

Press Release

Regarding the Trial of the Appeals Court of Former Political Prisoners

(Translated)

As we mentioned earlier, the court of appeal is holding a trial of 15 former political prisoners in Tashkent. Fifteen out of the 23 men (Shabab), who were previously imprisoned for 20 years for their ideologies and beliefs, were sentenced in July this year to prison terms ranging from 7 to 14 years, most of them were sentenced to a special regime detention center. The court also found that most of them were dangerous returnees. The remaining eight men were sentenced to house arrest for up to 5 years. According to reliable sources, the court of appeal, like all previous judicial proceedings, is not conducted as a real trial, but rather a show trial. It is worth mentioning that these large-scale trials are taking place away from the public eye. Local and foreign media, which follow the events in Uzbekistan closely, somehow “ignored” this very important event, but they do not get tired of reporting illegal trees cut down! This is why their work for the benefit of the local authorities and the colonial powers is once again confirmed. But those who are being tried are not trees, but people of flesh and blood.

A number of the Shabab have objected to the Court of Appeal, proving that its judges do not even abide by the laws they have adopted. In particular, when the judge asked the Shabab: “Do you confirm your testimony in the court of first instance?”, most of them answered with denial. Nizamov Muradjan said that the court sentenced him to 12 years in prison without any evidence, and since he was over 50 years old, it was like a life sentence. Furthermore, the Shabab one after another confirmed that the charges against them were fabricated. Abdullaev Zabibulla also complained that an unfair sentence was issued against him without any valid evidence. Shamsiyev Alimjan stated in the courtroom that he was harassed during the interrogation, and that he did not testify against anyone and did not confess to the charges against him. However, the speedy operators and detectives took the dirty approach of blackmail and threatened him with his daughter, who currently lives in America, so he was forced to sign the document they demanded him to sign so that his daughter’s marriage would not be annulled. He informed the judge of the name of the officer who committed this act and the date and time of the incident can be found from the video camera in the investigation room. He also added that the officer promised to tear up the signed document under pressure, but did not keep his promise. Fazil Bekov Davronbek also told the court that he was blackmailed in the same way. The investigator told him that if he did not do what they said, they

threatened to bring his son and arrest him on charges of having something illegal on his phone, after which he copied the instructions written by the investigator on the printed note and signed it.

The Shabab told the court that on July 4, 2024, a week before the verdict was announced, the investigating officers came to the prison and explicitly announce who would be deprived of their freedom. The Shabab responded that “the court will issue the verdict”, then they confidently said, “No, we will issue the verdict.” The court then actually read the verdicts exactly as they had said. After that, a question was raised to the court as to how the verdict could be prepared in 30 minutes for a case of more than 100 pages?! Thus, the Shabab testified before the Court of Appeal that they had been informed of the pre-trial verdicts. When the judge asked them about the names of these officers, they said that none of them were told their names from the beginning, and that they if would they were to be presented then the they would confront the department officers. At the end of the dialogue, most of the Shabab addressed the court and said, “We are not asking for your help, but we are asking you to reveal the truth according to the law that you adopt.” In addition, more than 20 women, from the families of the Shabab who were brought to court, sent a complaint to the judges, warning them against unknowingly colluding in the persecution of these innocent, pious and pure men and calling on them to rule with the fear of Allah... Of course, these are just brief summaries of the Court of Appeal verdicts, without digging deep into details.

We certainly support these brothers and their family members, and we once again call on the Uzbek regime, its judicial bodies, judges of the Court of Appeal, public prosecutors, and, in short, all those in positions related to this case, to refrain from injustice. It is not too late, there is a chance to correct mistakes. As we have warned before, tyranny and violence never benefit the oppressor, but injustice is darkness on the Day of Judgment! Allah Almighty says: **﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ﴾** **“Do not think ‘O Prophet’ that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them until a Day when ‘their’ eyes will stare in horror”** [TMQ Surah Ibrahim: 42].

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