

Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l

Avenue d'Auderghem 61/16, 1040 Brussels
Phone/Fax: 32 2 3456145

Email:

international.secretariat.brussels@hrwf.net –

Website: <http://www.hrwf.net>



Freedom of Religion or Belief Prisoners List World Report 2012

Edited by Willy Fautré

Mark Barwick, Jan Nils Schubert & Alfiaz Vaiya

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Contact address

**Human Rights Without Frontiers International
Avenue d'Auderghem 61/16, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel./ Fax: +32-2-3456145
Website: <http://www.hrwf.org>
Email: international.secretariat.brussels@hrwf.net**

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Introduction

Eighteen countries in the dock

Human Rights Without Frontiers (HRWF) has compiled a list of prisoners that have been detained or jailed on grounds that constitute an infringement of the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB). The cases listed in this report relate incidents of violations on the basis of: (1) freedom to change religion or belief, (2) freedom of expression, (3) freedom of association, (4) freedom of worship and assembly, or (5) in respect to specific obligations imposed by the state on believers in such a way as to conflict with their conscience.

This Prisoners' List has been elaborated on the basis of available information collected from a wide range of public and private sources.

In some countries, it has been difficult to determine whether certain cases should be designated FORB prisoners. Some clerics and other believers have been sanctioned for their peaceful public advocacy to protect religious freedom or human rights. Others have called for legal or political reforms needed for their implementation. Still others have defended religious freedom advocates in court, participated in pro-democracy campaigns, claimed territorial autonomy for their ethno-religious group, defended the rights of their ethnic group or striven to preserve their culture. These actions are undoubtedly laudable and the objectives consistent with international standards on human rights; however, HRWF considers such prisoners to be human rights activists and defenders.

In this report, HRWF defines FORB prisoners as persons who have been arrested and detained for reasons primarily connected to their faith as practised individually or in community.

HRWF has identified **eighteen countries with such FORB prisoners in 2012: Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, Eritrea, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nagorno-Karabakh, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, South Korea, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.** Due to the lack of transparency in the judicial system in some countries or insufficient data available from existing general or specialized sources of information, HRWF makes no claim that this list covers all the countries which had FORB prisoners in 2012 or to have identified all FORB prisoners in the ones listed.

For instance, **Eritrea** should arguably concede its first place ranking to **North Korea**; however, access to information about possible FORB prisoners in **North Korea** is extremely limited. In practice, there is no religious freedom in this country, yet no data is made available about arrests, detention and imprisonment of North Koreans on the ground of freedom of religion or belief.

Also, conscientious objectors to military service are often forgotten in reports on religious freedom and as prisoners of conscience. This report intends to correct this oversight by highlighting the situation of Jehovah's Witnesses in **South Korea.**

Each year the number of Jehovah's Witnesses that are imprisoned in **South Korea** for their conscientious objection to military service varies between 700 and 800. Since 1950, the government has sentenced 17,107 Jehovah's Witness objectors, making a combined total of 32,413 years of imprisonment. However, this problem could be resolved by introducing some form of alternative civilian service, an action that South Korean authorities have refused to take, despite repeated condemnations by the United Nations.

Armenia, with its over 30 FORB prisoners, is in a similar position in respect to military conscription.

Concerning the objection to military on the grounds of religion or belief, the **UN Human Rights Committee General Comment 22 Para. 11 on the ICCPR**, states that:

Many individuals have claimed the right to refuse to perform military service (conscientious objection) on the basis that such right derives from their freedoms under article 18. In response to such claims, a growing number of States have in their laws exempted from compulsory military service citizens who genuinely hold religious or other beliefs that forbid the performance of military service and replaced it with alternative national service. The Covenant does not explicitly refer to a right to conscientious objection, but the Committee believes that such a right can be derived from article 18, inasmuch as the obligation to use lethal force may seriously conflict with the freedom of conscience and the right to manifest one's religion or belief. When this right is recognized by law or practice, there shall be no differentiation among conscientious objectors on the basis of the nature of their particular beliefs; likewise, there shall be no discrimination against conscientious objectors because they have failed to perform military service. The Committee invites States parties to report on the conditions under which persons can be exempted from military service on the basis of their rights under article 18 and on the nature and length of alternative national service.

The main purpose of the List is to stimulate advocacy in favour of the release of these FORB prisoners.

Throughout 2012, HRWF used this material in its contributions to the EU Human Rights Dialogues with various countries. Our FORB Prisoners' List will be updated throughout 2013.

COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN
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1. Eritrea
2. South Korea
3. China
4. Iran
5. Tajikistan
6. Uzbekistan
7. Pakistan
8. Turkmenistan
9. Armenia
10. Azerbaijan
11. Russia
12. Kazakhstan

P.S. **North Korea** should certainly appear on top of this list but due to the lack of available information about this country, it has been impossible to rank it. According to the 2012 Report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, there may be 6000 Christians incarcerated in Prison No 15 in the northern part of the country but the reasons of their imprisonment are not known.

ARMENIA

Jehovah's Witnesses

Names: See table below with 31 names

Charges: Evasion of the call-up to military or alternative service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with their faith.

Places of detention: Nubarashen Prison (near Yerevan), Erebuni (in Yerevan) and Kosh (near Ashtarak)

Court decisions: Between 2 and 3 years in prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 327, Part I which states that "Evasion from recurring draft military or alternative service call-up, training exercise or mobilization, without any order defined by Legislation of the Republic of Armenia as grounds for exemption, is punished with arrest for a maximum term of two months, or imprisonment for a maximum term of three years" (modified 16.12.2005).

Date of release: See table below

Other information: On 7th July 2011, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) rendered its judgment that Armenia had violated the right to freedom of conscience in the case of Mr. Vahan Bayatyan. Bayatyan is one of nearly 400 Jehovah's Witnesses who have been convicted and imprisoned for conscientious objection to military service since Armenia's accession to the Council of Europe in January 2001. In doing so, Armenia has failed to honour its commitment given as a condition of its accession, that it institute a genuine civilian alternative service for conscientious objectors and pardon all those who had previously been convicted.

Since the Grand Chamber's decision in the case *Bayatyan v. Armenia*, the prosecutor's office and the courts of Armenia continue to prosecute and imprison young men who are conscientious objectors. Criminal investigations and prosecutions have been initiated against 48 young men.

Of these 48 cases, the Cassation Court has rejected the appeals in 12 cases, with 10 of these (repetitive) men now serving a 30-month prison sentence. The criminal convictions in 13 cases are pending in the appeal and cassation courts, 11 cases are pending in the trial courts and 12 cases are pending with the prosecutor's office.

Some Armenian officials have stated that the prosecutions and convictions will not stop until parliament passes proposed amendments to the Law on Alternative Service. By its judgement in the case *Bayatyan v. Armenia* and more recent judgments on this issue, the ECtHR has made it clear that this is unacceptable.

By year's end, 31 Jehovah's Witnesses were in Armenian prisons because of their conscientious objection to military service. Despite rulings by the European Court of Human Rights in *Bayatyan v. Armenia* and subsequent judgments, Armenia has refused to release these Jehovah's Witnesses who had been convicted under the Criminal Code.

Name	Date	Sentence	Location
Bagiryan, Andranik	August 2, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Avakyan, Levon	August 3, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Davtyan, Alik	August 4, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Aghekyan, Sevak	August 5, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Khechoyan, Manuk	August 9, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Mnatsakanyan, Harutyun	August 25, 2010	§ 327 I, 36 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Arshakyan, Artashes	September 6, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution

Antonyan, Vardan	September 11, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Alikhanyan, Vahagn	September 24, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Poghosyan, Nikolay	October 21, 2010	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Musheghyan, Aharon	November 12, 2010	§ 327 I, 36 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Voskanyan, Ashot	February 2, 2011	§ 327 I, 36 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Sargsyan, Samvel	February 3, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Kirakosyan, Harutyun	March 9, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Nersisyan, Arman	March 14, 2011	§ 327 I, 24 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Geghamyan, Andranik	March 15, 2011	§ 327 I, 24 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Sargsyan, Hayk	April 8, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Gasparyan, Hovik	April 11, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Sardaryan, Hovhannes	July 1, 2011	§ 327 I, 24 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Adyan, Artur	July 7, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Margaryan, Vahagn	July 7, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Avetisyan, Garegin	July 19, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Khachatryan, Harutyun	July 27, 2011	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Sargsyan, Edouard	August 6, 2011	§ 327 I, 24 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Khudoyan, Maksim	August 6, 2012	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Sahakyan, Gevorg	August 23, 2012	§ 327 I, 24 months	Erebuni Penal Institution

Aslanyan, Artur	September 28, 2012	§ 327 I, 30 months	Kosh Penal Institution
Vardanyan, Varazdat	October 8, 2012	§ 327 I, 30 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Zakaryan, Nver	October 9, 2012	§ 327 I, 24 months	Erebuni Penal Institution
Grigoryan, Anania	November 15, 2012	§ 327 I, 24 months	Nubarashen Penal Institution
Khachatryan, Artsrun	November 26, 2012	§ 327 I, 30 months	Nubarashen Penal Institution

(Source: Office of General Counsel of JW)

AZERBAIJAN

Muslims (Said Nursi Readers)

Sadulla GENC, Salim SAMIR and Togrul KIRAZ

Place of residence: Gyanja

Date & Place of Arrest: 28th April 2012 in a private home

Statement of the defendants: Arrested for participating in a prayer meeting

Place of detention: Eight hours detention on 26th April 2012 at the Gyanja's police station

First court decision: 7th June 2012, sentenced with deportation and fines of 2,000 Manats each (2,075 EUR or 2,550 USD)

Last court decision: On 28th and 29th June 2012, only the fines were retained.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 300.0.4 of the Code of Administrative Offences that punishes "the conduct of religious propaganda by foreigners or stateless persons"

Other information: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960) was a Turkish Sunni Muslim theologian who wrote the Risale-i Nur Collection, a body of Qur'anic commentary exceeding six thousand pages. Believing that modern science and logic was the way of the future, he advocated teaching religious sciences in secular schools and modern sciences in religious schools. Nursi inspired a faith movement that has played a vital role in the revival of Islam in Turkey and now numbers several million followers worldwide.

Baptists

Timofei APARSHEV, Nadezhda RYZHKOVA and Stepanida SHELUDYAKOVA

Date & Place of Arrest: Morning of 23rd June 2012 in northern Khachmaz Region

Charges: Criminal Code Article 167-2, Part 1: “Production, sale and distribution of religious literature, religious items and other informational materials of religious nature with the aim of import, sale and distribution without appropriate authorisation”

Statement of the defendants: Sharing their beliefs and distributing religious literature

Place of detention: Police station and then at the head office of the Criminal Investigation Department

Date of release: 24th June 2012 at 1am

Other information: Still under investigation, but no action has yet been taken.

Ilgar MAMEDOV, Akif BABAIEV and Telman YARMETOV

Place of residence: Kusar in northern Azerbaijan

Date & Place of Arrest: 17th May 2012 in the village of Mujuk

Charges: Distribution of religious literature by members of an unregistered church

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 167-2, Part 1 (Production, sale and distribution of religious literature, religious items and other informational materials of religious nature with the aim of import, sale and distribution without appropriate authorization)

Place of detention: Police station in Kusar

Duration of detention: A few hours

Other information: During the arrest, all literature (120 items of 13 publications) as well as Yarmetov's car was seized and not returned as of 28th June 2012.

