

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Information on tortures and death of people in pre-trial detention and prisons of Turkmenistan still causes serious concern. These messages come from the persons released from custody, those who came out of prisons on amnesty, and also from separate employees of the law enforcement bodies.

Conducting the annual amnesty, Turkmen authorities are afraid that information on cruel and inhumane treatment of the prisoners gets published. Therefore everyone who gets out of prison swears to be quiet about jails, conditions in custody, names of other prisoners, and also information on tortures and offences endured personally or by other prisoners.

Nevertheless, it is known, that prisoners in Turkmenistan are being subjected to rude physical and mental treatment, arbitrarily placed in heavier conditions - moist and dark punishment cells, and also so-called cells for "humpbacked", where the height of a ceiling is only 120 cm, are deprived of the necessary medical aid, and also left without visits of the relatives and lawyers and don't have any other contacts with the rest of the world. The same methods are being used by inspectors to get necessary statements from people on trial.

Many of you know that two days after the arrest my husband Boris Shihmuradov, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, professional journalist and the diplomat, he has named himself an addict and has admitted to crimes which he did not make.

For the last several years hundreds of high-ranking employees of the law enforcement bodies and ordinary public prosecutors and inspectors got arrested and sentenced for long terms in prisons of Turkmenistan, including several former ministers of the national security, domestic affairs and even the general public prosecutor of Turkmenistan. However there is no reason to be delusional: it not a celebration of lawfulness and justice, this is a consequence of aspiration of authorities to conceal real facts of violations of the human rights, deliberately or not deliberately made by these high-ranking convicts. Thus, Niyazov is getting rid of the witnesses of his criminal activities.

Turkmenistan, being a full member of such authoritative international organizations as the United Nations and the OSCE, has obligations to observe the norms ordered by these memberships. In particular, in June of 1999 Turkmenistan has joined the "Convention against torture and other kinds of severe, brutal or humiliating treatment and punishment", however it has not presented any report to the corresponding committee of the United Nations till now. Probably, Turkmen authorities have nothing to say to justify themselves. The absence of the representatives of the official Ashgabat on this Human Dimension Meeting is yet another fact proving this.

Given by Niyazov promise to establish cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and to at last allow its employees to enter Turkmen prisons is not kept till

now. Also not a single request of representatives of the international organizations to meet the prisoner Batyr Berdyev, who was the ambassador of Turkmenistan in OSCE is not satisfied till now. These requests Turkmen authorities regard as "demonstration of distrust to the government of Turkmenistan".

I wish to emphasize, that convention against torture, accepted by the General assembly of the United Nations, alongside with causing of physical suffering, recognizes psychological suffering as torture as well. Turkmen authorities actively use public mass media, newspapers and TV for moral destruction of those who voiced their protest against Niyazov's dictatorial regime, and insult their relatives and even ancestors. I would like Mr. Miklosz Kharazsti to pay special attention to this issue.

These barbarous principles are realized in Turkmenistan to the full. Such madness is hardly possible in any other OSCE participating state.

Thank you for your attention.