



GENERAL INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION
ASIA-PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES



THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

23 March 2021

In behalf of

**The Asia-Pacific Association of Jehovah's Witnesses
and
The European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses**

*Joint Submission for the
39th Session of the UPR (November 2021)*

Tajikistan

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ABOUT THE SUBMITTING ORGANISATIONS

The Asia-Pacific Association of Jehovah's Witnesses (APAJW) is a general incorporated association registered in Japan, with membership in Australia, Fiji, Guam, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tahiti, Taiwan, and Thailand.

The European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses (EAJW) is a charity registered in the United Kingdom (No. 1085157), with membership throughout the member states of the Council of Europe.

These associations work together to promote the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in various parts of the world, particularly when Jehovah's Witnesses face violations of such rights. This submission is prepared and submitted jointly.

SUMMARY OF THE SUBMISSION

This submission to the Human Rights Council (HRC) on Tajikistan highlights human rights issues and current failures to implement accepted recommendations by Tajikistan during the previous UPR cycle.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan, and as a worldwide organisation, respectfully request the government of Tajikistan to:

- (1) Immediately release those imprisoned for practising their religious beliefs, in particular Shamil Khakimov, provide adequate compensation and expunge criminal records;
- (2) Grant re-registration of the banned legal entity of Jehovah's Witnesses, in harmony with the August 2013 Concluding Observations of the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/2, para. 20, 22 August 2013) and subsequent UN Human Rights Committee Concluding Observation on the third periodic report on the State party (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/3, para 43, 22 August 2019);
- (3) Respect the rights of conscientious objectors to military service as clearly established by WGAD opinion No. 43/2017, 5 October 2017, and the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/3, para 46, 22 August 2019);
- (4) Establish a genuine alternative civilian service that is in line with international standards, such as a service period that is not punitive in nature, is outside of the military sphere, and is not under military control; and
- (5) Abide by their commitment to uphold the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of Tajikistan and the ICCPR for all citizens, including Jehovah's Witnesses.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Jehovah's Witnesses have been present in Tajikistan and peacefully practised their faith for more than 70 years. They were legally registered in 1994 and re-registered on 15 January 1997. However, on 11 October 2007, the Ministry of Culture dissolved their registered body "Religious Organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Dushanbe" (hereafter, Religious Organisation) and banned the activities of the Religious Organisation. Numerous efforts to resolve this situation through dialogue with Tajik authorities remain unsuccessful. International delegations of Jehovah's Witnesses make regular attempts to meet with local authorities. However, each time, under different pretexts, the authorities reject the proposals and refuse to engage in dialogue.
2. Jehovah's Witnesses are forced to hold their peaceful religious meetings in small groups in private homes. Despite showing respect for the law, they face some difficulties with the authorities.

3. Between January and March 2019, local law enforcement officers targeted 24 Jehovah's Witnesses in Khujand and nearby areas and interrogated them for up to 14 hours. The officers searched seven homes of the Witnesses, arrested several individuals and confiscated personal items, including Bibles, tablets, passports and computers. They compelled some of the detainees to complete a questionnaire about their beliefs, which concluded with a statement affirming that the police had not beaten them.

