



**Review of the 2013 Cotton Harvest in Uzbekistan:
State Forced-Labour System Continues**

This year, the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan began in early September and ended in mid-November. The Uzbek government systematically forced farmers to produce state-established quotas and children and adults to pick cotton in one of the largest state-orchestrated systems of forced labour in the world.

The government introduced extensive measures to create the impression of voluntary work in the cotton fields, but behind this screen, as in previous years, the government coercively mobilized over a million citizens, including children as young as age 15, to cultivate and pick cotton. Despite the presence of International Labour Organization (ILO) observers, the government silenced Uzbek human rights monitors through arrest, imprisonment and intimidation. Eleven citizens lost their lives as a result of the forced-labour system.

The expected yield of the forced labour of Uzbek children and adults was 3.35 million tons of cotton.¹ The Uzbek government maintained control of land, prices to cotton farmers and all cotton sales. The government will only account for income from cotton in the extra-budgetary “Agricultural Fund,” to which only the highest level government officials have access and knowledge of how the proceeds are used.² The forced-labour produced cotton from the 2013 harvest is destined primarily for firms in China and Bangladesh,³ and secondarily for firms operating in Uzbekistan, such as Daewoo International and Indorama.

The extent to which the ILO and the international community can work with the Uzbek government to apply fundamental labour conventions depends on Tashkent. The Uzbek government’s total control over the cotton sector means they can end forced labour. Yet overwhelming evidence of systematic, state-orchestrated forced labour and the government’s extensive measures to deny such human rights violations indicate a lack of political will to do so. More than ever, businesses and governments should condition use of Uzbek cotton and trade with Uzbekistan on ending forced labour, thereby creating incentives for the Uzbek government to work seriously with the ILO on much-needed reforms.

This report updates the [Review of the first month of the 2013 Cotton Harvest in Uzbekistan](#). The evidence presented herein on the continued use of forced labour in the 2013 cotton harvest was gathered by human rights defenders in Uzbekistan through interviews and observations during the harvest. They also reviewed government documents and collected both local and international media reports on the cotton harvest. Information was gathered from seven regions. Each region had a group of local monitors who monitored the cotton harvest from beginning to end. All interviewees had direct experience of participating in the 2013 cotton harvest. The interviewees were from different families and different schools. The teams of human rights defenders received training on monitoring and interview techniques by a social scientist. The monitoring teams operated anonymously for their personal protection.



Authorities in Akkurgan, Tashkent region, issued these photos of “Brigade 105” (left) and “Brigade 132,” (right) that includes details of how many people worked in the brigades, how much cotton they harvested and which farms they worked on. © Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights.

Systematic State Mobilization of Forced Child Labour

As in previous harvests, in 2013 the government systematically forced children, primarily students from colleges and lyceums (aged 15 to 18), to pick cotton, under threat of expulsion from school. Children in Uzbekistan enter colleges and lyceums at age 15 or 16.⁴ According to national statistics, 1.7 million students attended colleges and lyceums in 2012, and over one third of the first-year college and lyceum students were 15 years old.⁵



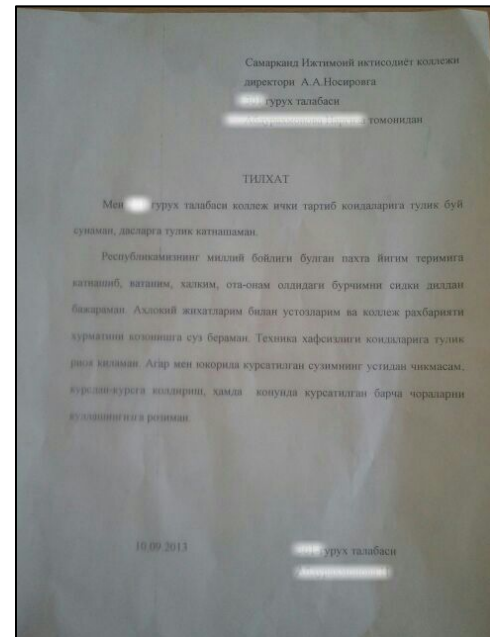
Teenager picking cotton, Andijan, October 2013.

College and lyceums administrators sent their students to

prepare the cotton fields in May in the Tashkent region.⁶ Beginning in August college and lyceum administrators around the country – who faced dismissal for failure to mobilize a sufficient number of students to participate in the harvest -- organized groups of students to lobby their peers on the importance of their participation in the nationwide, “voluntary” campaign to harvest cotton.⁷The school administrators also required parents to sign contracts committing their children to pick cotton in order to register them for school.⁸

A copy of one of these letters, pictured here, stated:

“I _____, the student of course # ___ agree to obey all the internal rules and regulations of the college and to attend all the classes. I also agree to participate in cotton harvesting, the national wealth of our nation and sincerely fulfill my duty in front of my country, my nation and my family. I promise to earn respect of my teachers and administration of the college by my exemplary behaviour. I will follow all the safety rules. If I do not fulfill my above mentioned promise, I agree to be left to re- take the course and be penalised by all means showed in the law.”⁹



Student statement to voluntarily pick cotton, 10 September 2013.

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In spite of the government’s all-out effort to portray child labour in the harvest as voluntary, school administrators reported that it was necessary to threaten punishment to ensure that students would pick cotton.¹⁰ In Tashkent region, school administrators sent teachers to students’ homes to pressure families to send their children to pick cotton, pay 400,000 – 500,000 soums (\$188 - \$235 USD), or expect expulsion from school.¹¹ In other regions, school administrators and teachers offered exemptions from the cotton harvest for 300,000-800,000 soums (\$142-\$378).¹² On September 20, the dean of Lyceum No. 2 in Karshi expelled Barhayot Turaev, a 16-year old student, for refusing to pick cotton, indicating that he was following orders from the education department.¹³



A college closed for the cotton harvest, Kashkadarya region, October 2013. The sign states, "Everyone goes to the cotton harvest!"

