

FROM THE CONFLICT ZONE
BULLETIN OF HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER "MEMORIAL"
DECEMBER 2004
(the issue prepared by HRC "Memorial" in Nazran)

Dear colleagues,

'Memorial' Human Rights Center presents its latest information bulletin based on the results of monitoring of human rights abuses in the armed conflict zone in the Chechen Republic and Prigorodny District of North Ossetia.

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II. The Situation in the Chechen Republic and Republic Ingushetia: December 2004

Statistics: Chechnya-2004

Statistics

According to HRC "Memorial"'s data* in 2004:

(*The human rights center carries out monitoring in 5 out of the 17 regions of the Chechen Republic. Our statistics includes only the cases documented by monitors of "Memorial"):

1. *Killed*: 293 persons

2. *Kidnapped*: 396 persons

- Subsequently set free or released for ransom- 187;
- Subsequently found dead - 24
- Subsequently went missing - 175;

- Under trial -10

NB! Given the specific nature of the monitoring carried out in the Chechen Republic, it has to be acknowledged that the information received will be gradually supplemented over the following few months. Therefore, regrettably, the numbers of those killed and abducted in 2004 will inevitably grow.

The Situation in the Chechen Republic: December 2004

According to HRC "Memorial"'s data*, during December 2004:

1. *Killed*: 9 persons

2. *Kidnapped*: 13 persons

- Subsequently set free or released for ransom- 5;
- Subsequently found dead - 2;
- Subsequently went missing - 4;
- Under trial-2

II. From the "Chronicle of Violence"

At night of December 2/3 at about midnight in the village of Sernovodsk, *Sunzhensky district of Chechen Republic*, unidentified armed persons leaped through the fence and broke into the house of **Sajdullaev** family, residents of *Lenina street 15*. They were dressed in masks and military

uniform and spoke unaccented Russian. The military servicemen woke everyone up and without presenting their IDs or explaining reasons for the detainment, bound feet, hands and eyes of all family members with scotch tape. Then they forced **Irina Sajdullaeva**, born 1976, out of the house. A few minutes later they brought Irina back, allowed her to put her clothes on and drove her into unknown direction.

On December 4, Ramzan Kadyrov, the vice-prime minister of Chechen Government of the Chechen Republic arrived to the village. He held a meeting with the district authorities and the Elders of the village. At the meeting he was confronted with the issue of recurrent kidnappings of people by unidentified power agencies. Ramzan Kadyrov promised to take measures, reveal and prevent such illegal actions.

On December 6, Sajdullaeva Irina was released. For four days she had been kept in a trench, covered with wooden boards, she was not allowed to sleep or given any food. When the girl was falling asleep she was rudely woken up. From time to time the guard told her: "Weep a bit, beg us nicely, may be we will give you some food". Irina was guarded and interrogated by servicemen speaking unaccented Russian. During the interrogation Irina was told that before she was kidnapped for at least one week she had been followed by her kidnappers. Irina was accused of being a suicide bomber and of preparing a shakhid belt for blowing herself up.

On the forth day a plastic bag was put on Irina's head, she was placed in a car and driven around for some time. Then the car stopped and she was ordered to sit still and not to move, the guards left in the meantime. After a while someone opened the door of the car and took the plastic bag off Irina's head. She saw a man with a short beard. He asked her in the Chechen language if she knew who he was. And immediately responded himself that he was Ramzan Kadyrov. Ramzan congratulated Irina with release and also said something about "those FSB people". Subsequently, the head of Sunzensky militia, Shamil Katsiev brought the girl back home.

This is the second accident "Memorial" registered with the Sajdullaev family. On August 27, Chechen OMON fighters broke into their house and as a result of ensuing fight killed **Sajdullaev Imran** and injured **Sajdullaev Zaambek** and **Irina** herself.

Currently the Irina Sajdullaeva is in a heavy post-traumatic crisis.

On December 5 in the proximity of *Pervomajskaja village, Groznensky Selsky District of Chechnya* were found corpses of three young men. All of them died a violent death: traces of torture and numerous injuries were all over their bodies. One of the corpses had empty eye-sockets; all the dead men had their hands tied behind their backs, hair and beards of the same length.

