



**José Manuel Barroso**  
President of the European Commission

Brussels, 18 January 2011  
Our Ref.:B1032

Dear President Barroso,

**Subject: Visit of Uzbekistan President to Brussels, 24 January**

In view of President Islam Karimov's upcoming visit to Brussels on 24 January, Amnesty International would like to provide you with the attached briefing, which sets out our main concerns. Given the serious, persistent nature of the human rights violations in Uzbekistan, it is imperative that your meeting is used to raise these concerns and to obtain specific commitments on the following three issues:

1. **Human Rights Defenders.** Human rights defenders and independent journalists are continuously subjected to harassment, beatings and detention without fair trial. The authorities repeatedly deny this. We urge you to raise this situation directly with President Karimov, in line with your commitments in the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. We ask you in particular to raise the case of Isroil Kholdorov, a human rights defender sentenced to six years imprisonment following an unfair trial in February 2007, for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association. He features as one of the *Ten Cases of People under Threat* addressed to the EU during the Hungarian Presidency (attached).
2. **Andizhan killings.** In response to the mass killings by security forces in Andizhan in May 2005, the EU established sanctions on Uzbekistan in October 2005, specifically calling for an independent, international investigation into the events. However, the EU has now lifted all sanctions, without an investigation taking place, which has led to the government publicly declaring the matter closed. International pressure urgently needs to be reasserted, and we therefore ask you to use this meeting to reaffirm EU policy on the Andizhan killings by calling publicly for Uzbekistan to allow an investigation as a matter of urgency.
3. **EU Delegation in Tashkent.** The role of EU Delegations is critical in delivering on EU human rights priorities, in monitoring the situation and coordinating action with EU member state embassies. However, there is still no Delegation in Tashkent. We therefore call on you to agree to the immediate unconditional opening of a Delegation. Given the serious situation in the country, the lack of transparent information available and the lack of access to international human rights monitors, we also ask you to ensure that a full-time experienced human rights officer is recruited to the Delegation as a priority.

We look forward to hearing from you as to the outcome of your meeting, and remain at your disposal to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Nicolas J. Beger  
Director