II. ISSUES

a. Arbitrary detention of peaceful practisers of faith

SPECIAL REPORT — URGENT MATTER

4. Shamil Khakimov, a Jehovah's Witness, then 68 years old, was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison on 10 September 2019 for allegedly 'inciting religious hatred'. The court also imposed a three-year ban on his religious activities after he completes his sentence.
5. On 26 February 2019, despite recently undergoing leg surgery and suffering from high blood pressure, Mr. Khakimov was arrested and placed in pre-trial detention. Two days later, the Khujand City Court remanded him in pre-trial detention, where he remained throughout the investigation and criminal trial.
6. During the trial proceedings, the "experts" who concluded that Mr. Khakimov had incited 'religious hatred' could not support the findings of their report when questioned. Even those who were expected to testify against Mr. Khakimov admitted that the police had directed them to use the term 'inciting religious hatred' and that this term was already pre-inserted in the statements that the law enforcement authorities provided for them to sign. In fact, these witnesses actually made positive comments about Mr. Khakimov's religious conversations with them.
7. On 9 October 2019, the Sughd Regional Court (the cassation court) upheld the verdict. Although the cassation court asserted that the hearing would be open to the public, the court staff prevented representatives from both the Germany embassy and the European Union delegation, as well as 10 of Mr. Khakimov's friends, from attending. Only the attorney representing Mr. Khakimov and a consulting attorney were permitted to be present at the hearing.
8. Mr. Khakimov's local attorney reports that when she visits Mr. Khakimov, one of the guards always listens to their conversations, thus denying him effective and confidential access to a lawyer. The guards informed her that since the prisoner was accused of being against the government (extremism), they should be present during these meetings.
9. On 9 November 2019, Mr. Khakimov's local attorney met with the Ombudsman, Mr. Umed Bobojonov, and he advised her to file a written request with his office, which she did. On 25 December 2019, she received a formal response stating that the Ombudsman had no legal grounds to review the lawfulness of court decisions and that only higher courts have such authority.
10. On 21 October 2020, Mr. Khakimov was orally informed by the prison administration that an application for his early release due to emergency circumstances in connection with the

COVID-19 pandemic had been rejected. On 26 October 2020, the cassation court dismissed Mr. Khakimov's supervisory appeal.

11. The prison administration has failed to follow the provisions of Rules 30–32 of the Nelson Mandela Rules (UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners), which require that doctors make decisions on prisoners' medical needs.
12. Since his transfer to the YaS 3/5 prison, Mr. Khakimov's health continues to deteriorate. Owing to vascular disease in his left leg, he has painful, festering sores that prevent him from standing on his feet. His toes are black and purple, he falls frequently, and it is hard for him to use the toilet. Even though a doctor has visited him occasionally, he manifestly does not receive adequate medical care. He has access to bandages but to only one medication, an antimicrobial agent. He has to change the dressings on his leg himself, and other prisoners have verbally attacked him for having 'a leg that smells like rotten meat.' In addition, in his multi-occupancy cell, he is located near the door and the cold draft adversely affects his well-being. Because of his health condition, Mr. Khakimov is in and out of the medical unit.
13. When Mr. Khakimov's son visited him on 10 December 2020, he observed that his father "felt very sick and seemingly had COVID-19 symptoms." Mr. Khakimov's son was not permitted to provide a handicap toilet or crutches for his father.
14. On 17 December 2020, the local advocate applied to the prison administration for self-funded consultations with a vascular surgeon and for prescribed treatment in a specialised hospital.
15. On 24 December 2020, Mr. Khakimov was transferred to the prison medical unit, and four days later, on 28 December, he was visited by a cardiologist who diagnosed thrombophlebitis of the lower extremities, encephalopathy and stage 1 arterial hypertension. The cardiologist prescribed four different daily medications.
16. During the first week of January 2021, Mr. Khakimov was returned to his cell.
17. On 25 February 2021, more than two months after making an official request, Mr. Khakimov was seen by a vascular surgeon. The surgeon agreed with the cardiologist on a diagnosis of post-thrombotic disease of both legs, which was described in full technical detail. The report stated that the legs are swollen, slightly asymmetrical, and the subcutaneous tissue has expanded. The skin colour of the left leg is brown, bruised, and numb. The right leg displays an expansion of the saphenous veins. However, there is no inflammation or pain. The surgeon prescribed four oral or injected medications and compression stockings for varicose veins and also recommended that Mr. Khakimov avoid any physical load or walking. No further treatment was provided or recommended because indicated surgery is not available locally.
18. It was not until 6 March 2021 that Mr. Khakimov's friends were permitted to deliver all of the prescribed medication to the prison.
19. On 21 December 2020, the president of Tajikistan signed a law decriminalising Article 189 of the Criminal Code (the article under which Mr. Khakimov was convicted) and transferring the stipulated violations to the Administrative Code.
20. Accordingly, Mr. Khakimov's local attorney filed a motion requesting his release. She also filed applications to the Khujand City Prosecutor, the Khujand City Court and the Supreme Court to initiate a new investigation in view of new circumstances. In addition, she filed a

supervisory appeal to the Sughd Regional Court Presidium, asking it to revoke the verdict against Mr. Khakimov.