The corpses were brought to the mosque of the *Pervomayskaya village* for identification; information about the discovery was passed over to the republican prosecution and the ministry of internal affairs. However, even by noon of December 7, the investigation group had not arrived at the site. Then the corpses were photographed and buried at the local cemetery.

After the burial, the corpses were identified. They belonged to the residents of Grozny, **Ibrahim Ozdamirov**, born 1983 and **Aslambek Khazhaliev**, born 1978.

On September 4, at 11:00 Ozdamirov and Khadzaliev were kidnapped by the personnel of unidentified power agencies in Grozny from the family house of Ozdamirov, located at *Nikitina street* of the republican capital Grozny.

The military servicemen arrived by several cars. Having broken into the house they seized two young men, forced them into their military YAZ and drove in the direction of the city center. The older brother of Ibrahim, a militiaman, tried to follow the kidnappers by car. In the area of Grozneftyanoj the car was blocked by two automobiles with the military servicemen. Ibrahim's brother was pooled out of the car and forced into one of the military jeeps, his eyes were blindfolded and he was driven in the unknown direction. He tried to provoke a fight in order to

attract the attention of militiamen at the checkpoint, but the military servicemen passed the checkpoint unobstructed. Ibrahim's brother was thrown out of the car near the village of *Petropavlovksaja, Groznensky District*. Having taken the bandage off his eyes, he saw cars with his brother driving up the Tersky mount. All subsequent attempts of the relatives to establish the whereabouts of the kidnapped were unsuccessful.

On December 14, in Grozny, in the afternoon the representatives of unidentified power agencies kidnapped **Alvi Isaev**, born 1971. He was kidnapped from his house located at *Yaltinskaya 61*, where he lived with his family.

Four military servicemen broke into the house without masks. Among them were Russians and Chechens. The military servicemen ordered Alvi to come out, and when he did so, the military servicemen said that he had to go with them. The wife of Isaev tried to protest and asked the military servicemen to present their IDs. The servicemen said that they were FSB servicemen and one of them added his family name was Yashurkaev. No documents were presented.

Alvi was taken out of the house, forced into a car and the kidnappers left. It was not possible to trace their route. As of the end of December Isaev's whereabouts had not been established.

On December 25, at 1: 00 in Staropromyslovsky district of Grozny, domicile address: *Prishvina street, 10* unidentified armed persons kidnapped a man named **Bashir**, aged 30, resident of Argun and **Mutushev Musa**, aged 24/25.

Unidentified military servicemen, allegedly the personnel of Security Service of A. Kadyrov, arrived by several cars, without registration plates. The relatives of Bashir claim that the kidnappers presented themselves as *kadyrovtsy*, but did not explain the reasons for their visit. Before kidnapping, Bashir and Musa were severely beaten with gun butts.

Bashir lost consciousness, when he was dragged out into the street, where he and his guest were thrown into boots of two different cars and taken in the unknown direction.

On December 28, at 8 a.m. in the village *Sadovaya Groznensky District of Chechnya, Kustanajskaya street, 3* were kidnapped two brothers **Zubaraev Zelimkhan**, born 1957, and **Rizvan**, born 1968 .

According to the relatives, unidentified military men arrived by several Zhiguli cars of gray color without registration plates. They broke into the house and without explaining reasons grasped brothers Zubaraev. The son of Zelimkhan, Sulejman (19-20 years old), tried to protect his father. The military servicemen severely beat him up. In the house they carried out an unsanctioned search, as a result gold valuables, money (at least 100,000 rubles = 3,000 USD) and video equipment were taken.

On December 30, in the evening, the Yusupov family, residents of *Majrtup, Kurchaloy district of Chechnya* received a message that their son **Yusupov Aslan**, born 1986, had been killed and his corpse was to be found at the prosecutor's office of the town of Shali. Yusupov Aslan and his brother Akhmad were seized by the personnel of Kadyrov security service on December 8, 2004. On December 13, Akhmad Yusupov was transferred to the temporary detention facility of Kurchaloy ROVD, while Aslan was brought to the *kadyrovtsy* base in Tsotsin-Yurt.

On December 29, *kadyrovtsy* officers brought the prosecutor of Shali two corpses of Yusupov Aslan and **Khasuev Dlokhan**, born 1980. *Kadyrovtsy* claimed that these were fighters killed by them in cross-fire in Shalinsky district. However, the corpses bore clear marks of torture, moreover, no fights had been registered in Shalinsky district at the time specified by *kadyrovtsy*. However, the prosecution of the district refused to instigate a criminal case into this fact. Nothing is known about the fate of Khasuev.