Pyotr BYAKOV (Council of Baptists congregation)

Family status: Married with children

Place of residence: Sumgait

Date & Place of Arrest: 21st September 2012 (9pm) at Yalama in Khachmaz District on Azerbaijan's northern border

Charges: Bringing religious literature illegally into the country

Statement of the defendant: Crossing the border with hidden religious literature in his minibus

Final court decision: On hold for the prosecution to gather evidence

Duration of detention: Until next morning

Other information: The confiscated literature was sent for an “expert analysis” to see if it was “against the law”.

Jehovah’s Witnesses

Asim MAMMADOV

Place of residence: Gyanja's Kapaz District

Charges: Failure to pay a massive fine imposed in November 2011 for participating in the worship meeting of an unregistered religious group

Last court decision: Sentenced to three days in detention

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 313-1.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences: “Failure to fulfil an official's order in connection with a court decision”

Date of release: 21st July 2012

Fakhraddin MIRZAYEV

Charges: Evasion without lawful grounds of call-up to military service

Statement of the defendant: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: Gyanja's Investigation Prison No. 2

First court decision: 25th September 2012, sentenced to one year in prison by a court in Gyanja

Last court decision: Appeal lodged

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 321.1 of the Criminal Code : “Evasion without lawful grounds of call-up to military service or of mobilisation, with the purpose of evading serving in the military, is punishable by imprisonment for up to two years [in peacetime]”.

Other information: Azerbaijan committed itself to introduce an alternative service law by January 2003 when it entered the Council of Europe in 2001. As it has failed to do so, the Council of Europe's Venice Commission adopted a joint Opinion on Azerbaijan's Religion Law with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. This document was made public on the Venice Commission website on 16th October, severely criticizing Azerbaijan for not introducing civilian service.

CHINA

The government of China recognizes five religions: Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Taoism and Islam.

The registration of particular religious groups is a prerogative of the state. For each of the five officially recognized religions there is a government-affiliated association that monitors and supervises its activities: the *Chinese Buddhist Association*, the *Catholic Patriotic Association*, the *Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement*, the *Chinese Islamic Association* and the *Chinese Taoist Association*. All religious groups must register with the appropriate religious organization to be allowed to carry out their activities legally.

A number of Catholic congregations loyal to the Pope, Protestant communities and Muslim groups refuse state monitoring. They are tolerated by the authorities, but all their activities in public or in private are considered illegal, a recurrent charge used against them when the regime perceives them as a challenge and a danger to the dominant ideology. So-called “evil cults”, like Falun Gong, are heavily targeted by the authorities.

Tibetan Buddhists who follow the Dalai Lama and the Muslim Uyghurs are also particularly persecuted not only for their religious activities but also for their political engagement.

The U.S. Congressional Executive Commission on China (CECC) has published a list of 7,014 prisoners that have been detained or imprisoned in China since 10th October 2012 for political or religious reasons, including 1,484 cases of prisoners who are currently believed to be incarcerated and 5,530 who were released or executed or who escaped or died while in detention or soon after their release (<http://www.cecc.gov>). The CECC considers that there are likely many more than the 1,484 verifiable cases of current political and religious imprisonment

in China and works on an ongoing basis to update its Political Prisoner Database.

The HRWF Watch List hereafter does not claim to be exhaustive but shows the magnitude of the repression affecting religious believers in China. Only the cases related to freedom of religion *stricto sensu* have been selected (freedom of association, freedom of assembly and worship and freedom of expression) and not religious prisoners who have been arrested, detained or imprisoned on other grounds.

Protestants

Mass arrests of 500 believers

Religious affiliation: Church of the Almighty God. Not registered under the state-controlled *Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM)*

Date & Place of Arrest: In December 2012, four hundred of the arrests took place in the north-western Qinghai province and the others in eight other provinces.

Charges: Creation and spread of rumours as well as public disorder - Unrest and provoking panic buying ... undermining social order and cheating people out of their money

Statement of the defendants: Spreading of Doomsday rumours and war on the so-called “big red dragon”, referring to the Communist Party

Other information: The religious group was predicting the end of the world on 21st December 2012.

Mass arrests of 169 believers

Religious affiliation: Shouwang Church. Not registered under the state-controlled TSPM

Date & Place of Arrest: Every Sunday of the year 2012

Charges: Illegal activity, as it is not registered under the TSPM

Statement of the defendants: Worship meetings in the open air because the authorities prevent them from acquiring or renting appropriate premises for their religious services.

Duration of detention: 1-2 days

Other information: The number of detainees (169) covers the year 2012 + 5 months in 2011

Mass arrest of 53 believers, including Hu Linpo, Han Hai, Yang Lianbing, Wang En, Li Dan, Zhang Mian and Cao Xia

Date & Place of Arrest: 14th April 2012 in Dianying village, Ye county, city of Pingdingshan

Charges: Suspicion of organizing a cult to undermine national law enforcement

Statement of the defendant: Unregistered church holding a Bible study class

Place of detention: Ye county detention center and Pingdingshan municipal detention center

First court decision: After an investigation, 48 of the detainees were released. Hu Linpo, Han Hai, Yang Lianbing, Wang En, Li Dan, Zhang Mian and Cao Xia were kept in detention centres until their trials.

Final court decision: On 13th December 2012, the seven detainees were tried by a court in Pingdingshan. No decision was reached since the court adjourned with no date set to reconvene.

Other information: The detainees are accused of being part of religious ‘cult’ known as the “Shouters”, an affiliation denied by them.

Arrest of 15 believers

Religious affiliation: Group led by Evangelical Protestant preacher Cao Nan, not registered under the state-controlled TSPM

Place of residence: Province of Guangdong

Date & Place of Arrest: 8th December 2012 in a public park in Shenzhen

Charges: Engaging in illegal religious activities

Statement of the defendants: Unregistered religious group holding a public meeting about the meaning of Christmas

Place of detention: Local police station

Date of release: 10th December 2012 in the late evening

Arrest of 9 believers

Religious affiliation: Group led by Evangelical Protestant preacher Cao Nan, not registered under the state-controlled TSPM

Place of residence: Province of Guangdong

Date & Place of Arrest: 15th December 2012 in a public park in Shenzhen

Charges: Engaging in Qigong activities

Statement of the defendants: Unregistered religious group holding a public meeting about the meaning of Christmas

Last court decision: Cao was sentenced to 13 days in administrative detention

Place of detention: Cao was held at the city's detention center

Date of release: Eight of the Christians were released the same day at 11pm, and Cao on 28th December 2012.

BAO Ling, LU Xia, WANG Xingxing, LUO Qinqin and five other unidentified believers

Place of residence: Cangfanggou, Shayibak District, Urumqi

Date & Place of Arrest: 3rd July 2012 at the Department on Preventing and Handling Cult-Related Crimes of the Public Security Bureau branch office in Shayibak District

Charges: “Gathering teenagers for illegal Christian training activities”

Statement of the defendants: Summer camp activities for teenagers, such as teaching the contents and culture of the Bible

First court decision: Sentenced to 14 to 15 days of detention and fines ranging from 500 to 1,000 yuan

Last court decision: Application launched for administrative review according to the law of the People’s Government of Urumqi Shayibak District.

Date of release: 19th July 2012

Other information: The prisoners refused to pay the fines.

CHEN Hong, SUN Yuefen, Yinhua, REN Zhimin, LIU Di, PAN Wenwen

Place of residence: Provinces of Mongolia (3), Heilongjiang (2) and Baishan (1)

Date & Place of Arrest: 1st August 2012 in the hamlet of Zhongxinbu, Shumugou village, Horqin Right Front Banner, in the city of Ulanhot

Charges: Using cult activities to interfere with law enforcement and engaging in illegal evangelism

Statement of the defendants: Providing medical services in rural areas of Inner Mongolia

Place of detention: Horqin Right Front Banner police station

First court decision: On 1st September 2012, Ms. Sun and Ms. Ren were sentenced to two years in a re-education-through-labour camp by the Re-education Through Labour Management Committee of Hinggan League.

Last court decision: Request submitted by all six victims for an administrative review of their case

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Clause 3 of the “Supplementary Stipulations on Re-education through Labour,” State Council Document No. 56 (1980)

Other information: On 30th October 2012, five of the detainees’ families had still not received the legally required written notifications of the detentions.

YANG Xuan, ZHANG Huamei, CUI Jiaying, YANG Rongli and her husband WANG Xiaoguang (belonging to the Linfen Church)

Place of residence: Linfen City

Date of Arrest: 13th September 2009

Charges: Illegally occupying farmland and disturbing transportation order

Statement of the defendants: Defending their church building from destruction by the authorities on 13th September 2009 (Fushan Church in Linfen City, Shanxi Province).

Place of detention: Yang Rongli and Wang Xiaoguang are in Taiyuan Detention Center, the other three at Yicheng County Detention Center.

First court decision: On 25th November 2009, Yang Rongli was sentenced to seven years in jail and fined 30,000 Yuan; Zhang to three years; Wang to three years with a fine of 10,000 Yuan; Yang Xuan to three years and a half with a 20,000 Yuan fine; and Cui to five years and a half with a 50,000 Yuan fine.

Last court decision: In 2010, an appeal was rejected by the Linfen courts.

LI Hailing, DU Weixiao, HUO Xiaofeng, HAN Dongkui and two other Christians

Place of residence: Handan in Hebei province, Nanchang in Jiangxi province, Xuchang in Henan province and Yanji in Jilin province

Date & Place of Arrest: 27th October 2012 in the southern city of Shenzhen

Statement of the defendants: Handing out tracts and preaching the Gospel

Place of detention: Local police station

Date of release: 31st October 2012

GONG Bangkun, GONG Shengliang, XU Fuming, and HU Yong (belonging to the Evangelical South China Church)

Charges: Belonging to a cult; intentional assault and rape for Gong Shengliang

Statement of the defendants: Leaders of the unregistered South China Church

First court decision: December 2001, sentenced to death for “using a cult to undermine enforcement of the law”.

Last court decision: In September 2002, a retrial sentenced Gong Shengliang, Xu Fuming, and Hu Yong to life imprisonment. Gong Bangkun was given a 15-year prison term.

BAO Ling, WANG Xingxing and LUO Qinqin

Place of residence: Liushuzhuang Village, in the Gansu Province

Date & Place of Arrest: 24th July 2012 at Bao Ling's home

Charges: Gathering minors for illegal Christian Bible-teaching activities and disrupting normal religious order

Statement of the defendants: Organizing a Christian summer camp activities for 22 teenagers

First court decision: Sentenced to 15-day administrative detention

Last court decision: Application launched for administrative review, according to the law to the People's Government of Urumqi Midong District.

Date of release: 9th August 2012

WANG Dawei and two other Christians

Place of residence: Xilinhot, Inner Mongolia

Date & Place of Arrest: 2nd January 2012 during a raid on their house church

Charges: Engaging in illegal religious activities

Place of detention: Xilinhot police station

Duration of detention: five hours and a half

LIU Xinxing and XUE Yuxia (belonging to the Total Scope Church)

Place of residence: Shaanxi province

Date & Place of Arrest: 13th January 2012 in Guodong village, in the town of Hejiaji, Zizhou County

Charges: Suspicion of organizing and using a cult to undermine law enforcement

Statement of the defendants: Engaging in Christian activities

Place of detention: Provincial Women's Re-education-Through-Labour Management Centre

First court decision: 13th February 2012, sentenced to 18 months of re-education through labour by Yulin's Re-education through Labour Management Committee

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Clause 3 of the "Supplementary Stipulations on Re-education through Labor," State Council Document No. 56 (1980)

DAI Suqin

Date & Place of Arrest: 22nd September 2012 in Xuetian, Tuquan County in Hinggan

Statement of the defendants: Providing medical services in rural areas of Inner Mongolia

Place of detention: Local police station

Date of release: 2nd October 2012

JIN Yongsheng

Age: Born on 13th May 1974

Place of residence: Kailu County, Tongliao City of Inner Mongolia

Date & Place of Arrest: 29th July 2012 in Zhifu Village, Yihetala Town of Kailu County

Charges: Engaging in proselytizing in the name of rendering medical service by measuring people's blood pressure.

