

28 September 2016

**Mr. Michael George Link,  
Director of the OSCE ODHIR**

### **Tajikistan Uses My Family Members as Hostages**

Dear Steinmeier,

I, Ilhomjon Yoqubov, would like to draw your attention to the serious human rights abuses happening against my family members in Tajikistan following participating at the OSCE conference in Warsaw and appearing in a video released here.

As you saw, I and other Tajik activists staged peaceful protests outside the hall and a silent walk in inside this hall against the human rights violations, tortures and for the release of the political prisoners in Tajikistan.

Following this, in 22 September 2016, at about 14:10, more than two hundred of protesting people have descended on the house of my mother, Ochakhon Yokubova, (locates in Chashma Street, Kvartal 40, House 13, Khujand city) and held banners against me and shouted "Ilhom is a traitor", "Kabiri and Ilhom are the nation's traitors", etc. This led to deterioration of my old mother's health condition.

In 23 September, members of this group have also descended on the house of my eldest sister, Munira Jhuraeva (locates in the same street and kvartal and House 20, Khujand city) and have done as they did in my mother's house.

In 24 September, my brother Alijon Yaqubov was invited by the security official in Khujand city where my family members live. The security officials threatened him to ask me to return back to Tajikistan, otherwise all properties of my family members, including the houses of my mother, two sisters and two brothers would be confiscated by the government and all of my family members will be jailed.

Moreover, the security officials on last Saturday (24 September) descended on the house of my father-in-law and threatened him to ask her daughter, Farida Yaqubova who is my wife, to Tajikistan, otherwise an unknown future will awaiting them.

Furthermore, in 27 September, around 13:40 (local time), a group of more than 250 mostly young people went to Alijon Yaqubov, my brother's house (locates in Lenin street 81-18) and staged a protest against me, shouting "Ihomjon is a traitor" as well as wrote these slogans on the wall of Alijon's house. The protest continued for about one hour.

I am afraid that health condition of my aged mother, who suffers from many diseases, will deteriorate due to the physical and psychological pressures imposed by the government. I am deeply concerned about her and my family members.

I, my wife and child along with my old father fled the government oppression after giving compulsorily confession and blaming forcibly the IRPT in a video in the custody that was later broadcasted in national TV's.

The authorities are very angry with me, because I participated here at this conference and gave an interview in a video organized by Human Rights Watch and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee which was released here during this conference in 21 September.

So, I kindly call on you:

1. To particularly send the OSCE and other organizations' representatives to my house that locates in Lenin Street 81 – 18, Khujand city to observe my family members' situation and raise their voice against the worst human rights abuses in Tajikistan;
2. To pressure the Tajik government to make an end to using family members of the activists as hostages. Thank you very much.

**Ilhomjon Yoqubov**

**Head of Legal and Refugees  
Department, IRPT**