At night of December 19-20 unidentified power agencies carried out random detainments in the streets of Grozny. As a result several young men had been detained. Next morning all the detainees were released. They could not explain where they had spent the night. They were virtually not interrogated but strongly beaten.

The full "Chronicle of Violence" for December 2004 (in Russian) can be found at the HRC "Memorial" website at: <http://www.memo.ru/hr/hotpoints/caucas1/rubr/2/index.htm>

III. Explosions, armed clashes

On December 1, in Achkhoy-Martan, *Rabochaja street* a fougasse explosion took place, killing two residents of Urus-Martan, **Tsumaev Arsen**, born 1977, resident of *Budennogo street*, 39 and **Tsuraev Elsi**, born 1977, resident of *Sovetskaja street*, 31.

The two young men planted an explosive on the way of a military convoy. The explosive, however, failed to start and the young men came up to check the reason of the disruption. When they approached the place, the fougasse exploded killing both young men.

On December 31 at about 4 p.m. at the outskirts of Grozny in the village of Podgorny, the power agencies of the Russian Federation carried out a "targeted" special operation.

According to the eye-witnesses, a great number of military servicemen on APCs arrived to *Avtobusnaja street* and blocked house N 16. The crossfire was launched and the residents of the neighborhood found themselves in the middle of intense fire, and were forced to remain on the floor for several hours. They had almost no chances to leave the area of fire. The military servicemen offered no assistance to those who tried to do so. Thus, they paid attention to a woman with small children, who tried to make her way to a more secure place. They watched her efforts to take her children out but did not stop shooting.

The fight continued until 9 p.m. As a result the house was almost entirely destroyed and the people inside it **Dzaitov Muslim** and his wife **Madina** were killed. The military servicemen lost at least one person killed and others injured. The houses in the proximity of house N 16 were damaged. The servicemen took the corpses of the killed family with them. The neighbors knew little about them: they had moved into the village quite recently.

On December 16, at about 11 p.m. at the Western outskirts of *Assinovskaja village, Sunzhensky district of Chechnya* unidentified persons subjected to fire the building of the military prosecution. The attack was carried out from automatic weapon and grenade launchers. According to the local residents, the combatants were shouting "*Allah Akbar*" as they shot. The fire continued for 7-10 minutes. In response the military servicemen opened fire from machine guns and automatic weapons.

The incident involved no fatalities. Minor damages were inflicted on the neighboring houses. In one of the households a cow was killed.

On December 23, at dawn in *the village Chernokozovo*, a fight took place between the personnel of ORB-2 and Chechen fighters. As a result, 2 combatants (**Mashutov Alikhan**, born 1980 and **Baraev Adlan**, born 1982) and two ORB officers (**Avduev Arbi** and **Bakaev Aslan**) were killed. Two other ORB officers were seriously injured.

IV. Hostage-Taking of Relatives of Chechen Combatants. 8 relatives of A. Maskhadov Kidnapped

On December 1, after 9 p.m. the personnel of security service of Kadyrov burnt the house of **Murdashev Vakhid**, 1955, located at *Sovietskaya street* and the house of his parents, located at *Marksa street Kadyrovtsy* brought a team of firemen along with them, in case the neighboring houses were to be set on fire. As "a sign of generosity", *kadyrovtsy* left the animal shed for the family as shelter. The elderly mother of Murdaeshev, his wife and sister were taken hostage.

In 1997-1999 Murdashev Vakhid headed the State department for cadres in the administration of Aslan Maskhadov. During the first Chechen campaign he joined the armed forces of separatists and was a field commander, however, in the second war he has not participated in the military actions and is presently living outside the republic.

Some time before the above described incident in his interview on the Chechen TV Ramzan Kadyrov said that he had received a video recording, with a speech of Maskhadov. In this speech Maskhadov allegedly ordered to kill Ramzan's father, Akhmad Kadyrov. On the recording Murdashev was allegedly standing next to Maskhadov and nodding in support. Kadyrov announced unlimited financial reward for capture of Maskhadov and threatened Murdashev with reprisals.

On December 23 in the *village Ojskhara* the personnel of security service of Akhmad Kadyrov broke into the house of **Turlaev Yunus** (aged 75), resident of *Nagornaja street*. They ousted Yunus, his wife Mandat (70 years old), his daughter and four small grand children out of the house and set it on fire. They allowed to take documents only. The house and all family belongings burnt down.

A week before this incident there were several assaults on Turlaev family. In the village of *Tsentaroj, kadyrovtsy* burnt the house of **Nasurhanov Musrail**, who was married to the second daughter of Turlaev, Leila. Musrail and his two sons **Nasurkhanov Khizir and Khas-Magomed** were kidnapped. Even earlier in Grozny was kidnapped the oldest son of Leila Turlaeva, and in the village *Verkhnyaja Noybera* was kidnapped the son-in-law of Yunus Turlaev, **Magomedov Nazir**, aged 45 (the husband of Yunus's third daughter, Markha).

As of January 10, 2004 all the hostages remained in the Tsentoroj prison.

In December 2004 eight relatives of A. Maskhadov, the leader of Chechen separatists, have been abducted in the Chechen Republic

1) **On December 3**, at about 9 pm a sister of A. Maskhadov, **Buchu Abdulkadirova** born in 1937, was driven away from her own house (domicile address: *City of Grozny, district Staropromyslovsky, Turbine street, 62*) by kadyrovtsy.

At the moment of detainment Buchu was alone in the house. Her neighbors saw, how she was taken out of the house and put in one of the cars standing close to it. Then the group, who arrived by 9 vehicles of the brands UAZ and Zhiguli left the place of incident. During their departure from the settlement the group of cars got stopped at the checkpoint by members of the battalion "West" of special troops of the Main Intelligence Division (GRU) of Joint Staff of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation headed by Said-Magomeda Kakiev , deployed on the territory of the factory "Transmasch" near to the place of abduction. According to eyewitnesses a wrangle evolved between employees of different power structures, which developed into a hand-fight.

The members of the Main Intelligence Division told the kadyrovtsy, that it is not allowed to take away people from the territory under their control. The kadyrovtsy shouted that they were sent by Ramzan Kadyrov and they do not take away somebody, but the sister of Maskhadov. Later the information of the daughter taken away being Buchu Abdulkadirova was confirmed by the assistant of the commander of the battalion "West" - Pjatimat.

He also said that that he called Ramzan Kadyrov and got himself convinced that the special action is carried out under his order and they were compelled to let a group of cars pass.

However, as he said, during the check of the cars by his subordinates, the woman has not been found. In his opinion she could have been taken away on another road.

2) The same evening at 8.15 pm the *kadyrovtsy* abducted a brother of A. Maskhadov, **Lecha Maskhadov** born in 1936, domicile address: *City of Grozny, district Staropromyslovsky, Podgorni, Mostovaja street b/h*. The abductors arrived with up to 12 cars of the brands UAZ and Zhiguli.

According to his wife, Kasada Maskhadov, they rushed in by force without any explanation and demanded to give out to them their son Solman. The answer of the owners of the house that he was not at home did not satisfy them. Kadyrovtsy hoping to find him searched all rooms and the yard. Not finding him some of the aggressors threatened to burn down the house, if nobody was going to tell them where he was hiding. After intervention of female neighbors the kadyrovtsy left, taking with them L. Maskhadov.

3) During the same time **Adam Rachiev**, born in 1950, a physically handicapped distant relative of Maskhadov got abducted. He has been detained in the house located at the address: *City of Grozny, district Staropromyslovsky, Podgorni, Sovxoynaja street, house 26.*

According to the relatives of the abducted, his detention was implemented by kadyrovtsy, who arrived with up to 11 cars made by UAZ and Niva. On the request of family members to tell them where Adam was taken to the kadyrovtsy told them that they would deliver him to the Ministry of Inner Affairs October area. However, after having checked the given information the relatives were convinced, that this was not true. During the abduction the kadyrovtsy behaved very roughly.

4) Approximately at 8 pm the same day, kadyrovtsy abducted **Lem Maskhadov**, 55 years old and a brother of A. Maskhadov. He was taken out of his house located at the address: *Pervomaiskaja side, Soviet street 125.* Before this, non-authorized search has been carried out in his house. Leaving the house Lem was even not allowed to get dressed. His wife, Liza, in an attempt to prevent his withdrawal was thrown down to the floor.