Statement of the defendants: Providing public health education as a public service along with other local Christians

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Clause 2, Article 27 and Article 11 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Public Security Administration Punishment

First court decision: Sentenced to 15 days administrative detention and a fine of 1,000 yuan

Last court decision: On 15th August, an application for an administrative reconsideration was launched.

Other information: During the arrest and interrogation, Jin was severely beaten several times resulting in a contusion of the soft tissues of the left chest.

SHI Enhao (belonging to the Chinese House Church Alliance)

Family status: Married to Zhu Guangyun with 4 adult children ditto

Date & Place of Arrest: 31st May 2011 in Suqian city, Jiangsu Province

Charges: Unknown

First court decision: July 2011, sentenced to two years in a labour camp

Date of release: 19th January 2012 (early release)

WANG Xiao

Date & Place of Arrest: 8th October 2012 in the town of Baoshi, Huquan County, in Hinngan

Statement of the defendants: Providing medical services in rural areas of Inner Mongolia

Place of detention: Local police station

Date of release: 18th October 2012

ZHAI Fuling

Date & Place of Arrest: 11th October 2012 in the town of Baoshi, Huquan County, Hinngan League

Statement of the defendants: Providing medical services in rural areas of Inner Mongolia

Place of detention: Local police station

Date of release: 21st October 2012

Alimujiang Yimiti (Christian ethnic Uyghur)

Age: Born on 10th June 1973

Family status: Wife (Guli nu'er) and two sons

Place of residence: Tianshan District, Urumqi, Xinjiang

Date of Arrest: 20th February 2008

Charges: Revealing state secrets or intelligence to overseas organisations

Statement of the defendants: Working for a British-owned company (Jirehouse) and leading a house church ministry in Kashgar with his wife.

First court decision: 6th August 2009, sentenced to 15 years in prison during a secret trial by Kashgar Intermediate People's Court

Last court decision: In March 2010, an appeal was rejected.

Other information: The sentence given is the most severe for the charge and is the harshest given to a Christian in a decade. The company was closed with several others that were owned by foreign Christians.

Unidentified believer

Date & Place of Arrest: Kidnapped in January 2012 by Chinese security agents in Shanxi Province

Statement of the defendants: Visiting the leader of Shouwang and a house church in Shanxi Province

Duration of detention: two days

Other information: The detainee was a Canadian businesswoman of Chinese descent.

Catholics

Fr Joseph ZHANG, Fr Joseph BAN Zhanxiong, Frs Ding, Wang, Zhao and another priest (Roman Catholic loyal to the Pope)

Place of residence: Diocese of Suyian, Inner Mongolia

Date of Arrest: 30th January 2012

Charges: The Diocese of Suiyuan does not exist according to the Chinese government and is part of the illegal underground Catholic Church

Statement of the defendants: Meeting in a private home to discuss pastoral work

Place of detention: Joseph Ban Zhanxiong was detained in a hotel in Hohhot. Ma Mumin was sent to prison, first in the Heibei Province

Date of release: On 28th February 2012, four of the priests were released but had to report daily to the police and are subject to re-education sessions on the religious policy of the government

Other information: No news about the other priests by the end of 2012

Fr. GAO Jiangping and another priest

Place of residence: Diocese of Suyian, Inner Mongolia

Date of Arrest: 31st January 2012

Charges: The Diocese of Suiyuan does not exist according to Chinese government and is part of the illegal underground Catholic Church

Statement of the defendant: Incompatibility between the allegiance to the regime and his loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope

Thaddeus MA Daqin (Bishop of Shanghai)

Charges: Resignation from the state-controlled *Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association* (CPCA)

Statement of the defendant: Incompatibility between the allegiance to the regime and his loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and the state-controlled CPCA

Place of detention: House arrest in Sheshan (near Shanghai) since his ordination on 7th July 2012

Buddhists

Migyurg Gyatso, Choedar Dargye, Gedun Thogphel and Jamyang Oezer

Place of residence: Jampa, Choedar and Gedun are monks from Khangmar monastery.

Date & Place of Arrest: January 2003 in Marthang (Hongyuan), Sichuan

Charges: Unknown

Statement of the defendants: Possessing photos of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, conducting prayers for the Dalai Lama while he was ill, and possessing a painting of the Tibetan flag

Place of detention: Unknown

Last court decision: On 29th August 2003, Migyurg, Choedar and Gedun were sentenced to 12 years in prison; Jamyang to eight years.

Gendun Choekyi Nyima and his parents

Age: Born on 25th April 1989

Place of residence: Lhari County, Tibet

Date of Arrest: On 17th May 1995, Gendun Choekyi Nyima and his parents disappeared.

Charges: The Dalai Lama's proclamation is "illegal and invalid"

Statement of the defendants: Named by the Dalai Lama as the 11th incarnation of the Panchen Lama of Tibet.

Place of detention: Unknown

Other information: He was kidnapped by Chinese authorities three days after he was announced to be the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama and has not been seen in public since 17 May 1995. Another Panchen Lama has been chosen by the Chinese government, but he has not been approved by the Buddhist community faithful to the Dalai Lama.

Runggye Adak

Age: 57

Place of residence: Nomad from Lithang in eastern Tibet

Date & Place of Arrest: 1st August 2007 at the Lithang Horse Racing Festival in Tibet

Charges: Provocation to subvert state power

Statement of the defendants: Addressing the gathered crowd by saying: "If we cannot invite the Dalai Lama home, we will not have freedom of religion and happiness in Tibet" and

calling for the release of the Panchen Lama and Tenzin Delek Rinpoche.

Place of detention: Unknown

Last court decision: 20th November 2007, sentenced to eight years in prison

Muslims

Sadike Ku'erban and 8 other Uyghur believers

Charges: Involvement with illegal (for not being registered under the state-controlled *Chinese Islamic Association*) religious schools or religious instruction. More specifically, Sadike Ku'erban was accused of “extremist religious thought and inciting others to wage a holy war”.

Statement of the defendants: Sadike Ku'erban was running a network of home schools in four different parts of Xinjiang over 10 years that taught 86 students, including 16 under 14 years of age

First court decision: 31st May 2012, sentenced to prison terms ranging from 6 to 15 years in three separate public hearings in Kashgar.

Falun Gong

MENG Xiuli and her 3 children

Place of residence: Banqiao Town

Date of Arrest: 4th November 2012

Place of detention: Meng's two daughters were detained at the Fuping County Detention Centre and Meng at the Baoding Detention Centre. No news about the third child.

Duration of detention: Meng's two daughters were detained for 5 and 14 days respectively. Meng was still incarcerated by the end of 2012

Other information: Ms. Meng Xiuli and her three children drove to visit relatives on the morning of 4th November 2012.

They were arrested in transit by police for posting information about the persecution of Falun Gong. They were taken to the Fuping County Domestic Security Division. Their car, valued at 120,000 yuan, was taken away. Their Falun Gong books, computer, printer, DVD burner, portable hard drive and other personal belongings worth over 20,000 yuan were also confiscated from their home.

GONG Baoying and LI Cuier

Date & Place of Arrest: 1st December 2012 in Beijing

Statement of the defendants: Explaining the teachings about Falun Gong to people

Place of detention: Li Cuier is being held in the Longfeng Detention Center. The whereabouts of Ms. Gong are unknown.

SUN Guiping and HAN Caixia

Date & Place of Arrest: 4th December 2012 in Tianjin

Statement of the defendant: Speaking to people about Falun Gong in a market

Place of detention: Banqiao Town Police Station

Duration of detention: Unknown

WANG Shulian

Date & Place of Arrest: 6th September 2012 at her home

Place of detention: Taibaozhuang Police Station

Duration of detention: A few hours

Other information: After Ms. Wang was detained, the police contacted the local Party head and asked him to write a guarantee statement, promising to ensure that Ms. Wang would no longer practice Falun Gong.

EGYPT

Copts

Mina NADI and Nabil NADI

Ages: 9 and 10

Place of residence: Town of Marco, south of Cairo

Date of Arrest: Early October 2012

Charges: Blasphemy against Islam for allegedly desecrating the Quran

Statement of the defendants: Tearing up a copy of the Quran and urinating on it

Last court decision: The charges were dropped after a deal was reached between Muslims, Christians and security officials in the area.

Date of release: 10th October 2012

Other information: Some witnesses say the boys were illiterate and could not have recognised the Koran.

Makram DIAB

Age: 49

Date of Arrest: February 2012

Charges: “Insulting the prophet” and “provoking students”

Statement of the defendants: Stating to Makram Diab, a Salafi Muslim, that Muhammad had more than four wives, which resulted in an argument

Place of detention: Assuit General Prison

First court decision: 29th February 2012, sentenced to six years in prison

Last court decision: On 16th March and 4th April 2012, the two appeals on were rejected.

Other information: The first sentencing lasted only 10 minutes and no defence attorney was present. The first appeal process instigated a massive riot by Muslim attorneys, who assaulted the court room.

Ayman Youssef MANSOUR

Age: 22

Charges: “Insulting the dignity of the Islamic religion”, “promoting extremist ideas” and “inciting sectarianism”

Statement of the defendants: Posting on Facebook (no details provided)

First court decision: October 2011, sentenced to three years in prison

Gamal Abdu MASSOUD

Age: 17

Place of residence: Assiut

Charges: Blasphemy, defaming Islam and inciting riots

Statement of the defendants: Posting cartoons mocking Islam and the prophet Muhammad on Facebook in December 2011 and distributing the images to other students.

First court decision: 4th April 2012, sentenced to three years in prison

Last court decision: Appeal lost

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 98(f) of the Penal Code, “Confinement for a period of not less than six months and not exceeding five years... shall be the penalty inflicted on whoever makes use of religion in propagating, either by words, in writing, or in any other means, extreme ideas for the purpose of inciting strife, ridiculing or insulting a heavenly religion or a sect following it, or damaging national unity.”

Alber SABER

Date of Arrest: 13th September 2012

Charges: Blasphemy and contempt of religion

Statement of the defendants: Sharing an anti-Islam film (Innocence of Muslims) on social networking sites (Facebook)

Last court decision: Sentenced to three years in prison

ERITREA

The State Department, non-governmental human rights organizations and Christian advocacy groups estimate that 2,000 to 3,000 persons are imprisoned on religious grounds in Eritrea, the vast majority of whom are Evangelical or Pentecostal Christians.

Persons detained for religious activities, in both short- and long-term detentions, often are not formally charged, permitted access to legal counsel or accorded due process.

Orthodox

Patriarch Abune ANTONIOS

Age: Born on 12th July 1927

Statement of the defendants: Protested the interference of the Eritrean Department of Religious Affairs in his church's affairs

First court decision: 2006, sentenced to house arrest where he is being kept.

Other information: He has been prevented from communicating with the outside world and reportedly denied medical care.

