

Tajikistan

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I want to talk about the role of civil society in Tajikistan in the protection of human rights in Tajikistan, my country where violations of human rights especially in recent years is widespread. And human rights defenders and activists pay high price for their engagement in this issue.

I would like to draw your attention to a very negative phenomenon regarding civil society in Tajikistan.

There are some pro-government groups, which call themselves as part of civil society, but their main goals are not the protection of human rights, rather crushing opposition and their family members which lead to a large violations of human rights.

For example, there is a group called "Avangard" or "Sozandagoni Vatan "Homeland Builders". It is the youth wing of the ruling party lead by president Emomali Rahmon. Members of this group are free to hold anti-opposition rallies in front of activists' homes, block the streets, throw stones into the houses of activists, threaten their family members and even cause mass unrest. They break into western embassies in Tajikistan and demand extradition of political activists, who live in exile in Europe.

Members of this group "Avangard" in these days, when OSCE conference in Warsaw was being held, organized rallies outside the offices of OSCE in Khujand and Dushanbe, demanding extradition of Tajik activists (what they called "traitors to their country"), who participated in this conference last year, like Muhiddin Kabiri and Ms. Shabnam Khudoidodova.

Unfortunately, the Tajik government had adopted a policy of intimidation, blackmail as well as physical and psychological terror towards "civil society" and activists. Muhiddin Kabiri, chairman of the IRPT is right, when he said: The government label activists and its opponents radicals and extremists, but it uses extremist methods itself.

In the end, I want to say pro-government "Avangard" and similar groups are not builders of homeland, rather they are destroyers of our beautiful homeland.

Thanks for your attention.