

Uyghur Tribunal – Fact Witness statement

UTFW2-047 – Abdurahman Ismayil

1. My name is Abdurahman Ismayil. I was born on the 2nd of April 1974 in the 4th Village of Qonas, Alaqaqha Village, Kucha County. After elementary school, I started studying Qur'an recitation and Arabic. I have a record of prison detentions starting from 1990. On the 22nd of May 1990, when I was 16 years old, I was suddenly abducted from my home for alleged affiliation with people in Barin. I had nothing to do with Barin. I did not know anything. My only "crime" is partaking in Islamic studies in Kucha under Sidiq Qari Hajim's supervision. I was released after a month and a half and it was said that I was innocent. Even as a child, I suffered a lot of hardship. This included torture, violence and the like in a place that was called Irjen.
2. In 1991, I went to Qaghiliq to study under Ablikim Mahsum Hajim. I stayed there until 1993. While I was studying in Guma, on the 19th of December 1993, I was detained and imprisoned for five years for studying under Ablikim Mahsum Hajim in Qaghiliq. They claimed that we (the students) were doing physical exercise and plotting something against the government. It was nonsense. In those five years, I spent four years in Kashgar Provincial Prison.
3. During those four years, I was interrogated nearly day and night for a year and a half, sometimes not sleeping during the day nor the night. I was interrogated continuously. The guards would keep us standing, our feet wide open, our hands tied behind our backs and then would hit our feet with iron and even beat us naked. I was still very young. Four years later, the religious teachers Alimjan Abliz and Qawul Abdurehim were taken to Yarkent and were executed. They were charged wrongfully - they were innocent. I did not have much connection with them. I studied there, but not under them. However, the government officials said that I was planning something with them in order to participate in some kind of anti-governmental activities and that I had participated in their talks

against the government, etc. As a result, I was imprisoned for five years even though I insisted that I was only there to study.

4. During those five years, my cellmate was Abdughani Ubulqasim, a well-known professor of Kashgar Normal University (now Kashgar University), who was known as Abdughani English. He was a very brave and patriotic person. The man was not convicted of any crime but was sentenced to 20 years in prison by fake trial, on charges of involvement in an anti-governmental organization. I later heard that, in 2006, he was killed in Urumqi No. 1 Prison.
5. In the same prison, I was next to the cell of Abitjan Ubulqasim, a student of the Kashgar Normal University (now Kashgar University) and I had some conversations with him. He was an excellent student in his classes. He was also imprisoned along with three or four of his friends. Despite Abitjan Ubulqasim's innocence, the government blamed him for the intention to establish an organization. He was sentenced to 20 years on conspiracy charges. He suddenly died in prison in 2005. But, because he was a very healthy man, people have said that he was murdered. He was injected with something and that might have had some impact. He passed away just like that.
6. Then, on the 12th of November 1997, I was taken from Kashgar to the 7th Village of Shabahu, Sanji. It was in the middle of nowhere. There were a lot of men that were involved in the Barin Revolution and I became a prisoner like them. There were also about 50 other political prisoners. There, we were forced to do labour. In cold weather, we would walk for an hour or two to the destination. We would carry large bags of soil on our backs. For months, we carried soil on our backs from the top of a hill which we then dumped at the bottom of the hill. Some of us became sick as a result of this harsh working environment. There was a 22-year old, tall and handsome man from Aksu Uchturpan, Tursunjan (I forgot his last name). There was also another man, named Memetjan, from Ghulja. Both had been sentenced to three years. They fell ill because of the hard labour.

In January 1998, during very cold days, they were working day and night outside without returning to the cell. As a result, they lost a lot of weight and became very sick. Officials said they had taken them to the hospital. However, both died in March 1998. Their bodies were buried in Shabahu, Sanji, only with their direct family. I can testify for this since I was present at that time.