5) At the same time kadyrovtsy abducted **Ivan Magomedov**, the 35 year old nephew of A. Maskhadov (the son of one of Maskhadov's sisters). He was taken from his house at the address: *Grozny District, Pervomaiskaja side, Soviet street 87.*

In the course of his withdrawal the abductors did not hide the accessory and symbols of the local power structures and that they operated under the order of Ramzan Kadyrov. Ihvan asked them not to touch his sister and wife. The commander of the kadyrovtsy took the decision to leave them, which upset some of the men in the group.

6-8) **On December 28** the niece and two sons-in-law of A. Maskhadov have been abducted. After 1 am the married daughter of Buchu Abdulkadirova, **Khadischat Satuevf**, born in 1964 was violently taken away from the house of her mother.

The kadyrovtsy went over a fence, seized her, took her barefooted out on the street and drove her away with cars of the brand "Zhigulis" of the 10-th model and "Niva". During the withdrawal they demanded to tell them where her husband lives.

As it was found out later, the same night **Usman Ramzanovich Satuev**, 47 years old, was taken from his apartment located in Grozny, district Staropromyslovsky, "Novaja".

Similarly his brother-in-law, Movladi (????????), 35 years old, living in city of Grozny, district Staropromyslovsky, "Avtotrect" has also been abducted.

It is necessary to note, that relatives of the people abducted officially did not address the state bodies of the Chechen Republic. As of January 12th 2005 the location of the abducted persons is officially not known. However, through some channels the relatives of the abducted know that they are being kept in an illegal place of maintenance in the town of Tsentoroi, the Gudermes district of Chechnya. There is illegal prison is located in which kadyrovtsy keep people detained by them. The last attempt of two women to meet with the mullah of the specified settlement was not crowned with success. Armed security forces, having learned what kind of question they want to address hunted them away.

V. Bombing of Civilian Settlements

On December 3, the Federal Forces subjected to fire the village of *Tezen-Kala, Vedensky district*. One of the rockets hit the house of **Sulejmanov family**.

As a result 2 young men, **Sulejmanov Said**, born in 1982, and **Sulejmanova Zareta**, born 1986, were heavily injured. **Sulejmanov Sajdan**, born 1988, died of the received injuries.

The aerial attack started at about 9 p.m. According to **Sulejmanov Said** at the moment of the attack together with his sister and brother he was watching TV. The relatives were not at home, they went to the funeral of a relative. As soon as the attack began the electricity went off. After some time a rocket hit the house. When Said woke up he heard his sister screaming of pain. All in blood himself, Said managed to take his sister out of the house and then his younger brother. The brother was dead, a splinter hit him straight into his heart. After that Said lost consciousness. The house of Sulejmanov family burnt down fully with all the belongings. The premises around the buildings were damaged, three cows received splinter injuries.

The injured youngsters were delivered to the hospital first in Gudermes and then and in Grozny. At the site the investigating crew found splinters of the shell which hit the house. There were registration numbers on them. When the relatives of the victims turned to the prosecution office there were informed that a criminal case had been instigated but they were not shown any papers or informed about the registration number of the criminal case.

Finally the Sulejmanov family faced difficulties when receiving medical certificates. Instead of the actual reasons of their injuries, the certificates stated that they were injured as a result of land mine explosions.

Before the incident in Tezen -Kala village there remained only three families. After the incident even those families left. The military servicemen promised that the aerial attacks of this kind would not be repeated in the nearest week. They were not able to guarantee for the future, however.

According to one of the local residents this way the military servicemen exerted pressure on the people in order to make them abandon this village.

According to "Memorial" data, in the same small village as a result of aerial attacks were killed **Izrailov Emi**, born 1932, (on November 10, 2002) and **Khamzatova Taimat**, born 1916, (on April 14, 1995).

On Decemnber 23, at 4:30 am *the village of Dzalka, Gudermes district of Chechnya* was subjected to aerial attack. One of the shells landed in the yard of **Ushaeva Zalla**, born 1935, resident of *A. Sheripov street*. The second shell landed between the houses of Ushaev and Saraev families. Both houses received injuries, domestic birds were killed. Luckily, no civilian casualties were involved.

This was a second attack on the Dzalka village within this week. One of the shells landed 50 meters from the headquarters of the Military Oil Regiment.