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United States Mission to the OSCE

Release of human rights activist Murod Juraev in Uzbekistan

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 19, 2015

The United States welcomes the release of former member of parliament and human rights activist Murod Juraev after 21 years in prison.

We regard Mr. Juraev's release as a positive step and urge the Government of Uzbekistan to build on it by making it a prelude to the release of other long-held journalists, activists, and prisoners of conscience, including those imprisoned for their religious beliefs.

During his recent visit to the five countries of Central Asia, Secretary of State Kerry underscored in his engagement with government leaders the importance of doing more to protect civil liberties, human rights, and fundamental freedoms. This includes ceasing the arrest, abuse, and prosecution of activists like Elena Urlaeva, Malohat Eshonkulova, Dmitry Tikhonov, and most recently Uktam Paradaev, in retaliation for their human rights work.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.