21. In January 2021, motions requesting the release of Mr. Khakimov because of the decriminalisation of Article 189 of the Criminal Code were rejected by the city prosecutor's office and the prison administration; and by the city court, the regional court and the Supreme Court. The city prosecutor's office replied that this issue is not within its competence but that the prison administration and the courts deal with such matters. On 26 February 2021, a further application was filed with the Khujand City Prosecutor.
22. Commissioner Nury Turkel of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has adopted Shamil Khakimov as a Religious Prisoner of Conscience. The commissioner has called for his immediate release. Mr. Khakimov was featured during the USCIRF online event "FoRB Victims List and Religious Prisoners of Conscience Project Update" on 25 February 2021.—<https://www.uscirf.gov/events/webinars/forb-victims-list-and-religious-prisoners-conscience-project-update>.

b. Registration of Religious Organisation denied by government

23. Tajikistan is a party to the ICCPR (the Covenant) which entered into force on 4 April 1999.
24. In April and May 2007, directed by the State Committee on National Security (SCNS) and Tajikistan's Ministry of Culture, Tajikistan customs authorities seized two shipments of Bibles and religious literature imported by Jehovah's Witnesses.
25. On 11 October 2007, the Ministry of Culture terminated the activity of the Religious Organisation, claiming that Jehovah's Witnesses violated domestic legislation "by distributing in public places and at the homes of citizens . . . propagandistic books on their religion, which has become a cause of discontent on the part of the people."
26. The Religious Organisation filed a claim with the civil court in Dushanbe, challenging the decision of the Ministry of Culture to terminate the Religious Organisation and the seizure of the two shipments of religious literature. The civil court transferred the case to the military court because the SCNS was a party to the proceedings. This in itself constitutes a violation of the Covenant, article 14, as confirmed in communication No. 1172/2003, *Abbassi Madani v. Algeria*, Views adopted on 28 March 2007, at para. 8.7.
27. On 29 September 2008, the Dushanbe Military Court dismissed the claim, concluding that the decision of the Ministry of Culture was justified because: (1) individual Jehovah's Witnesses requested "the provision of alternative service" in substitution for military service; (2) Jehovah's Witnesses were distributing religious literature "in public places, houses, and streets"; and (3) Jehovah's Witnesses believe that their religion "is the true one," which could "incite religious-confessional conflicts." The Religious Organisation appealed.
28. On 12 February 2009, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court affirmed the decision of the trial court. The Religious Organisation filed a supervisory appeal to the Presidium of the Supreme Court, as permitted by law.
29. On 17 February 2010, a single judge of the Supervisory Collegium of the Supreme Court ruled that the supervisory appeal would not be referred to the Presidium of the Supreme Court for proceedings, reasoning that there were no errors in the decisions of the lower

courts.