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Mass mobilization of children began on September 10 throughout the nation, although the extent and intensity of mobilization varied somewhat from place to place according to how district and regional government officials implemented orders.¹⁴ As in past years, students who were deployed to pick cotton far from their homes were housed in schools and other public buildings, yet more proof of the government's continued, systematic involvement in mobilizing forced child labour. Administrators in the Syrdarya region sent all college and lyceum students to the fields starting on September 12.¹⁵ Of the 2,000 students of the Construction College in Gulistan, Syrdarya, 350 went to pick cotton, and the rest paid 150,000-200,000 soums (\$71-\$94 USD) for exemptions.¹⁶ Jizzak colleges and lyceums sent their students to pick cotton in Dustlik district in early September.¹⁷ College and lyceum administrators in Tashkent region conducted a mass mobilisation of students on

September 16.¹⁸ Tashkent municipality staff reported that colleges and lyceums sent students in shifts, beginning with first-year students (15-16 year olds), followed by second- and third-year students.¹⁹ Andijan colleges and lyceums sent large numbers of third-year students to pick cotton in early October.²⁰ School administrators required teachers to mobilize thirty students each to pick cotton and to report uncooperative students to the police.²¹ By mid-October, college and lyceum administrators in Samarkand had sent all grade levels to pick cotton.²² Teachers worked as supervisors in the fields; for example, a college teacher from Syrdarya region supervised a group of 31 second-year students (16-17 year olds) for ten days, then the school administrator sent another teacher to take his place and ordered him to visit the homes of students who had not gone to pick cotton and send them to the fields.²³

While the government did not mobilise children under the age of 15 on a national scale, some authorities forced children as young as age 10 to work in the cotton fields. Administrators of schools No. 170 and No. 35 of Chiroqchi district, Kashkadarya region suspended class and sent 5th- and 6th-grade students (ages 10-12) to weed and plough cotton fields in May.²⁴ Schools in Amudarya district of Karakalpakstan region also sent schoolchildren to weed and plough in May.²⁵ School administrators sent 7th-, 8th- and 9th-grade students (ages 14-15) to pick cotton in the Kasbi,

Konlikol and Turtkol districts of Karakalpakstan, in October.²⁶ Some schools sent students after Saturday classes; others sent students for 3-4 days at a time, forcing them to miss classes.²⁷ Administrators of school N16 in Oltinkul district, Andijan region, sent schoolchildren as young as age 11 to pick cotton in mid-October.²⁸ Doctors, themselves forced to pick cotton, reported seeing a group of children, apparently ages 12-14, on the edge of a cotton field with collection bags and accompanied by police officers, on October 15.²⁹ Local authorities ordered school administrators to send schoolchildren to pick cotton in Andijan and Kashkadarya regions in November.³⁰



Mobilization of college students, September 16-17, 2013, Tashkent region.

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School administrators sent schoolchildren to pick cotton in Yakkabog district, Kashkadarya region, October 2013.

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Systematic State Mobilization of Forced Labour of Adults

In 2013, the government's systematic use of adult forced labour affected farmers, public-sector workers, private-sector workers, unemployed citizens and those in receipt of public welfare benefits. Authorities forced pensioners, mothers and other citizens to pick cotton under threat of losing the social security support on which they depend. Under pressure from authorities in higher positions, administrators of public institutions and private business owners forced their workers to pick cotton under threat of dismissal from their job. University administrators forced students to pick cotton under threat of expulsion from university.

The forced-labour system of cotton production begins with the farmers. The Uzbek government continued to hold farmers “effectively indentured to the state.”³¹ Uzbek state media confirmed that the government does not allow farmers to choose the crops they grow, in an announcement that the government would ‘award’ the most productive farmers with the freedom to grow non-cotton crops.³² In May, Yangiyul District Department of Internal Affairs official Aziz Tashpulatov beat 63-year old farmer Tursunali Sadikov for arriving late to a cotton planning meeting, and the elderly farmer died of a heart attack the following morning.³³ In Tashkent region during the harvest, authorities restrained farmers from participating in the weighing of cotton in their own fields, so the farmers had no way of knowing the yield and how much they the state owed them.³⁴ In October, at least three farmers, Mukhtar Bekimbetov, Anvar Ismoilov and Khamidjon Matrizaev, fled Uzbekistan to avoid arrest and imprisonment for failing to meet their quotas for the cotton harvest.³⁵ In Surkhandarya, Kizir District Administrator Olim Alimardanov insulted and beat Orif Ruziboyev, 29-year old farmer, for delivering less cotton than expected, on October 5.³⁶ Safarboy Karimov, a farmer from Karalkalpakstan, committed suicide in his cotton field for fear of the consequences of failing to fulfill his state quota.³⁷

Teachers and other public-sector professionals participated in the cotton harvest to avoid losing their jobs or salary.³⁸ In May, administrators of schools, hospitals, power plants and other public-sector institutions in Jizzak and Tashkent regions sent teachers, doctors, nurses and other staff to plough and weed the cotton fields.³⁹ School administrators in Tashkent offered exemptions from springtime field work



*Prosecutor's Office, Akkurgan, Tashkent region, functioning as the district headquarters for the cotton harvest.
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for 20,000 soums (\$9USD).⁴⁰ Earlier in the year, the government had inserted a clause in public-sector contracts making help with agricultural work a condition of employment for all public-sector workers.⁴¹

