

Press Release

31 Former Political Prisoners are About to Appear in Court

(Translated)

According to information we received from reliable sources, while the appeals court for 15 former political prisoners is being held in Tashkent, another major trial is about to begin, this time with 31 people on trial. These are members who previously spent more than 20 years in the prisons of Karimov's tyrannical regime, where they were arrested, like the 23 former political prisoners, on trumped-up charges. Most of them are members who were arrested in different regions of the country and transferred to the capital. This brings the number of former political prisoners who have been arrested, investigated and tried since the beginning of this year to 54. Recently, these 31 members were asked to sign the indictment issued against them. Yes, we receive such information about them only from limited internal sources. Neither the local and foreign media, which do not avoid even the smallest incidents in Uzbekistan, nor the NGOs and commercial organizations, which acts to work in the field of human rights, mentioned it. Their true nature became more apparent during these events.

Any unbiased person who knows Hizb ut Tahrir cannot help but grab his collar (in protest) when he hears this accusation. They were also charged under the same mandatory articles; 159, 242 and 244 of the regime's Penal Code. But the evidence presented against them in the indictment is not only criminal, it is ridiculous. For example, what kind of profession the defendants practice, whether they see their brothers at weddings, where they meet and talk to someone else. It is also mentioned that they were keen to do deeds that are considered obligatory and recommended in Islam, such as participating in helping the needy, supporting the idea of restoring the Khilafah (Caliphate) and living according to Islam. But from the point of view of Islam, all these deeds are common knowledge. But since the system implemented by the Uzbek regime is un-Islamic, it treats these members as criminals, and they are being tried to blackmail them and tarnish their reputation in the eyes of our Muslim people.

It is also worth noting that in July of this year, President Mirziyoyev made a decision to commemorate our ancestors who were oppressed by the Soviet state. Interestingly, the victims of the communist regime a century ago are remembered, while the victims of the bloodthirsty Karimov regime, who were executed with inhuman repression and torture, are hardly cared about by this government. On the contrary, the tyrannical regime is trying to imprison the young Muslims who emerged from the oppressive mill of the regime, weak in body, for many more years. In fact, if

the government officials had an ounce of integrity, they would have honoured the oppressed with ointments for the physical and psychological wounds they were inflicted with in prison. What is worse, the members were falsely accused of financing and supporting terrorism. So, what do we call the continued relations with the terrorist Jewish entity that kills our Muslim brothers and sisters in the Blessed Land of Palestine and recognizing it as a state?! And since the Uzbek regime protects the embassy of the damned entity and does not even think about severing political and economic relations with it, is this not in fact a support for terrorism?!

We are deeply concerned that the trial of the 31 members will be similar to the previous trial of the 23 members. Also, the verdicts read in this court are prepared in advance, and the court is held only for the eyes of the people. The members recently testified before the Court of Appeal that the interrogators clearly told them that they would issue the verdict, not the court. Of course, the re-imprisonment of these wronged members is an order from the highest political circles, which aims to please the colonial powers such as Russia, there is no doubt about that. Therefore, we strongly warn the Uzbek government from being cursed by the mothers, wives, children, relatives and families of these members! After all, the result of engaging in the heinous act of imprisoning and oppressing innocent people in the name of appeasing our enemies is nothing but shame and sin. In the Hereafter, you will incur the wrath of Allah and be fuel for the fire of Hell! We repeat to our Muslim people, do not remain silent about the injustice of this unbridled regime, and use all your energy and power to support those who are working for the search for truth and justice! Otherwise, this persecution will inevitably happen to each one of you in one way or another. Our noble Messenger (saw) said: «وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَتَأْمُرَنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، «By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you command good and forbid evil, or Allah will soon send upon you a punishment from Him, then you will call upon Him, but He will not respond to you.» [Narrated by Ahmad]

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in Uzbekistan**