Muslims

More than 180

Charges: No charges

Statement of the defendants: Non-violent critics of the government-imposed leadership (Mufti) of the Muslim community or of policies that discriminate against independent Muslims

Other Information: Source: USCIRF Annual Report 2012

Protestants

64 believers (belonging to the Evangelical Church)

Date of Arrest: May 2011

Date of release: Only six have been released. The others were still detained at the end of 2012.

40 believers (belonging to the Kale-Hiwet and Mulu-Wengel Evangelical Churches)

Date of Arrest: November 2010

Charges: Engaging in “illegal” religious activities

Date of release: Two of the women were released in March 2012 prior to giving birth; all others remained in detention.

35 believers (belonging to a Pentecostal church)

Date of Arrest: 3rd July 2012

Date of release: Still in prison by the end of 2012

Jehovah’s Witnesses

56 Jehovah’s Witnesses in prison

Imprisonment of conscientious objectors to military service

The national military service requirement makes no provision for conscientious objection. To avoid being arrested by the ever-present military police that patrol the streets, most male Jehovah’s Witnesses between the ages of 18 and 40 go into hiding. Those found are arrested and taken to a military camp, where, once they express their conscientious objection to military service, they are detained and usually tortured. Some of those of military age have managed to flee the country to avoid prosecution; some have been caught while fleeing.

Three Jehovah's Witnesses, Paulos Eyassu, Isaac Mogos and Negede Teklemariam, have been imprisoned in the Sawa prison since 24th September 1994 because of their conscientious objection to military service. No charges have ever been filed against them and they have never been tried in court.

Since 2008, Eritrean authorities have taken additional measures to suppress Jehovah's Witnesses, arresting and imprisoning elderly men, several women and children as young as two years old. Many Witnesses have fled the country; those who remain must exercise extreme caution in carrying out any religious activity.

Imprisonment and abuse of Jehovah's Witnesses

There are 56 Jehovah's Witnesses imprisoned in the Sawa and Meiter prison camps. Of these, 15 are known to be imprisoned for their conscientious objection to military service. Others were arrested while attending Christian meetings, publicly sharing their faith or for reasons unknown. None of those imprisoned have been formally charged or given a trial and sentenced. Most do not know how long they will remain in prison. Twenty-three are 60 years of age or older; two are 85 years old. Two children, aged two and three years old, were imprisoned with their mothers in the 4th Police Station in Asmara for two and a half years until their release on 4th January 2012. Prisoners are denied visitors, including family members.

Death in prison

Yohannes Haile. On 16th August 2012, Yohannes Haile, a 68-year-old Witness and father of nine, died while imprisoned at the Meiter prison camp. According to reports, he succumbed to the excessive heat and a lack of hydration while being held in a metal building half-buried in the ground. He was apparently transferred to a hospital in Meiter for treatment the week prior to his death. He had been held since 18th September 2008, when he was arrested without charges.

Misghina Gebretinsae. In July 2011, Misghina Gebretinsae, a 62-year-old Witness and father of four, also died while imprisoned at the Meiter prison camp, enduring excessive heat and lack of hydration while being held in a metal building half-buried in the ground. He had been held since 10th July 2008, when he was arrested without charges.

General prison conditions at the Meiter Camp

On 5th October 2011, all 25 male Witnesses who were imprisoned at the Meiter camp (including the abovementioned Yohannes Haile) were transferred from the regular prison facility to an area for special punishment. There they were placed in a half-buried metal building by night and spent their days outside in an open-air structure with a thatched roof. The lack of a balanced diet and sufficient water posed serious threats to their health.

Since the death of Yohannes Haile in August 2012, the Meiter prison authorities have moved the other Witness prisoners from the metal building to an outside pen in the same special punishment area. Three elderly Witnesses of the group are also in a critical state of health due to the extreme heat they endured over the summer months.

These were the same conditions to which Misghina Gebretinsae was subjected prior to his death in July 2011.

New arrests

On 21st April 2012 a number of Jehovah's Witnesses attended a funeral of a fellow believer in the city of Keren. An undercover security agent who was present at the funeral arrested several Witnesses after the service was over. Although some were later released, ten of them are still in detention—four in Keren and six who have been transferred to the Meiter Camp. As noted on the prisoners' list, the four prisoners remaining in Keren are

over 70 years old – two of whom are 85 years old. No further information is available on their condition.

Imprisonment and release of children

On 28th June 2009, Eritrean police arrested and imprisoned 23 Jehovah’s Witnesses who were meeting peacefully for worship in a private home in Asmara. Those arrested included the elderly, women and children as young as two years old. Although the elderly women and some of the children were soon released, two of the children (aged two and three years old) and their mothers were held at the 4th Police Station in Asmara until 4th January 2012.

Name	Age	Sex	Prison	Date	Reason
Paulos Eyassu	39	M	Sawa Camp	24 th September 1994	Conscientious objection
Isaac Mogos	36	M	Sawa Camp	24 th September 1994	Conscientious objection
Negede Teklemariam	38	M	Sawa Camp	24 th September 1994	Conscientious objection
Aron Abraha	38	M	Sawa Camp	9 th May 2001	Conscientious objection
Mussie Fessehaye	40	M	Sawa Camp	June 2003	Conscientious objection
Ambakom Tsegezab	36	M	Sawa Camp	February 2004	Conscientious objection
Bemnet Fessehaye	41	M	Sawa Camp	February 2005	Conscientious objection

Henok Ghebru	28	M	Sawa Camp	February 2005	Conscientious objection
Worede Kiros	55	M	Sawa Camp	4 th May 2005	Religious activity
Yonathan Yonas	26	M	Sawa Camp	12 th November 2005	Religious activity
Kibreab Fessehaye	34	M	Sawa Camp	27 th December 2005	Conscientious objection
Bereket Abraha Oqbagabir	44	M	Sawa Camp	1 st January 2006	Conscientious objection
Yosief Fessehaye	23	M	Sawa Camp	2007	Conscientious objection
Mogos Gebremeskel	66	M	Adi-Abieto	3 rd July 2008	Unknown
Bereket Abraha	65	M	Meitir Camp	8 th July 2008	Unknown
Goitom Gebrekristos	76	M	Meitir Camp	11 th July 2008	Unknown
Ermias Ashgedom	22	M	Meitir Camp	11 th July 2008	Unknown
Habtemichael Mekonen	71	M	Meitir Camp	17 th July 2008	Unknown
Tesfai Teklemariam	59	M	Meitir Camp	5 th August 2008	Unknown
Goitom Aradom	68	M	Meitir Camp	8 th August 2008	Unknown
Habte Michael	64	M	Meitir Camp	8 th August 2008	Unknown

Tewoldem edhn Habtezion	53	M	Meitir Camp	9 th August 2008	Unknown
Ghebrehiwet Ghebremichael	68	M	Meitir Camp	22 nd August 2008	Unknown
Teferi Beyene	71	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd September 2008	Unknown
Beyene Abraham	60	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd October 2008	Unknown
Asfaha Haile	78	M	Meitir Camp	2 nd December 2008	Unknown
Semere Negusse	75	M	Meitir Camp	22 nd December 2008	Unknown
Muse Paulos	67	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd December 2008	Unknown
Tsehaye Leghesse	73	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd December 2008	Unknown
Tsegezeab Tesfazghi	63	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd December 2008	Unknown
Tsehaye Tesfamariam	71	M	Meitir Camp	5 th January 2009	Unknown
Yoab Tecele	61	M	Meitir Camp	23 rd April 2009	Rearrested
Yoel Tsegezab	36	M	Meitir Camp	26 th August 2008	Conscientious objection

Nehemiah Hagos	26	M	Meitir Camp	26 th August 2008	Conscientious objection
Samuel Ghirmay	30	M	Meitir Camp	March 2009	Conscientious objection
Teklu Gebrehiwot	37	M	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious Meeting
Isaias Afeworki	27	M	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious Meeting
Milen Isaac	22	F	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious Meeting
Faiza Seid	27	F	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious meeting
Merhawit Tadesse	22	F	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious meeting
Yodit Mekonnen	30	F	Meitir Camp	28 th June 2009	Religious meeting
Filemon Yemane	22	M	Adi-Abieto	23 rd November 2010	Religious activity
Yonadab Yonas	22	M	Adi-Abieto	23 rd November 2010	Religious activity
Tesfazion Gebremichael	70	M	Asmara 5th Police Station	20 th July 2011	Unknown
Ghebrehiwot Tedla	85	M	Keren Police Station	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Yemane Kifleyohannes	77	M	Keren Police Station	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Zerisenai Ghebrehiwot	71	M	Keren Police Station	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral

Hagos Woldemichael	60	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Araia Ghebremariam	58	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Zerisenai Ghebrehiwot	71	M	Keren Police Station	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Hagos Woldemichael	60	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Araia Ghebremariam	58	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Tsegabirhan Berhe	49	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Daniel Meharizghi	35	M	Meitir Camp	21 st April 2012	Attending a funeral
Redae Hagos	85	M	Keren Police Station	26 th April 2012	Attending a funeral
Amharai Osman	-	M	Meitir Camp	25 th April 2012	Attending a funeral
Yoseph Tesfamariam	48	M	Asmara	May 2012	Conscientious objection

INDONESIA

Muslims (Shia)

Andreas GUNTUR (belonging to Amanat Keagungan Ilahi)

Place of residence: Pulau Punjung

Charges: Blasphemy

First court decision: 11th March 2012, sentenced to four years in prison

Other information: A 2009 fatwa was issued against Amanat Keagungan Ilahi by the Indonesia Council of Ulema, claiming that they rejected conventional Islamic rituals.

Tajul MULUK

Place of residence: Sampang, East Java

Charges: Blasphemy and “causing public anxiety”.

Statement of the defendants: Asserting that the current version of disseminated Quran is not the original one and dissenting belief concerning the five pillars of Islam and six pillars of Islamic faith.

First court decision: 12th July 2012, sentenced to two year in prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Penal Code (KUHP) under Article 156a and the 1965 presidential decree against blasphemy by promoting a heretical interpretation of Islam.

Atheist

Alexander AAN

Age: 31

Place of residence: Pulau Punjung

Date of Arrest: January 2012

Charges: Spreading religious hatred

Statement of the defendants: Posting “God does not exist” on Facebook, posting cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad and starting an atheist page

First court decision: 14th June 2012, sentenced to 30 months in prison and a fine of 100 million rupiah (about 10,600USD).

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: 2008 electronic transactions law

Other information: Charges of blasphemy (Penal Code Article 156a) and promoting atheism (Penal Code Article 156b) have been dismissed.

Christians

Antonius Richmond BAWENGEAN

Place of residence: Jakarta

Date of Arrest: 26th October 2010

Charges: Blasphemy

Statement of the defendants: Distributing pamphlets that allegedly disparaged the Kaaba.

First court decision: 8th February 2011, sentenced to five years in prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Penal Code (KUHP), Article 156. Paragraph (a)

IRAN

The following HRWF list does not claim to be exhaustive but show nevertheless the magnitude of the repression. It lists a high number of Muslim converts to Protestantism and Baha'is but also Anglicans, Branhamist Christians, Zoroastrians as well as Shia and Sunni Muslims. Only the cases related to freedom of religion *stricto sensu* (freedom of association, freedom of assembly and worship and freedom of expression) have been selected and not “religious prisoners” who have been arrested, detained and imprisoned on other grounds.

Protestants

Mojtaba BABA-KARAMI, Mehdi Chaghakaboudi, Shirin Ghanbari , Azadeh SHARIFI and nine other Christians

Place of residence: Kermanshah

Date & Place of Arrest: 21st February 2012 in Kermanshah

Statement of the defendants: Gathering for worship in a private house

Place of detention: Baba-Karami and Chaghakaboudi are detained in Hafezieh prison.

Date of release: Nine were released on 22nd February 2012. Sharifi was released on 28th February 2012. No news concerning the three others by the end of 2012.

Fariba NAZEMIAN, Mojtaba HOSSEINI, Homayoun SHOKOOHI, Mohamad-Reza PARTOEI and Vahid HAKKANI and 3 others (belonging to house churches)

Date & Place of Arrest: 8th February 2012 in the city of Shiraz in Fars Province

Charges: Creating illegal groups, participating in a house church service, propagation against the Islamic regime and defaming Islamic holy figures through Christian evangelizing

Place of detention: Nazemian, Shokoohi and Hakkani were detained in Adel-Abad prison.

Statement of the defendants: Worshipping in a private home

Date of release: The three whose names are unknown were released on bail after 36 days. Nazemian was released on 18th October 2012, on a 250 million Toman bail (approximately 204,000 USD).

Pastor Farhad SABOKROH, his wife Shanaz JEIZAN, Naser Zamen-DEFZULI and Davoud ALIJANI (belonging to Assemblies of God)

Date & Place of Arrest: 23rd December 2011 in Ahwaz, Khuzestan Province

Charges: Unknown

Place of detention: Karoun prison in Ahwaz

Date of release: On 1st December 2012, Shanaz Jeizan was released after submitting the deed of a house as bail. Farhad Sabokroh and another member were released on bail after serving two months in prison.

Pastor Vruir AVANESSIAN and Mostafa BORDBAR (Armenian Christians belonging to the Assemblies of God)

Age: Avanesian is approximately 60 years old and Bordbar, 26

Family status: Pastor Avanesian is married and has children

Date & Place of Arrest: 27th December 2012 in the northern district of Tehran

Charges: Unknown

Statement of the defendants: Gathering at a residential home to celebrate the birth of Jesus and Christmas in a private home

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Tehran

Date of release: By the end of year 2012, both were still in prison.

Other information: Pastor Avanesian is suffering severe health challenges.

Ladan N. and Hooman H.

Age: Born in 1986 and 1985

Date & Place of Arrest: 14th April 2012 in Tehran

Charges: Unknown

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Tehran

Other information: The parents of the two detainees have received letters of summons to appear in court to answer questions about the converts' activities.

Pastor Saeed ABEDINI (belonging to an Evangelical Church)

Age: 32

Family status: Married with two children, a 6-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son

Date of Arrest: 26th September 2012

Charges: Threatening the national security of Iran through his leadership in Christian house churches

Statement of the defendants: Managing the construction of a non-religious orphanage

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Tehran

Other information: Pastor Saeed was granted U.S. citizenship in 2010 through marriage to his American wife.

Fariborz ARAZM

Age: Born in 1967

Family status: Married with two children

Date & Place of Arrest: 17th November 2011 in Robat Karim, south of Tehran

Charges: Being in contact with missionaries and promoting the Christian faith among Iranian Muslims

Place of detention: Ward 350 in Evin Prison in Tehran

Date of release: 11th April 2012

Other information: Before his transfer to Evin Prison, Arazm was held in Rajaei-Shahr prison in Karaj, where he was kept in solitary confinement for 21 days.

Masoud DELIJANI

Date of Arrest: 17th March 2011

Charges: Being a Christian, holding illegal house church gatherings, evangelizing Muslims and action “against national security”

Place of detention: Deizal-Abad, central prison of Kermanshah

First court decision: In July 2011, he was released on bail amounting to about 100,000 USD and rearrested two weeks later.

Last court decision: February 2012, sentenced to three years in prison by the Revolutionary Court of Kermanshah

Farshid FATHI

Family status: Married with two children.

Date of Arrest: 24th December 2010

Charges: Action against the regime’s security, being in contact with foreign organizations and religious propaganda

Place of detention: Ward 350 of Evin Prison in Tehran since December 2010

Last court decision: January 2012, sentenced to six years in prison by the Revolutionary Court of Kermanshah

Pastor Mehdi FURUTAN

Date of Arrest: January 2011

Charges: Crimes against national security and blasphemy against Islam

Date of detention: September 2011

First court decision: Acquitted on the blasphemy charge and released on bail a month later.

Last court decision: Sentenced to one year in prison.

Pastor Noorollah GHABITIZADEH

Age: 47

Date & Place of Arrest: 24th December 2010 in Isfahan

Charges: Proselytizing Muslims

Place of detention: Transferred to Dastgerd prison in February 2012

Duration of detention: 577 days

Date of release: Early August 2012

Maryam JALILI

Family status: Married with two children

Date of Arrest: 24th December 2009

Charges: Membership in an illegal group

Statement of the defendants: Gathering with other Christians to celebrate the birth of Jesus

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Teheran

First court decision: 5th December 2011, sentenced to two and a half years in prison

Leila MOHAMMADI

Age: Born in 1982

Place of residence: Kianshahr town, East of Tehran

Date & Place of Arrest: 30th July 2011 at her home in Kianshahr town, east of Tehran

Charges: Anti-Islamic propaganda, deceiving citizens by formation of a house church, insulting sacred figures and action against national security

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Teheran

First court decision: January 2012, sentenced to two years in prison by the Revolutionary Court in Moalem Street

Last court decision: The case was sent to the high court of Tehran province to be reviewed.

Pastor Yousef NADARKHANI

Age: Born in 1978

Family status: Married with two sons

Place of residence: Rasht

Date & Place of Arrest: 13th October 2009 in Rasht

Charges: Apostasy, converting to Christianity and evangelising Muslims

Statement of the defendants: Converting from Islam to Christianity and questioning the Muslim monopoly of religious instruction for children, seen as unconstitutional by the defendant

Place of detention: Lakan prison in Gilan province

First court decision: September 2010, sentenced to death for apostasy

Last court decision: In September 2012, he was acquitted of apostasy charges but sentenced to three years in prison for evangelising Muslims.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Shari'a law and authoritative fatwas

Other information: After having already spent close to three years in prison, he was released for a first time in September 2012. However, the director of Lakan Prison claimed he had been released several days too early. The pastor then had to return to prison in December 2012 to spend the remaining 45 days!

Fariborz PARSI-NEJAD

Place of residence: Isfahan

Date & Place of Arrest: 2nd March 2012 in Isfahan

Charges: Unknown

Place of detention: Dastgerd prison in Isfahan

Other information: Authorities allegedly arrested more Christians on the same day in Isfahan, but this could not be confirmed by other sources.

Noorallah QABITIZADE

Age: 48

Date & Place of Arrest: 24th December 2010 in Dezful

Charges: Unknown

Place of detention: Dastgerd Prison in Isfahan

Other information: Noorallah Qabitizade was transferred three times to different prisons because he was outspoken about his faith while incarcerated.

Mitra ZAHMATI

Date of Arrest: April 2011

Charges: Membership in an illegal group

Place of detention: Evin prison in Tehran

Last court decision: 5th December 2011, sentenced to two and a half years in prison

Anglicans

Hekmat SALIMI (St. Paul Anglican Church), **Giti HAKIMPOUR** (St. Luke's Anglican Church), **Shahram GHAEDI**, **Maryam DEL-ARAM**, **Shahnaz ZARIFI**, **Enayat JAFARI**

Ages: Salimi is 30; Hakimpour 78 and Del-Aramnd 54.

Family status: Shahnaz Zarifi has two children. Enayat Jafari is married and has a son.

Place of residence: Isfahan

Date & Place of Arrest: 22nd February 2012 in Isfahan

Charges: No official charges

Place of detention: Hekmat Salimi and Enayat Jafari were detained at Dastgerd prison.

Date of release: Giti Hakimpour was released on 25th February 2012.

Other information: Authorities have allegedly arrested more Christians in Isfahan, but this could not be confirmed.

Branhamist Christians/ Church of Iran

Mohammad (Vahid) ROGHANGIR, **Suroush SARAIE**, **Roxana FORUGHI**, **Eskandar REZAIE**, **Bijan HAGHIGHI**, **Mehdi AMERUNI** and **Shahin LAHOOTI**

Date & Place of Arrest: 12th October 2012 in a house in the city of Shiraz in Fars Province

Place of detention: Intelligence Ministry's detention centre, Pelak (Plaque 100). Some were transferred to Adel-Abad prison in Shiraz.

Charges: Unknown

Date of release: Bijan Haghghi was released on 25th October after posting bail bond amounting to 25,000 USD. Roxana Furughi and Mehdi Ameruni were released respectively on 1st November 2012 and in the last week of November after posting bail of a similar amount.

Afsar BAHMANI and Massoud REZAIE

Date & Place of Arrest: 18th October 2012 in the city of Shiraz in Fars Province

Place of detention: Intelligence Ministry's detention centre, Pelak (Plaque 100); Massoud Rezaie was transferred to Adel-Abad prison in Shiraz.

Date of release: Afsar Bahmani was released 24 hours after her arrest, reportedly on health grounds.

Behzad TAALIPASAND and Mohammed-Reza OMIDI

Place of residence: Rasht

Date of Arrest: 31st December 2012

Charges: Action against national security

Place of detention: A Ministry of Intelligence and Security detention facility

Behnam IRANI

Date of Arrest: April 2010

Charges: Crimes against national security

Place of detention: Prison of Karaj since May 2011

First court decision: After being released on bail a first time a few months later, he turned himself in after authorities issued a warrant for his arrest.

Last court decision: January 2011, sentenced to one year in prison

Other information: Authorities then told him he must also serve the five-year sentence handed down in 2008.

(Shi'a) Muslims

Ayatollah Mohammad Kazemeni BOROIJERDI

Date of Arrest: October 2006

Charges: Enmity against God and spreading propaganda against the regime

Statement of the defendants: Advocating the separation of religion and state and speaking out on behalf of the rights of Iran's religious minorities, as well as those of its Shi'a Muslim majority

First court decision: Death sentence

Last court decision: Sentenced to 11 years in prison

Other information: Adding to the imprisonment, the government has banned him from practicing his clerical duties and confiscated his home and belongings.

Zoroastrians

Mohsen SADEGHIPOUR

Date of Arrest: August 2011

Charges: Anti-regime propaganda for the Zoroastrian faith and organizing ancient ceremonies

Last court decision: Sentenced with a four and a half years in prison, 74 lashes and a fine

Pouria SHAHPARI

Date of Arrest: 22nd August 2011

Charges: Blasphemy and propaganda for Zoroastrianism

First court decision: Sentenced to two and a half years in prison and 74 lashes

Baha'is

Vahid MAHMOUDI, Mahmoud BADAVAM, Noushin KHADEM, Farhad SEDGHI, Riaz SOBHANI, Ramin ZIBAIE and Kamran MORTEZAIE

Family status: Mortezaie is divorced and has one child, Khadem is single, Badavam and Zibaie are married with two children and Sedghi with three.

Date & Place of Arrest: 22nd May 2011 in Tehran and Karaj (Alborz); 14th June 2011 in Tehran for Sobhani

Charges: Membership in a deviant sect with the goal of taking action against the security of the country

Statement of the defendants: Involvement with the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE)

Place of detention: Gohardasht

First court decision: On 21st September 2011, Sedghi was sentenced to four years in prison. On 25th September 2011, Mortezaie was sentenced to five years in prison. On 27th September 2011, Badavam and Khadem were sentenced to four years in prison. Mahmoudi and Sobhani were sentenced to four years in prison.