In August and September, public-sector administrators organized staff into shifts to pick cotton and docked the salaries of those not selected for field work, purportedly to hire additional workers to pick cotton.⁴² Hospitals and other health care institution administrations instructed doctors, nurses and other staff that they would have to pick cotton or contribute approximately half of their salaries to cotton collection during the harvest season or they would be dismissed.⁴³ Nurses reported that they picked cotton because they could not afford to pay the exemption, which cost more than a month's salary.⁴⁴ In Tashkent region, public-sector administrators informed staff that they would be held to a daily cotton-picking quota of 50 kilograms and would have to pay for their own transportation, food and lodging during the harvest.⁴⁵ Authorities in Surkandarya and Tashkent regions ordered public institutions and private businesses to pay and arrange accommodations for students forced to participate in the cotton harvest.⁴⁶

The tax inspectorate threatened private business owners with extraordinary investigations if they refused to contribute to the cotton harvest, forcing some businessmen to pay to hire day labourers to pick cotton in their place.⁴⁷ In September, local authorities in the Tashkent region, including the Prosecutor's Office and the Tax Inspectorate, convened business owners to present these demands and threaten tax penalties for those who failed to comply.⁴⁸ Authorities in Tashkent city gave vendors operating in city parks a choice: pick cotton for forty days in Syrdarya region, pay 1.6 million soums, or expect criminal charges.⁴⁹ The Tashkent authorities ordered the city's business owners to transfer money to the Mega Food Store, purportedly to support the purchase of food for cotton pickers.⁵⁰ In Surkandarya region, authorities ordered private businesses with ten or more employees to send as much as half of their staff to pick cotton.⁵¹ In September, Trastbank sent one-fifth of its staff, and the Shurtanneftgaz gas exploration



company sent shifts of 800 workers to pick cotton.⁵² GM Uzbekistan sent 32 people to pick cotton, nine of the company's own employees and the rest hired workers.⁵³

Teachers await transportation at the end of a day picking cotton, October 2013.
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Authorities coerced community residents to pick cotton with threats to cut their electricity and social welfare benefits.⁵⁴ In Tashkent region, mahalla committees, the local entities responsible for distributing public welfare benefits, visited residents' homes, demanded they pay 89,000 soums (\$42) for the cotton harvest, and threatened cutting off electricity if they refused.⁵⁵ In the Buka district of Tashkent region local authorities carried out orders to mobilize five people from each neighborhood.⁵⁶ The regional governor of Namangan issued a public statement in September instructing mahalla committees to mobilize residents.⁵⁷ Authorities of Zaaminksi district, Jizzak region, ordered residents to pick cotton in order to maintain their electricity and receive pension, child-care and other social welfare payments.⁵⁸ Police rounded up day labourers at the Koylik market in Tashkent and sent them to pick cotton, citing their lack of Tashkent residence permits.⁵⁹

In the south of Uzbekistan, the authorities began mass mobilization of public-sector workers, businesses' employees, and unemployed residents to the cotton fields on September 5.⁶⁰ By September 10, authorities had expanded the mobilization nationwide.⁶¹

Many public institutions sent their workers to pick cotton for shifts of 10-15 days.⁶² The regional governor of Namangan issued a statement on September 13 that all students of the three regional universities and all workers of private and public-sector institutions would pick cotton.⁶³ In a statement delivered at Tashkent's South Station on September 17, the Mayor of Tashkent ordered city residents to pick cotton in Jizzak region.⁶⁴ In Syrdarya region, local authorities closed markets to prevent people from avoiding work in the cotton fields.⁶⁵ In Kashkadarya region, authorities informed residents that



Closed market. The sign states, "Everyone goes to the cotton harvest!"

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transportation, food and accommodation costs would be residents' responsibilities, and that penalties for refusing to participate in the harvest would include dismissal from work, docked salary, and denied social welfare benefits.⁶⁶ Education officials offered exemptions for 400,000 soums, and other public sector workers reported fees for an exemption up to 700,000 soums.⁶⁷ Some citizens hired day labourers to work in their place, for rates that ranged 400,000 - 500,000 soums (\$189-\$236 USD).⁶⁸

Quotas under the State Forced-Labour System of Cotton Production

As in previous years, the harvest proceeded in stages, and authorities assigned daily quotas of cotton to individuals according to the amount of cotton in the fields. Average daily quotas required were:

- Starting in early September, 70 kg of cotton a day;
- October 5 - 16, 60 kg per day;
- October 17 – 22, 40 kg per day; and
- October 23 – November 15, 30 kg per day.⁶⁹

Many people were unable to pick enough cotton to fulfil their daily quotas and therefore had to pay farmers or local residents for the cotton they needed to make up the shortfall. In many cases, authorities also passed the cost of transportation and food to citizens sent to pick cotton.⁷⁰ Some students reported that school officials under-recorded the weight of cotton delivered.⁷¹ As a result, many people forced to pick cotton contributed both their labour and their money to the state-controlled cotton harvest. Many who struggled to fulfil their cotton quotas also reported suffering verbal abuse, threats of punishment and, in some cases, physical abuse.



Weighing cotton, October 2013.

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Deaths resulting from the forced-labour system of cotton production

In 2013, at least eleven Uzbek citizens died as a result of the forced-labour cotton production system:

- Tursunali Sadikov, a 63-year old farmer from Yangiyul district of Tashkent region was beaten by the Head of the Yangiyul District Department of Internal Affairs Aziz Tashpulatov and died from a heart attack the following morning April 16, 2013. Tashpulatov beat the farmer for being late to a cotton planning meeting.⁷²
- Mukhlisa Rajabova, a 17-year old second-year student of Kashkadarya Region Agro-Industrial High School, died of electric shock while working in the cotton fields on September 9, 2013. Authorities returned her body to the family after a forensic examination, and no other circumstances of the case have been disclosed.⁷³

- Amirbek Rakhmatov, a six-year old first-year schoolboy from Vobkent district of Bukhara region, died on September 15, 2013. Amirbek had accompanied his mother, and while she picked cotton, he fell asleep in a trailer and suffocated when cotton was loaded on top of him. They only found his body when they emptied the trailer.⁷⁴



Trailer taking cotton from the field, October 2013.

