanar-sekerbaeva-zayavila-o-davlenii-i-popytke-zavesti-na-nee-ugolovnoe-delo/33661048.html
[108] See IPHR-KIBHR statement from 15 January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/criminalising-peaceful-protest-kazakhstans-case-against-atajurt-activists/
[109] https://rus.azattyq.org/a/sud-nad-aktivistami-atazh%D2%B1rta-proydet-za-zakrytymi-dveryami-19-chelovek-obvinyayut-v-razzhiganii-rozni-/33657844.html
[110] See IPHR-KIBHR statement from 15 January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/criminalising-peaceful-protest-kazakhstans-case-against-atajurt-activists/
[111] For more information, see IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-renewed-attacks-on-foreign-funded-ngos-protest-restrictions-despite-protective-court-ruling-and-ongoing-prosecution-of-critics/
[112] See more in IPHR-KIBHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from January 2026: https://iphronline.org/articles/kazakhstan-pressure-on-media-lgbtqi-propaganda-law-and-criminal-cases-against-activists/
[113] See communication from UN special rapporteurs, published in September 2025: https://srdefenders.org/kyrgyzstan-arbitrary-detention-and-criminal-prosecution-of-rita-karasartova-and-kanyshai-mamyrkulova-joint-communication/
[114] https://kloop.kg/blog/2025/04/09/aktivistku-torokulovu-i-akyna-ishenbekova-pomilovali-ukazom-zhaparova/
[115] See joint NGO statement from October 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-drop-charges-against-11-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/
[116] The opinion is available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session103/a-hrc-wgad-2025-52-kyrgystan-aev.pdf
[117] The hearing was initially scheduled for 2 February 2026, but was later postponed. See more in joint NGO statement: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-implement-un-working-group-demands-and-free-journalist/
[118] See more in IPHR statement: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-convictions-of-kloop-contributors-highlight-escalating-assault-on-media-freedom/
[119] https://rus.azattyq.org/a/v-kyrgyzstane-sud-vtoroy-instantsii-osvobodil-pod-probatsiyu-operatora-kloopa-i-byvshego-sotrudnika-izdaniya/33603935.html
[120] See statement by the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and IPHR: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-release-journalist-kanyshay-mamyrkulova-and-drop-retaliatory-charges/
[121] See joint NGO statement from July 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-president-should-step-in-to-halt-the-erosion-of-freedom-of-expression/
[122] See communication from UN special rapporteurs, published in September 2025: https://srdefenders.org/kyrgyzstan-arbitrary-detention-and-criminal-prosecution-of-rita-karasartova-and-kanyshai-mamyrkulova-joint-communication/
[123] https://24.kg/proisshestvija/361921/
[124] See more in the following media reports: https://kloop.kg/blog/2025/04/19/siloviki-dostavili-tilekmata-kurenova-v-kyrgyzstan/, https://kaktus.media/doc/522277_zaderjannomy_tilekmaty_kyrenovy_opredelili_mery_presecheniia.html
[125] https://vesti.kg/obshchestvo/item/143499-rajsud-bishkeka-priznal-ritu-karasartovu-vinovnoj.html
[126] See the following IPHR briefing: thttps://iphronline.org/articles/the-growing-assault-on-civic-space-in-central-asia-briefing-for-osce-meeting/. See also Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch statements on her case: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/04/kyrgyzstan-detention-of-human-rights-defender-rita-karasartova-is-alarming-sign-of-deepening-repression/, https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/04/15/kyrgyzstan-rights-defender-detained
[127] See comment by UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders from 19 September 2025: https://bsky.app/profile/marylawlorhrds.bsky.social/post/3lz6vzb2mms24, and comment by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights from the same day: https://x.com/UNHumanRights/status/1969033900656656416?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1969033900656656416%7Ctwgr%5E6d7be7172ef4eb0d7dd65aa96c066a1da481155a%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2F24.kg%2Fobschestvo%2F344269_oon_obespokoena_prigovorami_rite_karasartovoy_isotrudnikam_Kloop_Media%2F; as well as joint communication from UN special rapporteurs: https://srdefenders.org/kyrgyzstan-arbitrary-detention-and-criminal-prosecution-of-rita-karasartova-and-kanyshai-mamyrkulova-joint-communication/
[128] https://kaktus.media/doc/536891_bishkekskiy_gorodskoy_syd_vynes_reshenie_v_otnoshenii_rity_karasartovoy.html
[129] https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/33351512.html
[130] See more on his case in update from April 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-civic-space-deteriorates-further-as-foreign-agent-style-ngo-law-is-adopted-and-media-crackdown-widens/

[131] For more information, see the following media articles: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/kyrgyzskiy-akyn-askat-zhetigen-zayavil-o-pytkah-v-kolonii/33695119.html, https://kloop.kg/blog/2026/03/04/nachalnik-gsin-osvobodil-akyna-askata-zhetigena-iz-shizo/

[132] See more in appeal issued by the Media Action Platform: https://kgplatform.org/2025/12/2993/

[133] https://24.kg/proisshestvija/354377_gknb_zaderjan_avtor_provokatsionnyih_postov_mejnatsionalnogo_haraktera_vsotssetyah/

[134] See more in the following media articles: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/v-kyrgyzstane-osvobodili-iz-pod-strazhi-aktivista-aybeka-tenizbaya-podozrevaemogo-v-vozbuzhdenii-vrazhdy-/33637747.html; https://www.currenttime.tv/a/kazahstan-kyrgyzstan-presleduyut-antirossiyskie-repliki/33627847.html

[135] In October 2025, a Bishkek court declared the activities of Kloop co-founder Rinat Tuhvatshin and Temirov Live founder Bolot Temirov "extremist", along with the materials of these platforms. See more in the following article: https://24.kg/proisshestvija/348739_vkyirgyizstane_Temirov_Live_ikloop_media_priznanyi_ekstremistskimi/?fbclid=IwY2xjawNsmT1leHRuA2FlbQIxMQBicmlkETFJc1ZqMzdrdzNZZjBGYlFQAR79JTBSXrTKpLbH--LimamecmMTHLFM4-euTVZrYLUiJZKqAB8CHcnUgukChg_aem_Y1Gdwv8iCFIsDrLHniJ9Iw&brid=SIU2sBDfKLalycaOXAR2qQ

[136] For example, in autumn 2025, Kloop co-founder Rinat Tuhvatshin learned that Kyrgyzstan had requested that Interpol issue a so-called Red Notice against him. Interpol eventually rejected the request. See more in the following OCCRP update: https://www.occrp.org/en/news/interpol-rejects-kyrgyzstans-request-for-a-warrant-against-independent-media-co-founder

[137] For more information on this trend, see update prepared by IPHR as part of its cooperation with the CIVICUS Monitor, published in March 2023: https://www.iphronline.org/tajikistan-continuous-crackdown-on-civil-society.html

[138] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/tajikistan-un-experts-deplore-criminal-proceedings-against-human-rights

[139] https://iphronline.org/articles/support-manuchehr-kholiqnazarov-human-rights-defender-and-fighter-against-injustice/

[140] The opinion is available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session99/a-hrc-wgad-2024-19-tajikistan-aev.pdf

[141] Special CPJ report published in January 2026: https://cpj.org/special-reports/2025-journalist-jailings-remain-stubbornly-high-harsh-prison-conditions-pervasive/

[142] https://cpj.org/data/people/daler-bobiev-daler-imomali/

[143] https://cpj.org/data/people/avazmad-ghurbatov-abdullo-ghurbati/

[144] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/tajikistan-un-experts-deplore-criminal-proceedings-against-human-rights

[145] https://asiaplustj.info/en/news/tajikistan/laworder/20250807/supreme-court-confirms-confiscation-of-jailed-journalists-savings

