

Press Release

23 Muslims Arrested in Russia on Charges of Affiliation with Hizb ut Tahrir Recognized as Political Prisoners

On 26 April 2016, the Russian Human Rights Center, Memorial, issued a statement in which it recognized 23 Muslims, arrested in Bashkortostan on charges of affiliation with Hizb ut Tahrir, as political prisoners. Their names are: Rustem Latypov, Linar Vakhitov, Radik Akhmetov, Fanis Akhmetshin, Rustem Gallyamov, Rishat Gataullin, Ilgiz Gimaltdinov, Azamat Kayumov, Aleksandr Kornev, Radmir Maksutov, Rinat Mamaev, Farid Mustafaev, Khalil Mustafin, Rinat Nurlygayanov, Artur Salimov, Irek Tagirov, Aramis Fazylov, Danis Faizrakhmanov, Rafael Fattakhov, Ruslan Fattakhov, Rustem Khamzin, Shamil Sharipov and Ural Yakupov.

All these men arrested in February 2015, being now charged with Article 205.5 of the Criminal Code of Russia (Participation in an organization recognized as a terrorist) and Article 278 of the Criminal Code of Russia (Preparation for the violent seizure of power). The human rights center states that *"the imprisonment is applied to all the accused solely because of their religious beliefs"*, and there is an *"absence of an offence"* of itself in the actions of the Muslims, and all the persecutions carried out by the Russian authorities have the political reasons. *"We believe that their prosecution should be immediately stopped, and they should be released from detention"*, said the Memorial in its official statement.

For our part, we reaffirm that Hizb ut Tahrir is a political party, as the only source for our actions is Islam and its Shariah sources. We also wish to emphasize that our method is Da'wah and political actions rather than military actions, and Hizb ut Tahrir does not aim at seizing power in Russia. We believe all the accusations against our party members in Russia are obvious lies and falsifications, directed by the powerlessness of Putin's regime and its inability to confront somehow intellectually to the Islamic thoughts that Hizb ut Tahrir members disseminate.

We are following very closely what is happening with the Muslims in Russia, and we consider it is important to add that in Russia at the moment more than 100 Muslims of Hizb ut Tahrir are deprived of freedom, for that reason most of all political prisoners in Russia are our party members. Moreover, Russia is the only country in the world that considers Hizb ut Tahrir to be a terrorist organization, and is the only country in the world that has legitimized life imprisonment for the members of Hizb ut Tahrir and for this reason a special Article 205.5 was added to the Russian Criminal Code. And if you pay attention to the package of the laws, toughening anti-extremist and anti-terrorist legislation, regularly enacted by the Russian parliament, it becomes clear that most of the new laws appear specifically for strengthening the fight against Hizb ut Tahrir. Also, it has not gone unnoticed that the Federal Security Service (FSB) officials have declared war on women and children, arresting our chaste sisters on 24 April 2016 in Tatarstan and despicably tearing them from their infants.

Thus, as far as the Russian regime delves in the persecution of Muslims, its crimes become more apparent. And that is why today, more and more public figures, journalists and human rights defenders in Russia and abroad pay attention to the apparent lawlessness against Islamic Da'wah Carriers of Hizb ut Tahrir, and more and more people around the world notice the resilience of our party members in Russia in bearing trials for their religion, and the malicious Kremlin powerlessness in trying to defeat the Islamic political thought.

Allah Almighty says:

"Those who put into trial the believing men and believing women, and then do not turn in repentance, then they will have the torment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the burning Fire." [85:10]

The Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir

