



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

"Dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights"

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ICJ Intervention on the adoption of the outcome document of the Universal Periodic Review of Uzbekistan

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Minister,

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) welcomes Uzbekistan's interaction with the Council's Universal Periodic Review mechanism (UPR). We welcome Government's information on several important legislative and policy measures to promote and protect human rights, including through the abolition of a death penalty, a gradual extension of some of the due process guarantees to arrested and detained persons or efforts to combat the worst forms of child labour.

Similar resolve must guide the Government's efforts to address all pertaining human rights concerns. The ICJ expresses concern that Uzbekistan accepted only very general and sometimes vague recommendations, and made reservations or eventually refused those that were specific and measurable. While all the UPR recommendations must be carefully studied and followed-upon, the ICJ urges the Government in particular:

- i) To permit an effective investigation into the Andijan events through an independent international commission of inquiry;
- ii) To afford to the victims of gross human rights violations and members of their families an effective remedy and reparation;
- iii) To refrain from the prosecution of dissenting political and religious activists, journalists and human rights defenders for the exercise of fundamental freedoms on vaguely defined charges related to terrorism, extremism, separatism or religious practice;
- iv) To narrow down the definition of what constitutes "terrorist acts" in accordance with the principle of legality of offences;
- v) To ensure that its legislation on criminal procedure complies with all due process guarantees, including the right of access to a lawyer of one's choice from the time of an arrest and the right to confidential communication between lawyer and client;
- vi) To ensure the absolute prohibition of torture, and to that end adopt the definition of torture that complies with Article 1 of the Convention against Torture, ratify the OP-CAT, refrain from invoking as evidence the information extracted by torture and continue to allow unfettered access by the ICRC to all places of detention;
- vii) To provide for an effective access by the public to criminal trials, including full and effective access for national and international trial observers.
- viii) To provide unhindered access to the Council's special procedures, which have outstanding requests for visits.

I thank you.