[146] https://asiaplustj.info/en/news/tajikistan/laworder/20250807/supreme-court-confirms-confiscation-of-jailed-journalists-savings

[147] https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/human-rights-defenders/tajikistan-continued-arbitrary-detention-of-independent-journalist?utm_source=chatgpt.com

[148] https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/05/tajikistan-un-expert-calls-release-and-retrial-rukhshona-khakimova

[149] https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/verhovnyy-sud-tadzhikistana-ostavil-bez-izmeneniy-prigovor-po-gromkomu-delu-o-gosperevorote-/33370685.html

[150] https://asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20260206/god-so-dnya-aresta-ruhshoni-hakimovoi-kak-zhivut-eyo-deti-i-kakie-resheniya-prinyali-rodnie-i-advokat

[151] The joint statement is available at: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistan-lawyer-wrongfully-held-for-a-decade/

[152] Available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3933035?v=pdf

[153] See more in Tajikistan update from February 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/tajikistans-crackdown-on-dissent-erosion-of-rights-and-civic-space/

[154] For more information, see IPHR-TIHR update for the CIVICUS Monitor from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-enforced-prosperity-narratives-corruption-driven-internet-censorship-and-repression-of-dissent-at-home-and-abroad/

[155] See Turkmen.News article from 12 January 2026: https://turkmen.news/migracionnaya-sluzhba-vyezd-halykova-protivorechit-interesam-nacionalnoy-bezopasnosti/

[156] See more in TIHR-IPHR statement from November 2024: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-elderly-journalist-prevented-from-travelling-to-geneva-forcibly-hospitalized/

[157] See statement issued on 3 April 2025: https://srdefenders.org/un-expert-urges-turkmenistan-to-investigate-alleged-poisoning-attempts-on-gurbansoltan-achilova-harassment-must-end-press-release/

[158] https://srdefenders.org/turkmenistan-poisoning-attempts-involuntary-hospitalisation-and-ongoing-harassment-against-whrd-gurbansoltan-achilova-joint-communication/