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- Kozim Omonov, a 22-year old fourth-year student of Karshi State University, and Samandar Nurmatov, a 23-year old fourth-year student at Karshi State University, died from stab wounds suffered during a fight with Akram Sadatovich Urolov, a 23-year old student of Karshi State University, on September 16. Urolov knifed Omonov, Nurmatov, 25-year old Zafar Tukhtaev and 24-year old Vokhid Qodirov during a fight over cotton quotas. Tukhtaev and Qodirov were hospitalized.⁷⁵
- Malika Embergenova, a 17-year old second-year student at Nukus City Medical College No. 1, hanged herself on September 23, 2013, in the village of Atakul, Tahtakupir District, Karakalpakstan.⁷⁶ The college had sent Embergenova to pick cotton and stay in the village during the harvest.
- Zulajkho Jergasheva, a 30-year old teacher at school no. 55 in Samarkand region, died in a car accident while returning home from picking cotton. Ms. Jergasheva had stayed near the cotton fields for five days and was driving home to visit her two small children.⁷⁷
- Khayrulla Nurmatov, a 31-year old resident of Tashkent region, died after an epileptic seizure on October 4, 2013, in a cotton field in Dustlik District, Jizzak region. Nurmatov was picking cotton in place of Dustmurod Abraev, a surgeon of Clinic No. 49 in Yunusobod District of Tashkent City, who had hired Nurmatov to replace him in the cotton fields and pick his quota.⁷⁸
- Safarboy Karimov, a 38-year old farmer from Karakalpakstan, hanged himself in his cotton field, on October 17. Three days prior, authorities scolded him for not meeting his quotas for cotton and wheat.⁷⁹

- Erkinboj Yoldashev, a 16-year old first-year student at the Urgench Industrial High School, died of a heart attack on the evening of October 21, 2013, in the village of Galaba of the Urgench District of the Khorezm Region.⁸⁰ The school administrators had sent Erkinboj to pick cotton in mid-September.⁸¹ In an interview the day of the tragedy, Erkinboj’s mother said Dilfuza Jumaniyozova expressed grief and outrage: “He died at 10 PM, and they came at 5 a.m. saying, ‘Your child is dead. He’s in the morgue,’ and ran away. None of them visited us since then. If my child dies, why don’t they call for me right away? Why did they inform us only after my son had undergone an autopsy? Why did they do this to my child?”⁸²
- Zulfira Akhmedova, a third-year student at Andijan State University, died on October 25 from stab wounds, inflicted by a day labourer who accused Ms. Akhmedova and her mother of underpaying him for picking the daughter’s quota of cotton. Authorities denied Ms. Akhmedova a medical exemption, even though she presented a certificate from the medical advisory board stating that she was unfit to work in the cotton fields.⁸³

Hazardous Conditions

In addition to the fatalities, the Uzbek government forced children and adults to pick cotton in hazardous conditions. The authorities denied virtually all requests for medical exemptions and ignored health risks.⁸⁴ In early September, authorities ordered citizens to manually spray defoliants on the cotton fields, without personal protection equipment or training.⁸⁵ In October, a teacher suffered severe back injuries incurred by lifting bags of cotton day after day, following orders to weigh cotton picked at a farm in Syrdarya region.⁸⁶ People forced to pick cotton around the country, of all ages, reported a lack of potable water at the fields, despite extreme heat at the beginning of the harvest and 10-hour work days throughout the harvest.

Citizens forced to pick cotton also reported unhygienic conditions at the accommodations arranged by authorities near the fields.⁸⁷ Accommodations were in school gymnasiums, hallways and classrooms and unused



Accommodations for children and adults sent to pick cotton in Syrdarya region, September 2013.

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buildings in the countryside. Adults and children often slept on the floors and reported a lack of washing facilities, heat, electricity and adequate food. A week into the harvest, children from Colleges in Tashkent fled the cotton fields because of the poor living conditions. Those with resources paid local residents 500-1000 soums (\$0.23 - \$0.47) per night to sleep in their houses Many students fell ill and were sent home early.⁸⁸



Delivering cotton to the trailer, October 2013. © Association for Human Rights in Central Asia

State Interference with ILO Monitoring and Repression of Independent Uzbek Monitors

The Uzbek government took extensive measures to conceal its continued use of forced labour from the international community in 2013.

The government continued to deny forced labour and misrepresented international organizations to support its claims. In public testimony before the United States Trade Representative in March 2013, the Uzbek Ambassador to the US denied that there was forced labour in the cotton harvest.⁸⁹ In June, in

public comments made on the floor of the International Labour Conference, the Uzbek government misrepresented UNICEF's program in Uzbekistan and claimed to quote a UNICEF report, stating, "the outcome of monitoring exercises carried out by UNICEF in 2012, in which investigations confirmed that in all 13 regions none of the 3.5 million pupils were obliged to participate in the harvest."⁹⁰ UNICEF corrected the record immediately after the Conference, reporting, "UNICEF's observations do confirm that forced child labour in Uzbekistan remains a major and extensive problem as it observed in 2012 the mass mobilization of senior secondary school students for weeks at a time in the cotton fields. Fewer children from primary and junior secondary school were observed in the fields."⁹¹

In Uzbekistan, the GOU intensified its efforts to deny forced labor by attempting to create the impression that work in the cotton fields is voluntary. In January, the government inserted a clause in contracts for public-sector workers making work in the cotton harvest a condition of employment. Leading up to the harvest, school administrators required students and parents to sign commitments at enrollment that students would pick cotton. Throughout the country, authorities instructed children at schools and adults in their workplaces and communities to report to foreigners that they picked cotton "voluntarily" and "for the love of the motherland."

