

**UPR Intervention for Uzbekistan, 16<sup>th</sup> Session April 24, 2013**

The United States welcomes [head of delegation] and the delegation of Uzbekistan.

We note steps taken by the government to improve treatment of detainees, but are concerned by violations of fair trial guarantees, irregularities in court proceedings, and reports of torture and other ill-treatment by security forces in detention facilities. The ICRC has ceased detainee visits in Uzbekistan because they are unable to address humanitarian issues.

We remain concerned by severe restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly, and association. Human rights activists, journalists, and others who criticize the government are harassed and subjected to politically motivated arrest and prosecution. Restrictions on religious freedom, harassment of religious group members, and imprisonment of individuals on so-called religious extremism charges persist.

We welcome reports that an internal ban led to reduced participation of children under 15 in the 2012 cotton harvest. However, more needs to be done to meet obligations outlined in UN and ILO conventions to prevent forced labor in the cotton harvest, regardless of age.

We recommend:

1. Initiate prompt, thorough, and independent investigations of all torture allegations and end politically motivated prosecutions by ensuring all trials conform to obligations under the ICCPR;
2. End harassment and detention of persons who exercise their rights to freedom of assembly, association, expression and religion and release those currently held on such grounds;
3. Eliminate all forced labor and hazardous child labor and implement recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies.



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