[159] See more in post by Turkmen News from June 2024: https://turkmen.news/mansura-mingelova-vozvrashayut-iz-bolnicy-v-koloniyu-iz-za-otkaza-ot-amputacii-nogi/, and October 2021: https://turkmen.news/banner/mingelov-prison-health/
[160] The UN Committee against Torture, the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination have all called for his release during the reviews of Turkmenistan: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2FC%2FTKM%2FCO%2F3&Lang=en; https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/08/experts-committee-elimination-racial-discrimination-commend-turkmenistans-cooperation; https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CCPR%2FC%2FTKM%2FCO%2F3&Lang=en. In addition, UN special rapporteurs have raised concerns about his case and his treatment in prison: https://srdefenders.org/turkmenistan-long-term-detention-and-declining-health-of-hrd-mansur-mingelov-joint-communication/
[161] See article posted by Turkmen.News on 10 December 2025: https://turkmen.news/mvd-turkmenistana-ne-nashlo-osnovaniy-dlya-dosrochnogo-osvobozhdeniya-mansura-mingelova/
[162] See joint NGO statement issued on 1 December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-mark-the-30th-anniversary-of-neutrality-by-showing-humanity-and-releasing-imprisoned-activists/
[163] For more background information on his case, see IPHR-TIHR submission for EU-Turkmenistan Human Rights Dialogue, June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-ngo-briefing-for-eu-turkmenistan-human-rights-dialogue/
[164] For more information, see joint statement by the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Turkmen.News, Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights, International Partnership for Human Rights and Association for Human Rights in Central Asia from June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-drop-new-charges-release-civic-activist-murat-dushemov/
[165] The statement is available at: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-drop-new-charges-release-civic-activist-murat-dushemov/
[166] https://bsky.app/profile/marylawlorhrds.bsky.social/post/3lv3tarsrjc25 Mary Lawlor UN Special Rapporteur HRDs
[167] See Turkmen.News update https://en.turkmen.news/news/turkmen-activist-murat-dushemov-sentenced-to-8-years-in-closed-door-trial/
[168] https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2FC%2FTKM%2FCO%2F3&Lang=en
[169] For more information about such cases, see IPHR-TIHR submission for EU-Turkmenistan Human Rights Dialogue, June 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-ngo-briefing-for-eu-turkmenistan-human-rights-dialogue/
[170] See more about their case in the following posts by TIHR: https://www.hronikatm.com/2025/04/turkmenskim-grazhdanskim-aktivistam-grozit-deportacziya-na-rodinu/, and Turkmen Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights: https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/6b6e02df-feab-40f7-bd77-39147c511b5a
[171] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/a89099b7-83e4-4ab9-b73e-a6595eda4a11
[172] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/a5714e0c-e7ce-42c3-9c72-ac2a7a91ce22, https://www.hronikatm.com/2025/08/the-whereabouts-of-abdulla-orusov-and-alisher-sakhatov-are-still-unknown/
[173] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/1ac69a45-b86f-4784-b021-182aed02ef9a
[174] https://www.hronikatm.com/2025/08/turkmen-bloggers-were-deported-from-turkey/, https://turkmen.news/istochnik-blogerov-sahatova-i-orusova-estradirovali-v-turkmenistan/
[175] See joint NGO statement from December 2025: https://iphronline.org/articles/turkmenistan-mark-the-30th-anniversary-of-neutrality-by-showing-humanity-and-releasing-imprisoned-activists/
[176] https://tmhelsinki.org/article/8a55aed9-0a22-49ff-bc99-759cbbef053d
[177] See video appeal posted by his sister on 8 February 2026: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtQSHdS5Faw&feature=youtu.be
[178] See joint statement issued by the Association for Human Rights in Central Asia, IPHR and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee on 10 February 2026: https://www.azattyqasia.org/a/verhovnyy-sud-tadzhikistana-ostavil-bez-izmeneniy-prigovor-po-gromkomu-delu-o-gosperevorote-/33370685.html
[179] Opinion adopted in November 2024: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/detention-wg/opinions/session101/a-hrc-wgad-62-2024-uzbekistan-advance-edite.pdf
[180] See statement from 26 January 2026: https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/01/uzbekistan-must-ensure-safety-human-rights-defender-dawletmurat-tajimuratov
[181] https://bureau.kz/publ-all/sobstvennaya_informaciya/novyj-vitok/
[182] https://rus.azattyq.org/a/karakalpakskiy-aktivist-ekstradirovan-iz-kazahstana-v-uzbekistan/33282280.html
[183] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/8a23c506-c9b1-4ade-bfb4-e8e3130b1c3f
[184] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/732e1e28-8dc5-48b3-aa1d-3532b11a352b

[185] For recent examples of such cases, see the following updates from September 2025: https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/bf84ec76-831b-4248-b22f-9f07c54b2403, and November 2025: https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/732e1e28-8dc5-48b3-aa1d-3532b11a352b

[186] https://tmhelsinki.org/ru/article/732e1e28-8dc5-48b3-aa1d-3532b11a352b

[187] For more information, see IPHR-AHRCA update: https://iphronline.org/articles/freedoms-under-threat-as-uzbekistan-continues-to-put-pressure-on-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/

[188] See joint appeal by AHRCA, IPHR and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee: https://iphronline.org/articles/joint-appeal-to-french-president-macron-raise-pressing-human-rights-concerns-during-uzbek-president-mirziyoyevs-visit/

[189] See more in IPHR-AHRCA update: https://iphronline.org/articles/freedoms-under-threat-as-uzbekistan-continues-to-put-pressure-on-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/

[190] For more information, see IPHR-AHRCA briefing for the EU-Uzbekistan Human Rights Dialogue in June 2025: https://iphronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/iphr-ahrca-forced-evictions-case-description.pdf