

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO UZBEKISTAN- ADDENDUM

DENMARK

- During last year the Government of Uzbekistan has taken a number of initiatives to improve the human rights situation in the country including the introduction of habeas corpus. Which specific initiatives for improvement of the human rights situation in Uzbekistan are planned for 2009, not least with regard to the reportedly continued routine use of torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and punishment committed by law enforcement and investigative officials, and the continued impunity of the offenders thereof?
- With the view for Uzbekistan to live up to its international human rights commitments, what hindrances are there for the Government of Uzbekistan to issue a standing invitation for the visitation by UN Special Procedures such as the thematic human rights Special Rapporteurs, and when will these hindrances be overcome?
- The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women remains seriously concerned about the prevalence of discrimination against women in Uzbekistan not least with regard to the wide spread violence against women, including domestic violence and marital rape. What initiatives will the Government of Uzbekistan take – and when - to ensure the protection of women's rights, not least by making violence against women also including marital rape a criminal offence?

GERMANY

- Germany welcomes the recent releases of political prisoners in UZB. Summaries of UN Bodies and Stakeholders in the UPR-Dokumentation compiled by OHCHR suggest that there is large scale use of inhumane and degrading treatment of detainees, including torture by law enforcement officials. What steps has the Government of Uzbekistan taken to ensure the fairness of all criminal investigations and trials, particularly access to a lawyer and the legal provisions relevant for the proceedings?

LATVIA

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 63 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering the visit of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in 2002 and despite the pending requests by several Special Rapporteurs to visit Uzbekistan - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

NETHERLANDS

- The Netherlands is concerned by the fact that almost at the same time that a number of human rights activists was released, a number of new arrests took place. How can these two be reconciled?
- The Netherlands welcomes the new measures to combat child labour. How do these measures translate into practical steps? What mechanisms have been set up to monitor the situation? How will the cotton be harvested if the children are in the future no longer part of the work force?
- What measures have been taken to prevent torture and ill treatment in detention centres?
- What is the current situation of freedom of religion - including the situation of religious minorities - in Uzbekistan?

SWEDEN

- According to reports the human rights situation in Uzbekistan deteriorated after the Andijan events in 2005. Though we have seen some achievements in fields such as the abolition of the death penalty, the situation is still very worrisome. Many reports indicate a tougher attitude towards human rights defenders and independent journalists, which are allegedly targeted in search of potential terrorists. This threatens the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly, while humanitarian organisations also reportedly face difficulties. What measures is the government of Uzbekistan taking to fully respect human rights including in its fight against terrorism?
- Uzbekistan is a state party to the Convention against Torture, but has not signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention. UN reports indicate that the use of torture in places of detention in Uzbekistan is to be regarded as “systematic”. Sweden welcomes the efforts made following the recommendations from the Special Rapporteur on torture after his visit in November 2002, but would, given the seeming persistence of the problem, like to ask the Government to elaborate on its view of signing the Optional Protocol, and on what measures it is taking to eliminate the occurrence of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in places of detention?