Finally bending to pressure from the international community to accept an ILO observer mission during the cotton harvest,⁹² the Uzbek government invited the ILO to conduct joint monitoring of the cotton harvest. Noting that Tashkent's continued denial of forced labour, the Cotton Campaign publicly highlighted measures to secure space for the ILO to conduct monitoring, including oversight by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and International Organisation of Employers (IOE), independent civil-society participation, a mandate to address forced labour and child labour and public reporting.⁹³ Yet from the outset, Tashkent asserted its position and limited the ILO monitors' ability to fully examine forced labour. The ITUC and IOE were excluded, and government officials and representatives of the state-controlled trade unions and employers' federation on the monitoring teams wound up outnumbered ILO personnel by 4:1. The ILO mission's scope was limited to the worst forms of child labour. The Intergovernmental Working Group accompanied the ILO monitors and consisted of the Uzbek government, the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan (FTUU) and the Chamber of Commerce of Uzbekistan. Neither the FTUU nor the Uzbek Chamber of Commerce constitute legitimate representatives of workers and employers, respectively, nor are they affiliated to the ITUC and IOE. In fact, the representative of the FTUU to the International Labour Conference is a government official and a member of the Uzbek cabinet.⁹⁴

When the ILO monitors arrived in September, government authorities throughout the country had already instructed citizens to report to foreigners that they picked cotton “for the love of the motherland.”⁹⁵ Even private business owners in Tashkent region followed orders to instruct their staff to respond to questions from the ILO mission by stating that they picked cotton “voluntarily, to raise the economy of the country and work hard for our motherland.”⁹⁶ Education officials instructed students to report being over age 18 if they are asked by foreigners while picking cotton and returned students from the cotton fields to schools in anticipation of visits by the ILO.⁹⁷ Fergana regional authorities ordered all residents to have children pick cotton away from main highways.⁹⁸ In advance of an ILO visits to colleges, school officials sent the students back to school from the cotton fields.⁹⁹ A student wrote to Radio Liberty, “I am first-year student from Samarkand Judicial College. We were also sent to pick cotton. Our teachers told us that if the Commission comes we should say that we are second-year in the college. What is happening? It seems illegal.”¹⁰⁰



*Police office to oversee the cotton harvest, Syrdarya region, September 2013.
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While partnering with the ILO to conduct monitoring, the Uzbek government also continued to intimidate and detain Uzbek citizens seeking to document and report on government-orchestrated forced labour. Authorities arrested and detained independent journalist Sergei Naumov, who had frequently reported on forced labour and other human rights violations, for 12 days, during which time they denied him access to his lawyer and family.¹⁰¹ The Bukhara City Criminal Court sentenced Bobomurad Razzakov, a farmer and human rights activist who has frequently represented fellow farmers’ interests before the prosecutor’s office, to four years imprisonment on politically motivated charges of “human trafficking.”¹⁰² In Jizzak, authorities took human rights activist Uktam Pardaev into police custody and then placed him under house arrest, following his meeting with a visiting delegation from South Korea.¹⁰³ Authorities also detained Pardaev incommunicado during the 2012 cotton harvest, following his reports on forced child labour.¹⁰⁴

Observing the fate of citizens who raised their voices, many Uzbek citizens were unable to be fully honest with ILO monitors. As one citizen wrote, “We are aware of our rights but cannot do anything to exercise them. Our state itself sends people to pick cotton and acts as a mafia. Today before we were sent to the



*Teenager picking cotton,
October 2013,
© Association for Human Rights
in Central Asia*

cotton fields the authorities told us that representatives of international organisations might come and ask us questions, and that we must answer that we came to the cotton harvest to help out the state. In these circumstances, no one will tell the truth in the presence of government officials.”¹⁰⁵

At the conclusion of the ILO Mission, the Uzbek government and ILO monitors produced an Information Note, a preliminary statement about the mission. Despite the limitations imposed on the monitoring mission, the Information Note importantly highlights the importance of the Uzbek government accepting technical support from the ILO for the effective implementation of Convention 105. ILO Convention 105 prohibits forced labour and was ratified by the Uzbek government in 1997.

Unfortunately, the mission’s preliminary statement stopped short of concluding that there is systemic use of forced child labor. While it reflects the limitations on the mission, this initial assessment contrasts the voluminous, concrete evidence disseminated by the [Cotton Campaign](#) and its [coalition members](#) throughout the harvest and compiled in today’s report.

In a continuation of its efforts to conceal its use of forced labour, Tashkent has already sought to take advantage of the Information Note, sending a doctored version to international financial institutions as alleged proof that there is no major child labor problem in Uzbekistan. Strikingly, the government’s doctored version blamed the victims, adding text not contained in the ILO monitors’ version: “Cases of child labor took place during the harvesting a very limited quantity [sic]. These cases were initiated by the children themselves and their parents-farmers, government agencies were not involved.”

Conclusions and Recommendations:

State-sponsored forced labour in the cotton industry by both children and adults remains a serious, systematic and continuous violation of fundamental labour rights in Uzbekistan. The government’s use of forced labour in the cotton industry violates Uzbekistan’s own national laws, and its obligations under international labour conventions.

In view of the above, the Cotton Campaign urges the Government of Uzbekistan to:

1. Publicly renounce the forced labour of children and adults in the cotton industry and take immediate and time-bound actions to end the practice.