Date of release: In January 2012, Vahid Mahmoudi was released after his sentence was suspended.

Fariba KAMALABADI TAEFI, Jamaloddin KHANJANI, Afif NAIMI, Saeid Rezaie TAZANGI, Behrouz Azizi TAVAKKOLI, Vahid TIZFAHM

Ages: Taefi is 50, Naimi 51, Tazangi 54, Tavakkoli 61 and Tizfahm 40. Khanjani was born in 1933.

Family status: Taefi has 3 children, Khanjani 4, Naimi 2, Tazangi 3 and Tizfahm 1

Date & Place of Arrest: 14th May 2008, in Tehran

Charges: Espionage, propaganda activities against the Islamic order, the establishment of an illegal administration, cooperation with Israel, acting against the security of the country.

Statement of the defendants: Leaders of the Baha'i community in Iran

Places of detention: Evin (Tehran) and Gohardasht (Karaj)

First court decision: August 2010, sentenced to 20 years in prison

Other information: In September 2010, authorities informed the seven Baha'is orally that their 20-year sentences were reduced to 10 years. However, prison authorities told them in March 2011 that their original 20-year sentences had been reinstated.

Rozita VASEGHI, Nahid GHADIRI, Davar NABILZADEH, Jalayer VAHDAT and Sima ESHRAGI (Aghdaszadeh)

Family status: Ghadiri has 2 children, Nabilzadeh 3 and Eshragi 2.

Date & Place of Arrest: Vaseghi and Ghadiri were arrested on 16th March 2010; Nabilzadeh on 13th July 2010; Vahdat and Eshragi on 24th October 2010. All were arrested in Mashhad, Razavi Khorasan.

Place of detention: Mashhad

First court decision: 25th October 2009, sentenced to five years in prison

Last court decision: Appeal launched

Erfan ESHANI and an infant child

Family status: Married with a baby boy

Date & Place of Arrest: 30th October 2012 in Sangsar, Semnan

Place of detention: Semnan

First court decision: Sentenced to one year in prison under Ta'zir law

Zoreh NIKAYIN and an infant child

Age: 31

Family status: Married with a baby child, also in prison

Date & Place of Arrest: 22nd September 2012 in Semnan

Charges: Forming illegal administrative groups, known as moral education classes, with intent to attract Muslims and to promote the ideologies of the perverse Baha'i sect; being present among Muslims; membership in illegal groups and organizations, including the Ruhi Institute; organizing gatherings, science and technology lectures and Nineteen Day Feasts for the purpose of propaganda [against] the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran and in the interest of Baha'i faith; propaganda against the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the interest of anti-regime groups

First court decision: Sentenced to seven years in prison

Last court decision: 8th December 2011, sentenced to 23 months in prison

Taraneh TORABI and an infant child

Family status: Married with a child born during her imprisonment

Date & Place of Arrest: 22nd September 2012 in Sangsar, Semnan

First court decision: Sentenced to five years and ten months in prison

Last court decision: On appeal, the sentence was commuted two and a half years in prison.

Alibakhsh BAZRAFKAN

Age: 61

Family status: One child

Date & Place of Arrest: 31st October 2009 in Yasouf (Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad)

Charges: Plotting overthrow of the government, acting against national security and propaganda against the regime

Place of detention: Yasouf

First court decision: 7th December 2009, sentenced to two and a half months in prison and five years of internal exile.

Goudarz BEIDAGHI

Age: 62

Family status: One child

Date & Place of Arrest: 26th July 2012 in Sangsar, Semnan

Charges: Propaganda against the blessed government of the Islamic Republic of Iran; disturbance of the general public's opinion through distribution of flyers (letter of the Bahá'í community of Iran addressed to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran).

Statement of the defendants: Involvement with the Baha'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE)

Place of detention: Sangsar

First court decision: 4th October 2011, sentenced to one year in prison under Ta'zír law (usually corporal punishment) and three years' exile from Semnan

Faran HESAMI

Family status: Married with a child

Date & Place of Arrest: 25th July 2012 in Tehran

Charges: Conspiracy and assembly with the intention to act against the national security by membership in perverse Baha'í sect as the primary director of the Department of Psychology at the illegal Baha'í university under the direction of the House of Justice

Statement of the defendants: Involvement with the Baha'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE)

Place of detention: Evin prison in Tehran

First court decision: 9th May 2012, sentenced to five years in prison

Afshin IGHANI

Age: 39

Family status: Married with one child.

Date & Place of Arrest: September 2011 in Semnan

Charges: Formation of a group and membership in illegal groups and assemblies with the intention of disturbing national

security; actions against national security through propaganda against the regime [and in support of anti-regime groups], i.e. propaganda for the perverse Baha'i sect.

Place of detention: Semnan

First court decision: 5th May 2010, sentenced to four years, three months and one day in prison

Siamak IGHANI

Age: 46

Family status: Two children

Date & Place of Arrest: 6th November 2010 in Semnan

Charges: Engaging in propaganda against the regime for the benefit of Bahai's

Place of detention: Semnan prison

First court decision: 8th July 2009, sentenced to three years in prison

Last court decision: In October 2010, the sentence was upheld on appeal.

Peyman KASHFI

Family status: Married

Date & Place of Arrest: 13th February 2011 in Tehran

Charges: Membership in an anti-Islamic group and propaganda against the regime

Place of detention: Evin prison in Tehran

First court decision: 15th June 2010, sentenced to four years in prison

Bhfar KHANJANI

Age: 36

Family status: Married with two children

Date & Place of Arrest: 21st June 2011 in Mashhad, Razavi Khorasan

Charges: Forming groups and membership in groups and assemblies with intention to disturb the national security; activity against national security through propaganda against

the regime; use, possession and distribution of 63 illegal compact discs containing appalling and offensive material

Place of detention: Semnan

First court decision: 4th May 2010, sentenced to four years in prison

Last court decision: Appeal denied on 6th February 2012

Manijeh NASROLLAHI

Family status: Married with three children

Date & Place of Arrest: 17th June 2009 in Semnan

Charges: Acting against national security through propagandist activity in the interests of groups and populations hostile to the regime related to Baha'is; membership in illegal groups and populations related to Baha'is, including the group of Khademin of Semnan, in which he was occupying the post of secretary

Place of detention: Evin prison in Tehran

First court decision: 30th June 2009, sentenced to three and a half years in prison

Last court decision: Appeal launched

Jinous NOURANI

Age: 28

Date & Place of Arrest: In May 2012 in Semnan

Charges: Unknown

Place of detention: Semnan

First court decision: 26th November 2011, sentenced to one year in prison

Kamran RAHIMIAN

Family status: Married with one child

Date & Place of Arrest: 14th September 2011 in Tehran

Charges: Using falsely obtained degrees, illegal counselling, running illegal classes, defrauding the public

Statement of the defendants: Involvement with the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE)

Place of detention: Gohardasht

First court decision: Sentenced to four years in prison

Kayvan RAHIMIAN

Family status: Widow with one child.

Date & Place of Arrest: 30th September 2012 in Tehran

Charges: Assembly and collusion with intent to commit acts of crime against national security, membership in the perverse Baha'i sect

Statement of the defendants: Involvement with the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE)

First court decision: 12th June 2012, sentenced to five years in prison and 97,877,000 rial fine (8,000 USD).

Didar RAOUFI

Age: 39

Family status: Married

Date & Place of Arrest: 16th October 2011 in Tehran

Place of detention: Evin Prison in Tehran

First court decision: 12th February 2011, sentenced to three years in prison

Feizollah ROWSAHN

Age: 63

Family status: Three children

Date & Place of Arrest: 15th January 2011 in Sari, Mazandaran

Charges: Teaching the Baha'i faith, being a member of and serving the Baha'i community and assisting Baha'i youth

Place of detention: Bijar

First court decision: Sentenced to one year in prison and four years internal exile to Damghan

Last court decision: Remaining internal exile changed to additional six months' imprisonment in Sari.

Mahvash Shahriari SABET

Age: 37

Family status: Two children

Date & Place of Arrest: 5th March 2008 in Mashhad, Razavi Khorasan

Charges: Espionage, propaganda activities against the Islamic order, the establishment of an illegal administration, cooperation with Israel, acting against the security of the country. **Place of detention:** Evin prison in Tehran

First court decision: 14th June 2010, sentenced to 20 years in prison

Azizollah SAMANDARI

Age: 56

Family status: Married with a child

Date & Place of Arrest: 7th July 2012 in Tehran

Charges: Being an active member of the perverse Baha'i sect with the intention to act against the national security

Place of detention: Evin prison in Tehran

First court decision: 4th October 2011, sentenced to five years in prison

Last court decision: In February 2012, the verdict was upheld by the appeal court.

Shahrokh TAEF

Age: 61

Family status: Married with two children

Date & Place of Arrest: In January 2012 in Tehran

Place of detention: Evin

First court decision: 13th February 2011, sentenced to four years in prison

Last court decision: 16th January 2012, an appeal upheld the sentence.

KAZAKHSTAN

Baptists

Aleksandr ZHUKOV, Mikhail MILKIN and Ruslan YERMAKOV

Date of Arrest: 10th March 2012

Charges: Distributing Christian literature

Statement of the defendants: Offering Christian literature for free to passers-by in the town centre

Place of detention: Burabai town Police (northern Kazakhstan)

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 375 of the Code of Administrative Offences: “Violation of legislation on religious activity and religious associations”

Duration of detention: A few hours

Vyacheslav CHERKASOV and Zhasulan ALZHANOV

Date of Arrest: 3rd March 2012

Charges: Distributing Christian literature

Statement of the defendants: Offering Christian literature for free to passers-by in the town centre

Place of detention: The Burabay District Police Department (northern Kazakhstan)

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 375 of the Code of Administrative Offences: “Violation of legislation on religious activity and religious associations”

Duration of detention: A few hours

Hare Krishna

Two unnamed devotees

Date & Place of Arrest: April 2012 in Oskemen, East Kazakhstan Region

Charges: Handing out “extremist literature” on the street

Duration of detention: A few hours

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law:

Article 375 of the Code of Administrative Offences: “Violation of legislation on religious activity and religious associations”

Other information: Their identity documents were seized but returned since. Oskemen authorities have stated that no charges will be brought against the two. The two devotees wished to stay unnamed for fear of State reprisals.

Jehovah’s Witnesses

Two unnamed followers

Date & Place of Arrest: 28th February 2012 in a shop in the town of Karasu, Kostanai Region

Charges: Unknown

Statement of the defendants: Talking to another customer in the shop about their faith

Place of detention: Karasu Town Police

Duration of detention: Five hours

Other information: After an enquiry has been launched against them by the Kostanai Regional Department of the ARA, the District Administrative Court on 10th April 2012 acquitted them, considering that speaking about religion in a public place is not against the law.

KYRGYZSTAN

Muslim

An unnamed woman

Date & Place of Arrest: June 2012, in Tashkumyr, in Jalal-Abad Region

Charges: Extremism

Statement of the defendants: Storing a Quran and several disks in Kyrgyz with sermons on what the Quran teaches. Since the Quran is in Arabic, and Prosecutor's Office officials do not speak or understand Arabic, they claimed that she has ties with some militant Islamic groups.