7. Other than that, I know that Barat Qahap, an old classmate of mine from Tuhula Village, Alaqagha Township, Kucha, was shot dead in Aksu in April 2000. Along with him, Memettursun from Yarkent, Nurmemet Awut, Omer Eli from Qaghiliq, and Abduweli Qadir from Kucha were all executed in Bay County, Aksu. Around the 11th of April 2000, as I remember, some of Bay County's roads were blocked. They met with their family for the last time and then they were taken to a room, from which they were (directly) taken away to be executed. Their bodies were buried somewhere unknown. They had dug a large hole with tractor and then buried their bodies. I can also testify for this.
8. In addition, I testify for Ehmet Suwur from the 3rd Village of the Ala Qaga Township, Kucha County. He was a carpenter. In 2003, he was about 25. His wife's name was Amangul. They had a daughter named Merhaba and two sons, Muhemmet Eziz and Mujahidin. He was taken to the jail in April 2003. On the 28th of May, his family was suddenly summoned by the government officials and they buried him in Kucha.
9. Memetjan was a veterinarian from the Alaqagha township. He used to work at Qonas (4th Village). He was also taken to the prison in 2016 and he died there. That is all I know with regards to him.
10. I had a nephew (my older sister's son) named Salahidin. He was detained in 2014 at the age of 15 and was sentenced to 20 years in prison. I learned this from my acquaintances that left to go abroad in 2015. I could not communicate with my family. I do not know the condition of my family at all. I am very worried about them. I have one older sister, three

younger brothers and two younger sisters. My eldest sister's name is Heyrinsa Ismayil. My brothers are Abduqadir, Abduleziz and Ablikim. My younger sisters are Amangul and Asiyegul. I am very worried about their situation. My parents are also getting older and I couldn't take care of any of them. We are very worried now. I hope everyone who may care about us, especially those in the west, will help us and take more concrete actions on this matter.

11. My father's name is Ismayil Hamut and he was born in 1947. My mother's name was Aynisem Talip and she was born in 1955. I heard that my father died in September 2018 but I do not know for sure. I am still worried. I have no idea about others.

12. In addition, I was released after my five years of imprisonment from December 1993 to December 1998 in Kashgar, Sanji and Urumqi. However, on the 17th of March 1999, while I was living normally at home with my family, I was detained again for no apparent reason. I was locked up for a month and interrogated for more than 10 days. I was released.

13. On the eve of the Eid al-Fitr on the 11th of April 2000 (I do not remember the exact time), I was at my shop in the old town. The police came to my shop and detained me. I was imprisoned for four months. During this time my two brothers, Abdul Qadir and Abdulaziz, were also imprisoned. They were detained for 4-5 months. After being released, I left for Urumqi in 2001 because I could no longer live in Kucha and wanted to live a normal life. On the 8th of June 2008, in Hongyanchi, Urumqi, I was building a house and many people were working on the house. While six or seven people were working in the mud, I was arrested and brought in. Everyone was detained. The detention lasted 4-5 months. I forgot their names. Five people were detained. I was detained from the 8th of June 2008 to the 4th of May 2009. I spent a month and a half in Liudaowan Prison. The interrogation there was very harsh. They even moved me to a special interrogation room outside the prison and interrogated me for two or three days without sleep. They tied my limbs to the interrogation chair, hung me up and electrified me. At that time, I was hopeless and I

knew that I may not leave the prison alive. However, I was innocent. They would torture me for teaching children religious knowledge. They claimed I knew of the underground places where children had religious studies and asked me to give them the information about who was teaching the children and where they were doing so. I was interrogated for six months between the 8th of June 2008 and the 9th of May 2009. During these six months, I experienced some of the most unforgettable days of my life. It was very extreme. Over consecutive days, I would experience electric shocks, hanging and sleep deprivation etc. I was severely tortured. My hearing is still impaired because they hit my ears so much. I was released on the 9th of May 2009 because they could not find that I had committed any crimes.

14. On the evening of the 31st of May 2009, my wife and I arrived at Sanxihangza Road and I received a call asking: "Abdurahman, where are you now?" I replied: "I am next to the Sanxihangza Hediye Eye Hospital." They said: "we are nearby, let's meet." I went to meet them and my wife was left alone. They put me in their car and detained me for a month and a half. They said it was for that year's 'strike hard' campaign. I was released on the 15th of February 2010. After my release, I was still constantly harassed. They would ask me what I was doing, who I was contacting and where I was staying etc. I couldn't stand it. I had to leave with my children because, if they wouldn't let me live in peace, I could not continue living there. Therefore, I had to expatriate and so, since January 2014, I have lived in Turkey.

I have read and understood this witness statement and I confirm that I agree with its contents.

I understand that this statement will be published on the Uyghur Tribunal website and will be available to the general public online.

Signature:

Date:

