

His Excellency
Emomalij Rahmon
President of the Republic of Tajikistan
via Botschaft der Republik Tadschikistan
Perleberger Str. 43
10559 Berlin

Fax: 030-34793029

Your Excellency

I am taking the liberty to approach you on behalf of the 42-year old incarcerated Tajik Christian, Rev. Bakhrom Kholmatov. He was arrested on April 10th of this year and sentenced to a prison term of three years.

This Protestant minister was accused of having promoted the singing of “extremist” hymns in his church, which incite religious hatred and therefore violate Article 189, Paragraph 1 of the Penal Code of Tajikistan. However, the lyrics of these hymns are exclusively related to passages from the Christian Bible.

Therefore, dear Mr. President, I urgently beseech you to advocate the immediate release of this father of three.

I also take the liberty to appeal to you to ease the registration of churches and religious communities, to return confiscated places of worship, and to permit parents to pass on religious values to their children. With its restrictions on religious freedom, Tajikistan is clearly in violation of the “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (ICCPR).

Most respectfully,