2. Investigate and hold accountable under legal due process all officials found to have violated national law by mobilizing forced labour during the 2013 harvest.
3. Invite an ILO high-level tripartite monitoring mission to visit the country during the 2014 cotton harvest, with complete freedom of movement and timely access to all situations and relevant parties, in order to monitor compliance with ILO Conventions No.105 and No. 182, under terms that include:
 - a. Tripartite oversight and selection of monitors by the ILO, IOE and ITUC;
 - b. Participation of independent Uzbek civil society;
 - c. Unfettered access for monitoring all situations related to the cotton industry;
 - d. Examination of multinational enterprises operating in the cotton and textile industries or otherwise involved in the cotton harvest; and
 - e. Public reporting of the findings and recommendations.
4. Accept technical assistance from the ILO and other United Nations agencies to eradicate forced labour, including ending the state-order system of cotton production and enabling farmers to hire labour in conditions respecting fundamental rights at work.
5. Provide comprehensive information, as requested by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) and Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS), on the concrete impact of various measures taken to prohibit and monitor the prohibition of forced labour.
6. Allow independent journalists and human rights defenders unrestricted access to document the conditions during the 2014 cotton harvest and as needed according to their discretion.

When the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) ¹⁰⁶ reviews the ILO mission report, they will also review information from the ITUC and IOE. We encourage the CEACR to consider the full range of evidence available and to set the record straight by making clear that again this year the Uzbek government required farmers to produce cotton and mobilized Uzbek children and adults in one of the largest state-sponsored systems of forced labor in the world.

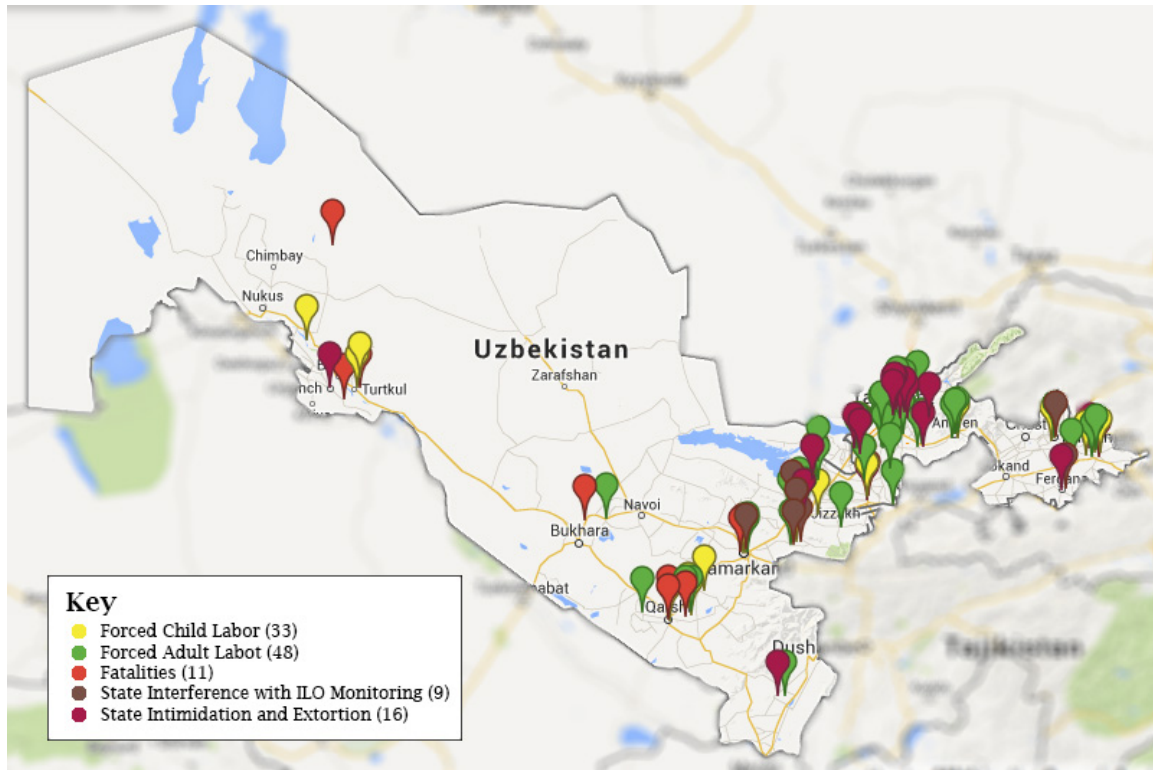
Unfortunately this year the Uzbek government has not demonstrated sufficient political will to end forced labour. Instead, the government continued the practice, interfered with the ILO monitoring mission, and repressed citizen monitors. It is incumbent on businesses, investors and governments to reduce the incentives for the Uzbek government to continue its forced-labour system. To do so, we call on the US government and European Commission to urge the Uzbek government to follow the recommendations

outlined herein. To avoid forced labour in their supply chain, as called for by the business and human rights guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, we call on companies around the world to cease business with the Uzbek cotton industry until the Uzbek government stops forced labour.

Map of abuses in the 2013 Uzbek cotton harvest

The map below depicts each confirmed incident documented in reports from human rights monitors, articles in the press, and from observations e-mailed directly by Uzbek citizens. For an interactive version with descriptions of each incident that will be updated throughout the rest of the harvest, visit:

https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?mid=zDroh0p5_oqk.kt6TkKo14O_A



¹ "Uzbekistan's 2013 cotton output to remain at 2012 level," *Fibre 2 Fashion*; 23 August 2013, http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/cotton-news/newsdetails.aspx?news_id=150781.

² Uzbek human rights monitor, interviews of government officials, 2013.