30. Meanwhile, on 26 March 2009, the 1994 Religion Law was repealed and replaced by the “Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations” (the “2009 Religion Law”). Article 4(1) guarantees the right “to freely choose, disseminate and change religious or other beliefs, as well as to act in harmony with them.” Article 4(9) guarantees the right “to engage in large scale preaching activities.”
31. Article 33(3) of the 2009 Religion Law required all religious organisations to submit an application for re-registration by 1 January 2010. Jehovah's Witnesses applied for re-registration on 1 December 2009.
32. On 18 January 2010, the Ministry of Culture (now the State Committee of Religious Affairs) denied the application, stating that the Religious Organisation had no right to apply for re-registration because the Ministry of Culture had banned its activity on 11 October 2007. Jehovah's Witnesses appealed.
33. On 23 August 2010, the Dushanbe Economic Court dismissed the appeal. Further appeals were dismissed by the Dushanbe Economic Court (Appeals Instance) on 27 October 2010, by the High Economic Court on 16 December 2010, and by the Presidium of the High Economic Court on 12 July 2011.
34. On 29 March 2012, the Constitutional Court rejected an application by Jehovah's Witnesses requesting the Court to rule that the 11 October 2007 decision of the Ministry of Culture banning Jehovah's Witnesses had violated the Constitution of Tajikistan.
35. After exhausting all domestic remedies, on 7 September 2012, Jehovah's Witnesses filed a complaint with the UN Human Rights Committee. The complaint addresses both the October 2007 banning decision and the denial of re-registration. (Communication No. 2483/2014, *The Religious Association of Jehovah's Witnesses of Dushanbe et al v. Tajikistan*).
36. Jehovah's Witnesses have applied for registration numerous times since October 2007. The State Committee of Religious Affairs (CRA) has denied each application on technicalities, most recently in October 2014.
37. The Human Rights Committee (CCPR) recommended in its Concluding Observations on the second periodic report on Tajikistan (22 August 2013, CCPR/C/TJK/CO/2) that Jehovah's Witnesses be granted re-registration, stating that “the State party should reverse its discriminatory refusal to register certain religious denominations.”
38. At the 2015 OSCE HDIM conference, the Tajikistan delegation disingenuously stated publicly that Jehovah's Witnesses had not fully exhausted domestic remedies to appeal the deregistration decision.
39. On 25 February 2016, in response to the direction given by the Tajik authorities, the Witnesses filed an appeal of the deregistration decision with the Chairman of the Supreme Court.
40. On 31 March 2016, the Supreme Court informed the Witnesses that the Chairman of the Supreme Court had rejected the appeal.

41. On 22 August 2019, the CCPR released its Concluding Observations on the third periodic report on Tajikistan (CCRP/C/TJK/CO/3) and reiterated the same recommendation as in paragraph 37 above, stating:

“The Committee remains concerned (see CCRP/C/TJK/CO/2, para. 20) that interference by the State in religious affairs, worship and freedom of religion and the ensuing restrictions, such as those set out below, are incompatible with the Covenant . . . (g) restrictions imposed on Christian religious minorities, including Jehovah's Witnesses (art. 18).”—para. 43.

“The State party should guarantee the effective exercise of freedom of religion and belief and freedom to manifest a religion or belief in law and in practice. It should revise all relevant laws and practices with a view to removing all restrictions that go beyond the narrowly construed restrictions permitted under article 18 of the Covenant.”—para. 44 (bold original).

c. Conscientious objection to military service

42. The CCPR has addressed the matter of conscientious objection to military service in Tajikistan three times: in 2005, 2013 and 2019. The Committee has strongly recommended that Tajikistan recognise the right to conscientious objection.

43. On 22 August 2019, the CCPR released its Concluding Observations on the third periodic report on Tajikistan (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/3) and strengthened its earlier findings by stating:

“The State party should step up its efforts to adopt the legislation necessary to recognize the right to conscientious objection to military service without discrimination as to the nature of the beliefs (religious or non-religious beliefs grounded in conscience) justifying the objection, and to ensure that alternative service is not punitive or discriminatory in nature or duration by comparison with military service.”—para. 46 (bold original).

44. However, the government has failed to make any progress in this respect. The recommendation by Argentina that Tajikistan recognise “the possibility of exercising the right to conscientious objection to compulsory military service” (A/HRC/33/11, para 118.47) was explicitly rejected by the government as allegedly contravening the constitution. (A/HRC/33/11/Add.1)

45. The stance of the government of Tajikistan on this issue is illustrated in the following documented cases concerning Jovidon Bobojonov and Rustam Norov.

46. **Jovidon Bobojonov**, a Jehovah's Witness who was then 19 years of age, was summoned by the authorities to the enlistment office on 13 August 2019. On 22 August, Mr. Bobojonov filed a written statement requesting to perform alternative civilian service in lieu of military service. On 4 October officers took him into custody and escorted him to an enlistment office. On 6 October the enlistment officers forcefully put him on a train to the military unit.