First court decision: Sentenced to seven years in prison

MOROCCO

Muslim

An unnamed Muslim

Date & Place of Arrest: August 2012 in the Old City of Rabat

Statement of the defendants: Eating in public during Ramadan as a public protest

First court decision: Sentenced to three months in prison and a 250 dirham (29 USD) fine

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 222 of Morocco's penal code: "whoever is believed to be a Muslim and eats publicly during the days of Ramadan in a public place, without a valid justification, shall be imprisoned from one to six months and fined twelve to one hundred and twenty dirham."

NAGORNO-KARABAKH REPUBLIC

Jehovah's Witness

Karen HARUTYUNYAN

Age: 18

Date & Place of residence: 30th November 2011 in the town of Askeran, central Karabakh

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith.

Place of detention: Prison of Shusha near capital city of Stepanakert

First court decision: 30th December 2011, sentenced to 30 months in prison by the Askeran District Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 327, Part 1: "Evasion from regular military or alternative service call-up, training exercise or mobilisation, without any order defined by Legislation as grounds for exemption, is punished with arrest for a maximum term of two months, or imprisonment for a maximum term of three years."

Other information: The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic is a de facto independent but unrecognized state. The territory is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan which has not exercised power over most of the region since 1991. Since the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh War in 1994, Nagorno-Karabakh has been under military control of Armenia.

NORTH KOREA

It is estimated that 150,000 to 200,000 prisoners are currently in North Korea's network of political prison camps. North Korea experts in South Korea, using testimony from refugees, estimate that there may be 6,000 Christians incarcerated in Prison No. 15 in the northern part of the country. No verifiable statistics are however available concerning FORB prisoners.

PAKISTAN

The 2012 Annual Report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has released a list of 79 prisoners¹ arrested/sentenced for alleged activities considered blasphemous or religiously insulting. Fourteen of them have death sentences pending or are in the process of appeal. Two Muslims and a Christian were sentenced to life in prison for defiling the Qur'an, joining at least 16 other individuals who are serving life sentences.

¹ See the list at <http://www.uscirf.gov/images/Appendices%20Combined.pdf>

RUSSIA

Jehovah's Witnesses

Igor YEFIMOV, Aleksei NIKOLAEV, Andrei MARTYNOV and Andrei NIKOLAEV

Age: Yefimov was born in 1966, Nikolaev in 1973, Martynov in 1964 and Nikolaev in 1970

Family status: Yefimov, Martynov and Andrei Nikolaev are married with children.

Date & Place of Arrest: 26th July 2012 in Alaty, Novocheboksarsk and Cheboksary (Chuvashia)

Charges: Extremism, distributing publications of Jehovah's Witnesses and creating and participating in an extremist community

First court decision: On 30th July 2012, a court ruled to impose detention on remand on Aleksey Nikolaev and Yefimov and to release Martynov and Andrei Nikolayev.

Last court decision: On 6th December 2012 the criminal case was closed because of lack of evidence.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 282, Part 2 (c); Article 282.1, Part 1; and Article 282.1, Part 2 (Incitement of National, Racial, or Religious Enmity)

Date of release: Andrei Nikolaev and Martynov were released on 30th July 2012, Yefimov and Aleksei Nikolaev on 10th September 2012.

Oleg MARCHENKO

Age: Born in 1980

Family status: Married

Place of residence: Kanash (Chuvashia)

Date of Arrest: 31st July 2012

Charges: Extremism

First court decision: The Moscow District Court of Cheboksary refused the investigator's request for Marchenko's arrest.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 282.1(1 and 2) and Article 282(2c) (Incitement of National, Racial, or Religious Enmity)

Duration of detention: 48 hours

Date of release: 1st August 2012

Muslims

Alesker SAFAROV and Renat KHAYAROV

Place of residence: Nizhny Novgorod

Charges: Extremism

First court decision: 11th October 2011, sentenced to eight months in an open- prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 282.2, Part 2

Date of release: Unknown

Amir ABUEV

Age: 31

Place of residence: Kaliningrad

Date of Arrest: 11th February 2012

Charges: Extremism. Abuev was suspected of belonging to the Nurdzhular movement, spreading ideas of fundamentalist Islam, which was classified as "extremist" by Russia's Supreme Court in April 2008.

Statement of the defendants: Reading the works of Said Nursi

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 282.2, Part 1 (Incitement of National, Racial, or Religious Enmity)

Duration of detention: 48 hours

Other information: The FSB detained Abuev in a psychiatric facility.

Elshan GASANOV

Place of residence: Nizhny Novgorod

Charges: Extremism

First court decision: 11th October 2011, sentenced to one year in prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 282.2, Part 1 (Incitement of National, Racial, or Religious Enmity)

Date of release: 21st February 2012

Asylzhan KELMUKHAMBETOV

Age: 42

Family status: Wife and two children

Place of residence: Orenburg

Date of Arrest: 28th June 2011

Charges: Extremism

Statement of the defendants: Reading the works of Said Nursi

Place of detention: Orenburg prison

First court decision: 28th June 2011, sentenced to 18 months in prison

Last court decision: The Regional Court changed his sentence from imprisonment into a fine, which he is not required to pay due to changes in the Criminal Code.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 282.2, Part 1: “Organisation of the activity of a social or religious association or other organisation in relation to which a court has adopted a decision legally in force on liquidation or ban on the activity in connection with the carrying out of extremist activity”

Date of release: 19th January 2012

SOUTH KOREA

Jehovah's Witnesses

Number of detainees/ prisoners: 743 (Situation in October 2012)

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with their faith

Last court decision: Generally sentenced to 18 months in prison

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Military Service Act Article 88 Paragraph 1

Duration of detention: Usually 18 months

Other information: Conscientious objectors who are called up as reservists face multiple prosecutions and repeated punishments over an eight-year period for violation of Homeland Reserve Forces Act, Article 15, Paragraph 9.

Every year the government tries and convicts 400 to 700 young Jehovah's Witnesses² as conscientious objectors to military service. Since 1950, the government has sentenced 17,107 Jehovah's Witnesses in South Korea, making a combined total of 32,413 years for their conscientious objection to military service.

The UN Human Rights Committee's decision on 1st December 2006 ruled that South Korea violated Article 18, paragraph 1, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This decision found an infringement of freedom of conscience in the case of two Jehovah's Witnesses imprisoned for their conscientious objection to military service. On 24th March 2011, the Committee issued a similar ruling in the case of 100 other Witnesses; 438 other Witness complaints are still pending before this Committee. Both Committee decisions

² See the list of JW conscientious objectors at <http://www.hrwf.net>

remind South Korea that it is under obligation to put an end to this violation. The government of South Korea has stated that it does not intend to implement the Committee's views.

(Information provided by the European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses)

TAJIKISTAN

According to Forum 18, a total of 95 followers of the banned Jamaat Tabligh Muslim religious movement were in 2010 given long prison sentences and huge fines. In March 2010, 23 of these Muslims were given prison terms of between three and six years, and the other 33 defendants were fined between 25,000 Somonis (4,330 EUR or 5,340 USD) and 50,000 Somonis (8,660 EUR or 10,680 USD). In May, 32 of these Muslims were given prison terms of between three and six years, with fines of up to 25,000 Somonis (4,330 EUR or 5,340 USD) being imposed on the remaining four followers. By year's end, these prisoners had not been released.

TURKMENISTAN

Jehovah's Witnesses

Aibek SALAYEV and nine others

Date & Place of Arrest: 7th March 2012 in Dashoguz

Statement of the defendants: Private religious meeting

Place of detention: Dashoguz Police Station

Duration of detention: A few hours

Date of release: The detainees were released after interrogation, but Salayev was kept in detention.

Matkarim AMINOV and Dovran MATYAKUBOV

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with their faith

Place of detention: Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: December 2012, sentenced to 18 months in a labour camp

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Date of release: Aminov was released on 27th June 2012 and Matyakubov on 28th June 2012.

Zafar ABDULLAEV

Age: 24

Place of residence: Dashoguz

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: 6th March 2012, sentenced to two years in prison by the Dashoguz City Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Matkarim AMINOV

Age: 21

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith.

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: December 2010, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Dashoguz Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Dovleyet BYASHIMOV

Place of residence: Turkmenabad

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith.

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: 30th August 2010, sentenced him to 18 months in prison by the Turkmenabad Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in

the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Date of release: 28th January 2012

Ahmet HUDAYBERGENOV

Age: 23

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: September 2010, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Turkmenabad Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Date of release: 20th March 2012

Mahmud HUDAYBERGENOV

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: August 2011, sentenced to two years in prison by the Dashoguz Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Sunet JAPBAROV

Age: 22

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: December 2010, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Turkmenabad Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Date of release: 14th May 2012

Dovran MATYAKUBOV

Age: 20

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: December 2010, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Boldumsaz Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Navruz NASYRLAEV

Date & Place of Arrest: 7th March 2012 in Dashoguz

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith.

Place of detention: Strict regime section at the Seydi Labour camp, Lebap Region

First court decision: 1st May 2012, sentenced to two years in prison by the Dashoguz City Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Juma NAZAROV

Age: 19

Place of residence: Ashgabad

Date of Arrest: 10th May 2012

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with his faith

First court decision: 23rd July 2012, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Azatlyk District Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Other information: From 10th May 2012, he was held in pre-trial detention at Yashlyk, south-east of Ashgabad.

Vladimir NURYLLAYEV

Age: 39

Place of residence: Ashgabad

Date & Place of Arrest: 15th November 2011 at his home in Ashgabad

Charges: Spreading pornography; giving a disc containing pornographic material to two named individuals on two separate occasions in Ashgabad

Statement of the defendants: The charge was fabricated to punish him for his faith.

Place of detention: Manual labour section of Ovadan-Depe Prison in the Karakum Desert, north of Ashgabad.

First court decision: 18th January 2012, sentenced to four years in prison by the Ashgabad's Azatlyk District Court

Last court decision: On 14th February 2012, Ashgabad City Court rejected his appeal after a 10-minute hearing.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 164, Part 2 of the Criminal Code punishes "production or distribution of pornographic items" more than once or by a group of people. The maximum penalty is five years' imprisonment.

Date of release: 17th May 2012 under amnesty to mark the 18th May Constitution Day.

Other information: The trial has been kept secret. Witnesses say the notebook computer was the only computer he had, and the disc drive on it had broken. He remains under restrictions, having to report to police up to three times a week.

Aziz ROZIEV

Age: 22

Charges: Conscientious objector to compulsory military service

Statement of the defendants: Performing military service is incompatible with their faith

Place of detention: General regime in Seydi Labour camp, Lebap Region

First court decision: 4th August 2010, sentenced to 18 months in prison by the Seydi Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 219, Part 1, punishes refusal to serve in the armed forces in peacetime with a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment.

Date of release: 4th February 2012

Aibek SALAYEV

Age: 33

Charge: Distributing pornography

Statement of the defendants: The charge was fabricated to punish him for his faith.

First court decision: 12th April 2012, sentenced to four years in prison by the Dashoguz City Court

Last court decision: On 1st May 2012, an appeal was rejected.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 164, Part 2 of the Criminal Code punishes “production or distribution of pornographic items” more than once or by a group of people. The maximum penalty is five years’ imprisonment.

Other information: Witnesses said that it was impossible for Salayev to copy pornographic discs, since there is no way to insert CD DVD into his small notebook.

Protestants

Pastor Begjan SHIRMEDOV (77), his son Shohrat SHIRMEDOV and about 10 others (Baptist, Path of Faith Church)

Family status: Married with at least two sons

Place of residence: Dashoguz

Date & Place of Arrest: 23rd September 2012 at Shirmedov’s home

Charge: Illegal religious gathering

Statement of the defendants: Shirmedov’s home was raided by officials during a church meeting. The church has been seeking registration without success since 2004.

