



Oral Statement

ITEM 4: General Debate

THE TRIAL OF OYUB TITEV AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN CHECHNYA

UN Human Rights Council

Fortieth session

13th March, 2019

Mr. President,

We would like to draw the Council's attention to the grave situation for human rights defenders in Chechnya and to the case of Mr Oyub Titiev, head of Memorial Human Rights Centre's office in the region.

Oyub Titiev has been arbitrarily detained since 9 January 2018. Law enforcement officials charged him with drug-related offences that, it is widely agreed, have been fabricated in retaliation for his human rights work.

Mr. Titiev's ongoing trial has been corrupted by falsified evidence and serious violations of due process and fair trial. However, the Courts have repeatedly denied Titiev's defences' requests for investigations into evidence tampering.

In a series of reprisals since Titiev's arrest, Memorial members in other Northern Caucasus Republics have been subject to harassment and intimidation. The head of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, has said openly last year that "human rights activists have no permission to enter this territory".

Mr. President,

Oyub Titiev has been recognised as a prisoner of conscience and a political prisoner by dozens of national and international human rights organizations. On two occasions, the European Parliament has called for Titiev's immediate release, as has the Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights defenders and freedom of opinion and expression.

Mr Titiev's verdict will be delivered on the 18th of March. He is looking at four years of incarceration for a crime he hasn't committed. We urge the international community to remain seized of this matter and support Mr. Titiev and Memorial by calling for his acquittal.

Thank you.