47. Mr. Bobojonov was initially sent to military unit No. 13003, which allegedly is “not military” but specialises in construction work. Mr. Bobojonov decided that this did not constitute genuine civilian service. He declined to accept a military uniform or take the military oath. He reported that he was constantly ridiculed and even beaten by soldiers in the unit.

48. Mr. Bobojonov's parents submitted complaints against the illegal arrest of their son to numerous officials. In response, the First Deputy of the Head of the Presidential Administration, Mr. Muzaffar Ashuriyon, informed them that their complaints had been forwarded to the Ministry of Defence and the General Prosecutor's Office. The Deputy Chief of the Armed Forces and the Regional Military Prosecutor's Office denied that Mr. Bobojonov had the right to conscientious objection. In their responses, the officials stated that although there is a reference to an alternative service in the Military Law, a separate law on alternative service had not been adopted; therefore, Mr. Bobojonov's refusal of military service should be considered a crime and the actions of the enlistment officers were lawful. Letters from the Headquarters of the Armed Forces, dated 13 November 2019 and 20 January 2020, stated that the Ministry of Defence had taken into consideration the "Christian religion" of Mr. Bobojonov as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. A response from the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Dushanbe Garrison dated 21 January informed Mr. Bobojonov's parents that no regulations on alternative service had been adopted and that therefore their son would be criminally prosecuted.
49. On 19 December, Mr. Bobojonov's parents filed a second appeal to the president of Tajikistan.
50. On 23 January 2020, Mr. Bobojonov filed a further written statement with the military unit commander, outlining his refusal of military service and requesting alternative civilian service. He also submitted a complaint to the prosecutor's office about his refusal of military service as well as the beatings he had suffered. However, he was afraid to report the beatings to his commander, owing to fear of reprisals from the perpetrators. On 25 January, Mr. Bobojonov's mother was permitted to visit him and was allowed to provide some medication for his constant headaches.
51. A criminal case was formally initiated against Mr. Bobojonov on 28 January 2020, under article 376 (2) of the Criminal Code, "evasion of a soldier from military service by self-harming or by simulating a disease or other deception," which is punishable by a prison term of from two to five years. On 31 January the Military Court of the Dushanbe Garrison ruled to keep him in detention as a preventive measure. On 4 February, Mr. Bobojonov's parents learned that their son was in the KGB Temporary Detention Facility in Dushanbe, and on 8 February his lawyer was able to visit him for the first time, though she did not receive a copy of the charges until 11 February.
52. On 2 April 2020, Mr. Bobojonov was sentenced to two years of imprisonment in a general regime colony. On 21 May 2020, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan rejected his appeal.
53. Mr. Bobojonov was transferred from the KGB Temporary Detention Facility in Dushanbe to Ya 3/6 in Yavan town on 6 June 2020.
54. On 9 October 2020, his advocate, filed a supervisory appeal to the Supreme Court.
55. On 1 November 2020, Mr. Bobojonov was released from prison after serving nine months of his two-year sentence, based on a pardon decree issued by the president of Tajikistan.
56. **Rustam Norov**, a Jehovah's Witness who was then 22 years of age, was summoned to the enlistment office on 24 September 2020 and was declared fit to perform military service. Mr. Norov explained his neutral stand as a conscientious objector and filed a written statement

requesting alternative service in lieu of military service.

