

# Human Rights Watch

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/23/uzbekistan-political-prisoner-free-after-19-years>

## Campaign and Advocacy

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Release All Imprisoned Peaceful Activists

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(Bishkek) Rustam Usmanov, a peaceful political activist imprisoned arbitrarily in [Uzbekistan](#) for 19 years and brutally tortured, was finally freed on February 13, 2017, at the end of his prison term, Human Rights Watch said today. Usmanov, 69, a founder of Uzbekistans first private bank and a vocal government critic, had been imprisoned since 1998.

In 2012, days before his original 14-year sentence was due to end, he was convicted for violations of prison rules and sentenced to five more years in prison. Usmanov was repeatedly and brutally tortured while in prison.

Rustam Usmanov and his family have suffered terribly for 19 years, said [Steve Swerdlow](#), Central Asia researcher at Human Rights Watch. This is President Mirziyoyevs chance to keep his campaign promises by seeing to it that those who are alleged to have tortured Usmanov and arbitrarily extended his prison sentence are promptly investigated and brought to justice.

Possession of Extremist Material in Kyrgyzstan

Censorship and Freedom of the Media in Uzbekistan

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