Place of detention: Local Hyakimlik (administration)

Duration of detention: A few hours

Other information: Church members were questioned about their religious activity. The pastor’s and his son’s fingerprints were taken.

Four unknown believers

Place of residence: One was from Ashgabat, the others from outside the capital.

Charge: Bringing “illegal” religious literature into Turkmenistan

Statement of the defendants: During a house search in a home where all four believers met, the police found a Bible on each person.

Place of detention: A detention facility

First court decision: The four appeared before a judge, who refused to hear the case since the police brought no proof of wrongdoing and no documentation.

Last court decision: On 27th February 2012, the same judge fined them to 357 Manats (125 USD) each.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Article 205 of the Code of Administrative Offences: “violation of the law on religious organisations”

Duration of detention: About an hour

Pastor Ilmurad NURLIEV (belonging to the Light to the World Protestant Church)

Age: 47

Family status: Married with a daughter and two grandchildren

Place of residence: Town of Mary, east of Ashgabad

Date of Arrest: 27th August 2010

Charge: Swindling money

Statement of the defendants: The charges were fabricated to punish him for his religious activity. Among the people he was supposed to have swindled money from were two women that occasionally attended church meetings and two men he had never met.

Place of detention: Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: 21st October 2010, sentenced to four years in prison and “forcible medical treatment”.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 228, Part 2

Other information: Pastor Nurliev has to report each Saturday to the local police station. Throughout his 18-month imprisonment he was not allowed to have a copy of the Bible.

Pastor Begjan SHIRMEDOV (belonging to the Path of Faith Church, Baptist)

Age: 77

Family status: Married with at least two sons

Place of residence: Dashoguz

Date & Place of Arrest: 3rd February 2012 at a local printing shop

Statement of the defendants: Printing copies of a small book of his religious poetry

Place of detention: Police 6th Department, responsible for counter-terrorism and organised crime work

Duration of detention: Six hours

Other information: Other local Protestants in Dashoguz have been questioned over printing religious materials. It remains unclear if any will face charges.

Muslim

Musa (last name unknown)

Age: About 25

Place of residence: Ashgabad

Charges: Teaching the Koran to children

Place of detention: Seydi Labour camp, eastern Lebap Region

First court decision: Sentenced to four years in prison

UZBEKISTAN

Muslims

The 2012 Annual Report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom has released a list of 65 prisoners³ arrested/sentenced in 2011-2012 to various prison terms due to their Muslim religious activities or affiliations: 6 of them have been sentenced to 12 years in prison, 2 to 8 years, 1 to 7 years ½, 5 to 7 years, 24 to 6 years, 2 to 5 years and 7 to 3 years. By year's end, these prisoners had not been released.

Moreover, Forum 18 has published a list of Muslims who were arrested on other grounds in 2012:

Gayrat KHUSANOV, Shuhrat YUNUSOV, Botir IKRAMOV, Alisher RAHIMBOYEV, Otabek ORIPOV, Muzaffar MIRALIYEV, Hasan ABDIYEV, Fazliddin MUKHAMEDOV and Dilshod SALIMOV

Place of residence: Tashkent Region

Date of Arrest: Between mid-May and 26th July 2012

Statement of the defendants: Meeting to read the Koran, discuss their faith and to learn how to pray

Place of detention: Yangibazar Detention Centre in Tashkent Region

First court decision: On 22nd November 2012, Yukorichirchik District Court sentenced Khusanov and Yunusov to seven years in prison. The others were sentenced to three years suspended prison terms.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 216: "illegal establishment or reactivation of illegal public associations or religious organisations, as well as active participation in their activities" Four or five were also prosecuted under Article 244-1, Part 3, Point a. This punishes "production and dissemination of

³ See the list at <http://www.uscifr.gov/images/Appendices%20Combined.pdf>

materials containing a threat to public security and public order”.

Other information: The nine believers were first detained on various dates during the summer 2012 and given a 15-day administrative detention in May.

Protestants

A Baptist Church (number of detainees unknown)

Place of residence: Mubarek in the southern Kashkadarya Region

Date & Place of Arrest: 26th February 2012 during a raid on the church

Charges: Using a private home for illegal religious purposes

Place of detention: Mubarek Police Department

Duration of detention: Five and a half hours

Nina CHASHINA and Gulya (full name unknown)

Age: Chashina is 74

Place of residence: Almalyk, Tashkent Region

Date & Place of Arrest: 4th September 2012 at the two persons' homes

Charge: Engaging in distributing DVDs of Christian films among Muslims

Place of detention: Almalyk City Police's Criminal Investigation Department

Other information: When she arrived at the station, Chashina had an epileptic attack and fell unconscious. The police refused to transfer her to the hospital, as asked by doctors who were present.

Tohar HAYDAROV

Place of residence: Gulistan

Date of Arrest: 18th January 2010

Charge: Producing and storing drugs

Statement of the defendants: The case has been fabricated and the police planted the drugs on him.

Place of detention: Labour camp in Qarshi

First court decision: 9th March 2010, sentenced to 10 years in prison

Jehovah's Witnesses

Pavel TOPOROV, Svetlana TOPOROV, Lyudmila KOZLOVA and Anna TOPOROVA, Dmitri KOZLOV, Ivan LEBEDEV and Svetlana DYACHKOVA

Family status: Pavel and Svetlana are married with two daughters

Place of residence: Tashkent

Statement of the defendants: Joining a group for Bible reading

First court decision: On 27th January 2012, Tashkent City's Sergeli District Court sentenced Pavel Toporov, Kozlov and Lebedev to 15 days in prison, with fines of 3,146,000 Soms (1,721 USD) each. The others received a 6,292,000 Soms (3,442 USD) fines.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Code of Administrative Offences Article 240: violating the law on religious organisations; Article 184-2: illegal production, storage or import into Uzbekistan with a purpose to distribute or distribution of religious materials by physical persons; Article 201, Part 2: violation of the procedure for holding religious meetings, street processions or other religious ceremonies; and Article 202: creating the conditions for conducting unsanctioned meetings

Date of release: 9th February 2012

Other information: During the raid, the police used physical violence.

Gulchehra ABDULLAYEVA

Age: 54

Family status: Married with one son and two grandchildren

Place of residence: Village of Muhayon near Hazorasp in Khorezm Region of western Uzbekistan

Date & Place of Arrest: 15th July 2012 at her home

Charge: Bringing back Jehovah's Witness literature from a private trip to Kazakhstan

Statement of the defendants: Abdullayeva denied the accusation and the alleged literature was never found.

Place of detention: Police station in Hazorasp

First court decision: 25th July 2012, fined 314,600 Soms (160 USD) by the Hazorasp District Criminal Court

Last court decision: On 27th July, Abdullayeva filed appeals against the torture (see below) and the fine to the Presidential Administration.

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Administrative Code Article 241: teaching religious beliefs without specialised religious education and without permission from the central organ of a [registered] religious organisation, as well as teaching religious beliefs privately

Other information: She was tortured during detention, notably by the use of a gas mask. The court stated that she was preaching her faith to others on the day of her arrest.

Abdubannob AHMEDOV

Age: 34

Place of residence: Fergana Region, eastern Uzbekistan

Date & Place of Arrest: 23rd July 2008 in the court room

Charges: Carrying literature that contradicts the principles of tolerance, inter-religious accord and the laws of the Republic; breaking the law by his criminal actions expressed in the renewal of the previously-halted activity of the illegal religious organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses and in their active participation in its activity as an illegal religious organisation.

Disobeying orders while in Tashkent Region's Tavaksay Prison

Place of detention: Kattakurgan in Samarkand Region

First court decision: 23rd July 2008, sentenced to three and a half years in prison by a Criminal Court in Fergana, eastern Uzbekistan

Last court decision: On 12th April 2012, he was tried under the new criminal charges of violating prison regulations. He was given an additional sentence of four months and three days in prison, by the Gazalkent City Criminal Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 216: illegal organisation of public associations or religious organisations.

Criminal Code Article 221, part 2b: disobedience to the legal orders of the administration of punishment institutions or other obstruction to the administration in performing its functions by a person serving a penalty in institutions of confinement, if the person has been penalised with confinement to a solitary cell or to a prison for violation of penal security regulations within one year, is punishable for a person convicted for a serious or very serious crime with imprisonment from three to five years.

Date of release: Not released by year's end

Other information: Ahmedov was told by prison officials in summer 2011 that he would not be released at the end of his sentence unless he renounced his faith.

Sergei IVANOV

Age: 25

Family status: Unmarried

Place of residence: Fergana Region, eastern Uzbekistan

Date & Place of Arrest: 23rd July 2008 in the court room

Charges: Carrying literature that contradicts the principles of tolerance, inter-religious accord and the laws of the Republic; breaking the law by his criminal actions expressed in the renewal of the previously-halted activity of the illegal religious organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses and in their active participation in its activity as an illegal religious organisation.

Disobeying orders while in Tashkent Region's Tavaksay Prison, by lying on his bunk one day when he was tired at a time he was not allowed to and visiting a different barrack within the camp without the necessary accompaniment by guards.

Statement of the defendants: The violations were the result of ignorance and cannot be defined as “systematic violation”.

Place of detention: Kattakurgan in Samarkand Region

First court decision: 23rd July 2008, sentenced to three and a half years in prison by a Criminal Court in Fergana, eastern

Last court decision: On 12th April 2012, he was tried under the new criminal charges of violating prison regulations. He was given an additional sentence of four months and three days in prison, by the Gazalkent City Criminal Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law: Criminal Code Article 216: illegal organisation of public associations or religious organisations.

Criminal Code Article 221, part 2b: disobedience to the legal orders of the administration of punishment institutions or other obstruction to the administration in performing its functions by a person serving a penalty in institutions of confinement, if the person has been penalised with confinement to a solitary cell or to a prison for violation of penal security regulations within one year, is punishable for a person convicted for a serious or very serious crime with imprisonment from three to five years.

Date of release: 19th May 2012.

Olim TURAEV

Age: 38

Family status: Married with three children

Place of residence: Samarkand

Date & Place of Arrest: 25th April 2008 at the Samarkand City Criminal Court

Charges: Holding an unapproved religious meeting and teaching religion without state permission

Disobeying orders while in Tashkent Region's Tavaksay Prison by turning out for a morning inspection without his jacket bearing his prison number and visiting a different barrack within the camp without the necessary accompaniment by guards.

Statement of the defendants: The violations were the result of ignorance and cannot be defined as “systematic violation”.

Place of detention: Kattakurgan in Samarkand Region

First court decision: 25th April 2008, sentenced to four years in labour camp by e Samarkand City Criminal Court

Last court decision: On 12th April 2012, he was tried under the new criminal charges of violating prison regulations. He was given an additional sentence of four months and seven days in prison, by the Gazalkent City Criminal Court

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code or law:
Criminal Code Article 216: illegal organisation of public associations or religious organisations

Criminal Code Article 229-2 and Article 221, part 2b: disobedience to the legal orders of the administration of punishment institutions or other obstruction to the administration in performing its functions by a person serving a penalty in institutions of confinement, if the person has been penalised with confinement to a solitary cell or to a prison for violation of penal security regulations within one year, is punishable for a person convicted for a serious or very serious crime with imprisonment from three to five years.

Date of release: 21st May 2012.

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