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Kyrgyzstan: Assault on human rights defender Izzatilla Rahmatullaev causes him to suffer a cardiac collapse

On 28 January 2017, human rights defender Mr. **Izzatilla Rahmatullaev** was verbally assaulted by a nationalist activist. The assault led to the human rights defender suffering a cardiac collapse.

[Izzatilla Rahmatullaev](#) is an ethnic Uzbek and a human rights defender in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. He is one of the leaders of a human rights organisation called **Law and Order**, which was founded in 2002 with the purpose of monitoring and documenting violations of civil, political, social and economic rights, as well as defending the rights of ethnic, and religious minorities and refugee rights. The organisation is active in the observation and monitoring of judicial trials related to inter-ethnic conflicts.

On 28 January 2017, at approximately 10:00 AM, the human rights defender was verbally assaulted at a bus stop by an elderly woman who is well known for her participation in nationalist events. This woman is a member of a group of radical nationalists, who are often used by political forces in Kyrgyzstan to verbally and physically attack demonstrators, human rights defenders and lawyers. She shouted at Izzatilla Rahmatullaev and humiliated him on the grounds of his ethnic origin and human rights work. While verbally abusing him she was also attempting to encourage members of the public to stand against Izzatilla Rahmatullaev. She said that Izzatilla Rahmatullaev and his colleague, Mr. [Khusanbay Saliev](#), lawyer for the human rights organisation 'Burduino Kyrgyzstan', should be incarcerated, similarly to human rights defender Mr. [Azimjan Askarov](#) who has received a sentence of life imprisonment. She also declared that 'all Uzbek people must be executed by a firing squad'. She followed Izzatilla Rahmatullaev until he managed to catch a taxi and return home. During the attack, the human rights defender's blood pressure elevated and as a result he was hospitalised with a cardiac collapse in the Osh Cardiology Centre where he will remain over the following 10 days.

After the incident, Izzatilla Rahmatullaev's son filed a complaint to the State Committee of National Security. On 30 January 2017, the Committee launched the investigation proceedings.

Front Line Defenders condemns the attack on Izzatilla Rahmatullaev and believes it to be directly related to his human rights work and his defence of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in Kyrgyzstan.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities of the Kyrgyzstan to:

1. Ensure that the ongoing investigation into the assault on Izzatilla Rahmatullaev is thorough and impartial, with a view to bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Izzatilla Rahmatullaev;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Kyrgyzstan are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.