³ "Uzbekistan to export 320,000 tons of cotton to China," *CA-News*, 18 October 2013, <http://ca-news.org/news:1084614/>; "Uzbekistan: At the international cotton fair, over 680,000 tons of cotton fiber was sold," *Fergana News*, 18 October 2013, <http://ca-news.org/news:1084614/>; "Uzbekistan Hails Cotton Fair While Industry Blasted for 'Slavery'," *EurasiaNet*, 18 October 2013, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67644>; "Uzbekistan Signs Contracts At Cotton Fair Worth \$1 Billion," *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, 18 October 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-cotton-contracts/25140780.html>.

⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "World Data on Education, VII Ed. 2010/11: Uzbekistan," August 2011, http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Uzbekistan.pdf.

⁵ Ministry of Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2012, <http://uzedu.uz/rus/info/pokazateli/> (November 2013); "КОЛЛЕДЖИ УЗБЕКИСТАНА В НОВОМ УЧЕБНОМ ГОДУ ПРИМУТ ОКОЛО 500 ТЫСЯЧ УЧАЩИХСЯ," *12uz.com*, 20 May 2013, <http://www.12uz.com/ru/news/show/education/14319/>.

⁶ "In Angren all residents mobilized to weed cotton fields," *UzNews*, 16 May 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=usual&cid=2&nid=22737.

⁷ Uzbek human rights monitor, August 2013.

⁸ Uzbek human rights monitor, August – September 2013; "Uzbek authorities conceal the true scope of forced labor, including that of children," *UzNews*, 7 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=30&nid=23979, English summary: The government authorities are requiring high-school students to signing statements of their volition to work in the cotton harvest, returning high-school students from the fields to their homes prior to the arrival of ILO monitors, and instructing students under age 18 to claim to be older; "Коллеж талабалари "пахтага бораман" деган тилхат ёзишга мажбурланмоқда," *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty "Ozodlik"*, 12 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25103653.html>, English summary: Throughout the country, students were required to sign letters stating their agreement to pick cotton, 'to fulfill my duty to my country, my nation and my family,' and acknowledgement to accept punishment if they fail to fulfill this "duty." A high-school staff person confirmed the use of these letters and stated that punishment for not fulfilling the order is necessary to ensure the students pick cotton, as they have each year.

⁹ "Коллеж талабалари "пахтага бораман" деган тилхат ёзишга мажбурланмоқда," *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty "Ozodlik"*, 12 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25103653.html>, English summary: Throughout the country, students were required to sign letters stating their agreement to pick cotton, 'to fulfill my duty to my country, my nation and my family,' and acknowledgement to accept punishment if they fail to fulfill this "duty." A high-school staff person confirmed the use of these letters and stated that punishment for not fulfilling the order is necessary to ensure the students pick cotton, as they have each year.

¹⁰ "Коллеж талабалари "пахтага бораман" деган тилхат ёзишга мажбурланмоқда," *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty "Ozodlik"*, 12 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25103653.html>.

¹¹ "Police in Angren force children to pick cotton," *UzNews*, 25 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=2&nid=24188.

¹² Uzbek human rights monitor, September – November 2013.

¹³ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: September 20, Karshi, Director of academic lyceum No. 2 expelled the 16-year old student Barhayot Turaev for refusing to pick cotton. Photograph depicts the teacher giving the expulsion note to the student: https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=635208806523144&set=a.600655889978436.1073741826.475357399174953&type=1&relevant_count=1; "Қаршида пахтага чиқмаган касал талаба ўқишдан ҳайдалди," *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty "Ozodlik"*, 21 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25113332.html>, English summary: Students of academic Lyceum # 2 in Karshi city who didn't go to pick cotton are being expelled. Barhayot Turaev, a third-year student at the high school, has a skin disorder, was refused a medical exemption, and was expelled for refusing to work in the cotton fields. The school dean confirmed the policy and stated that the education director had ordered school administrators to follow it.