57. On 30 September 2020, owing to his conscientious objection, Mr. Norov was summoned to the prosecutor's office, where he appeared on 1 October 2020. The prosecutor demanded that Mr. Norov write a note of explanation, and then he was escorted to the district conscription office and forcibly placed in custody. His advocate was not allowed to visit him.
58. Despite the numerous complaints filed with various high governmental institutions (including the president, the prime minister, the Minister of Defence, the Ombudsman, the Dushanbe Military Prosecutor's Office and the Department of Internal Affairs), Mr. Norov was transferred to a number of different military units in Khujand city.
59. Not until 16 October 2020 was a criminal case against Mr. Norov started by the commander of military unit No. 01972. He was charged under Article 376 (2) of the Criminal Code of Tajikistan, for "evading military service by deception for the purpose of complete exemption from the performance of military duties."
60. On 17 October 2020, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Tajikistan stated that alternative service is determined by the Law, citing paragraph 3, article 1, of the Law "On Conscription and Military Service". In this regard, a working group was created to develop and finalise this law. The law will be enforced upon its signing and publication. The statement continued that the drafting of Mr. Norov to military service was based on the requirements of the current laws. In addition, the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Dushanbe Garrison responded to one of numerous complaints, stating that since a law on alternative service has not been adopted in Tajikistan, conscription to military service should be determined by the Law "On Conscription and Military Service".
61. On 19 October 2020 the Military Court of Khujand Garrison ruled to keep Mr. Norov in pre-trial detention for the period of investigation. On 28 October 2020 the appeal court confirmed this decision.
62. On 7 January 2021, Mr. Norov was sentenced to three and a half years of imprisonment in the general regime colony by the Military Court of Khujand Garrison. On 15 January 2021 the verdict was appealed. The appeal hearing has not yet been scheduled.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

63. Following its previous review in 2016, Tajikistan accepted specific recommendations made by Member States.
64. Slovakia recommended that Tajikistan "[e]nsure the freedom of expression, association, assembly and freedom of religion in accordance with international human rights norms." This was accepted by Tajikistan but Jehovah's Witnesses have seen no evidence of the implementation of this recommendation in respect to their community. (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.42, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1)
65. Switzerland also recommended that Tajikistan "[e]nsure freedom of expression, of assembly and of association in accordance with its international obligations and do not interfere with civil society organizations and their activities by excessive regulations which are formulated ambiguously." (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.43, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1)

66. Sierra Leone stated: “In the interest of religious tolerance, lift the bans on religious groups to enable them to practise their religions freely.” (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.46, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1) Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan have not been re-registered and hence have seen no evidence of the implementation of this recommendation in respect to their community.
67. Austria recommended that Tajikistan “[e]ngage in bringing Tajikistan's legislation in line with the country's international and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe commitments to protect freedom of religion.” (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.10, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1) Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan have seen no evidence of the implementation of this recommendation in respect to their community.
68. Honduras recommended that Tajikistan “[e]liminate discrimination affecting freedom of religion.” (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.24, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1) Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan have seen no evidence of the implementation of this recommendation in respect to their community.
69. Argentina recommended that Tajikistan “[t]ake the measures necessary to eliminate restrictions on freedom of worship, including the possibility of exercising the right to conscientious objection to compulsory military service.” (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.47, compare A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1) Tajikistan appeared to support the first clause in the recommendation while explicitly rejecting the second clause. Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan have seen no evidence of the implementation of any part of this recommendation in respect to their community.
70. France recommended that Tajikistan “[r]espect freedom of expression, assembly and association, ... by implementing the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression following his visit” (A/HRC/33/11, para. 118.44, accepted A/HRC/33/11/Add. 1) Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan have seen no evidence of the implementation of this recommendation in respect to their community.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

71. Jehovah's Witnesses in Tajikistan, and as a worldwide organisation, respectfully request the government of Tajikistan to:
 - (1) Immediately release those imprisoned for practising their religious beliefs, in particular Shamil Khakimov, provide adequate compensation and expunge criminal record;
 - (2) Grant re-registration of the banned legal entity of Jehovah's Witnesses, in harmony with the August 2013 Concluding Observations of the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/2, para. 20, 22 August 2013) and subsequent UN Human Rights Committee Concluding Observation on the third periodic report on the State party (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/3, para. 43, 22 August 2019);
 - (3) Respect the rights of conscientious objectors to military service as clearly established by WGAD opinion No. 43/2017, 5 October 2017, and the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/TJK/CO/3, para. 46, 22 August 2019);

- (4) Establish a genuine alternative civilian service that is in line with international standards, such as a service period that is not punitive in nature, is outside of the military sphere, and is not under military control; and
- (5) Abide by their commitment to uphold the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of Tajikistan and ICCPR for all citizens, including Jehovah's Witnesses.