

## **Civil society calls on the Uzbekistani authorities to register the independent human rights organization Human rights House**

**Tashkent Inter-district Administrative Court returned the NGO Human Rights House's complaint about non-registration "on formal grounds", but the group has appealed the decision and is currently seeking to register with the Ministry of Justice for the ninth time. We, the undersigned members of the Civic Solidarity Platform, call on the Uzbekistani authorities to take swift steps to register Human Rights House and other independent human rights organizations in Uzbekistan, and ensure that they can freely carry out their human rights activities.**

On 29 September 2021, Tashkent Inter-district Administrative Court ruled to return Human Rights House's complaint against the Ministry of Justice's decision "on formal grounds", citing Article 134 paragraph 1 part 1 of the Code of Administrative Judicial Proceedings of Uzbekistan. Human Rights House had complained to the court about the Ministry of Justice's eighth refusal to register the organization. Lawyer Sergei Mayorov, representing Human Rights House, considers the decision to return the complaint to be unreasonable, as it met all the procedural requirements of the Code of Administrative Judicial Proceedings.

Human Rights House members submitted a renewed request for registration to the Ministry of Justice on 18 October 2021. This is the ninth request Agzam Turgunov filed to register his human rights group. The first request had been submitted in February 2019.

On 26 October 2021, the group lodged an appeal against the decision of Tashkent Inter-district Administrative Court.

### **Background information:**

On 28 August 2021, the Ministry of Justice informed Human Rights House founder Agzam Turgunov that his eighth registration request had been refused, stating that he had not submitted two copies of the organizational mandate and proof of having paid the registration fee. Turgunov and his lawyer maintain that they submitted all required documents and receipts. Previously, the Ministry of Justice's grounds for rejecting the applications by Agzam Turgunov and his colleagues were often unclear or unsubstantiated indicating that the group's registration has been refused on politically motivated grounds. For further background information about Human Rights House's attempts to register, refer to the joint NGO statement [Eighth time lucky? Human Rights House to apply for official registration again](#).

Other independent civil society groups also report having multiple applications for registration rejected on untransparent and unsubstantiated grounds.

In its March 2020 concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Uzbekistan, the United Nations Human Rights Committee raised concern at "the small number of independent self-initiated NGOs registered in the State party, the high number of rejections for registration".

**Signatories:**

1. Association for Human Rights in Central Asia – AHRCA, France
2. Association UMDPL, Ukraine
3. Austrian Helsinki Association
4. Center for Civil Liberties, Ukraine
5. Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights, Russia
6. DRA, Germany
7. Freedom Now, United States
8. Helsinki Citizens' Assembly - Vanadzor, Armenia
9. Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland
10. Human Rights Center (HRC), Georgia
11. Human Rights Center of Azerbaijan
12. Human rights center "Viasna"
13. Human Rights Monitoring Institute, Lithuania
14. Human Rights Movement "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan"
15. humanrights.ch, Switzerland
16. IDP Women Association "Consent", Georgia
17. International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR), Belgium
18. Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Kazakhstan
19. KRF Public Alternative, Ukraine
20. Legal Transformation Center (Lawtrend)
21. Netherlands Helsinki Committee, Netherlands
22. Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Norway
23. Promo LEX, Moldova
24. Public Association "Dignity", Kazakhstan
25. Swedish OSCE-network, Sweden
26. World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), Switzerland
27. Belarusian Helsinki Committee, Belarus