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- ¹⁴ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 10 September, authorities began the nationwide mobilization of students to the cotton fields; “Қашқадарёда 9 сентябрдан оммавий пахта терими бошланади,” *BBC*, 7 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130907_cy_uzbek_cotton.shtml
- ¹⁵ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 15 September, Syrdarya, all high-school students sent to pick cotton, including from Jizzak, Pakhtakor, Zafarabad, Arnasay, Dustlik, Mirzachul, Zarbdor and Zaaminsky; Uzbek human rights monitor, English translation: 12 September, Syrdarya region, all high-school students began picking cotton. A student’s mother reported that her daughter picked cotton in the Bayavut district, where they were required to pick 50 kilograms of cotton per day, for which they rise at 6:00 AM and return to their accommodations at 19:00 and 20:00, despite the high temperatures and insufficient drinking water.
- ¹⁶ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 15 September, Gulistan city, Syrdarya region, the Construction College mobilized its students. Of the 2,000 high-school students, 350 went to pick cotton, and rest paid 150,000-200,000 soums (\$71-\$94 USD) for an exemption.
- ¹⁷ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: September 19, the Jizzak Politechnical Institute sent its adult university students to join the children, students of Jizzak’s high schools, to pick cotton at farm No. 11 in the Dustlik district.
- ¹⁸ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 16-17 September, Angren, Tashkent region, mobilization of high-school students (ages 15-18): <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.633550863355605.1073741828.475357399174953&type=1>
- ¹⁹ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 25 October 201, Tashkent region, the city municipality reported that the harvest is expected to continue until November 5. High-school students were sent to pick cotton in shifts during October, starting with the first-year students, followed by the second- and third-year students. Some students were obliged to pay the expense of transportation to the cotton fields.
- ²⁰ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 7 October, Andijan region, high schools sent a large number of third-year students (ages 17 and 18) to the cotton fields.
- ²¹ “Пахта: Ўқитувчиларга талабаларни топишдек изқуварлар вазифаси берилган,” *BBC*, 17 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130917_cotton_teacher.shtml, English summary: The BBC interviewed a high-school teacher, who reported that they were ordered to pick cotton despite poor health; and they were ordered to coerce 30 students into picking cotton under their oversight. The teachers were instructed to report uncooperative students to police, who would record a list of their names. The target students were the 10-15% who register but work instead of attending school. The teacher also reported visiting a healthcare clinic, where staff instructed everyone the no medical exemptions would be granted, except by the mayor’s office. Another teacher reported receiving the orders to recruit and oversee students in the cotton fields.
- ²² Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 15 October, Samarkand region, high-school students from all grade levels were working in the cotton fields.
- ²³ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 20 October, Syrdarya region, high-school teacher reported that he began overseeing a group of 31 second-year high-school students since September 12. Of the 966 students of his high school, 450 were sent to pick cotton. The daily cotton pick quota is 60 kilograms. After 10 days, another teacher took over his role as overseer, and he was ordered to visit homes of students who had not gone to pick cotton and to send them to the fields
- ²⁴ “Чироқчида ўқувчилар чопиққа мажбурланмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 23 May 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/24994813.html>, English summary: Chiroqchi district, Kashkadarya region, classes for grades 5-6 at School No. 170 and No. 35 were suspended, and the children ages 10-12 were sent to weed and plough cotton fields.
- ²⁵ “Амударё туманида ўқувчилар ғўза чопиғига чиқарилди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 15 May 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/24987039.html>, English summary: Amudarya district, Karalkalpakstan, schoolchildren were sent to weed and plough cotton fields. Jizzak region, teachers and other public-sector workers were forced to work in the cotton fields on the weekends.
- ²⁶ “Касби туманида ўқувчилар пахтага ҳайдалди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 4 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25126888.html>, English summary: Kasbi district, Kashkadarya region, schoolchildren of 7th, 8th and 9th grades were sent to pick cotton; “Қорақалпоғистонда мактаб ўқувчилари пахта теримига чиқарилди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 12 October 2013,

<http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25135028.html>, English summary: In the Turtkol and Konlikol districts of Karakalpakstan, schoolchildren were taken to pick cotton. In the Ordurdiv village, school #9 took 8th and 9th grade students (ages 14-15) to pick cotton on Saturday after classes. In the Konlikol district, most schools took 7th – 9th grade students to pick cotton for 3-4 days, instead of classes.

²⁷ “Қорақалпоғистонда мактаб ўқувчилари пахта теримига чиқарилди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 12 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25135028.html>, English summary: In the Turtkol and Konlikol districts of Karakalpakstan, schoolchildren were taken to pick cotton. In the Ordurdiv village, school #9 took 8th and 9th grade students (ages 14-15) to pick cotton on Saturday after classes. In the Konlikol district, most schools took 7th – 9th grade students to pick cotton for 3-4 days, instead of classes.

²⁸ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 16 October, Oltinkul district Andijan region, schoolchildren as young as age 11 from school N16 were sent to pick cotton.

²⁹ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: 15 October, Tashkent region, Buka district, doctors reported seeing a group of 15 children approximate ages 12-14, standing at the edge of a cotton field with bags used to collect cotton and accompanied by two police officers.

³⁰ Uzbek human rights monitor, English summary: November, Andijan and Kashkadarya regions, school children were sent to pick cotton on orders from the local government authorities.

³¹ Trilling, David, “Forced labour in Uzbekistan: In the land of cotton,” *The Economist*, 16 October 2013, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2013/10/forced-labour-uzbekistan>

³² “Uzbek farmers promised benefits for good cotton,” *BBC*, 21 October 2013, http://www.cottoncampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Gazeta_21October2013_farmers_promised_benefits.pdf

³³ “В Янгйюле схвачен милиционер, обвиняемый в убийстве фермера,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 3 May 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=ru&cid=38&nid=22628.

³⁴ Uzbek human rights monitor, September 2013.

³⁵ Uzbek human rights monitor, October 2013.

³⁶ “Ҳақоратланган фермернинг кампир онаси Қизириқ ҳокимига этагини кўтарди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 9 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25131695.html>

³⁷ “Farmer commits suicide on cotton field,” *Fergana News*, 20 October 2013, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2743&mode=snews>; “Тўрткўллик фермер қамалишдан кўрқиб, ўзини осди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 18 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25140979.html>

³⁸ “Volunteering Gone Mad in Uzbekistan,” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 7 February 2013, <http://iwpr.net/report-news/volunteering-gone-mad-uzbekistan>; “Is teacher more useful at school or in a cotton field?” *BBC*, 1 October 2013,

http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/10/131001_cy_uzbek_teacher_day.shtml, English summary: On Uzbekistan’s Teachers’ Day, a national holiday, President Islam Karimov did not mention the participation of teachers in the cotton harvest. Teachers shared their experiences of picking cotton, managing double workload while colleagues pick cotton, and being fired for reporting on the mobilization for the cotton harvest;

“Университет ўқитувчиси: 40 кун пахта тердим, тушликни уйдан ташидим,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 25 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25148101.html>, English summary: A teacher of Guliston State University picked cotton for 40 days, returning home each night, to avoid losing his salary.

³⁹ “Амударё туманида ўқувчилар ёўза чопиғига чиқарилди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 15 May 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/24987039.html>, English summary: Jizzak region, teachers and other public-sector workers were forced to work in the cotton fields on the weekends; “In Angren all residents mobilized to weed cotton fields,” *UzNews*, 16 May 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=usual&cid=2&nid=22737.

⁴⁰ “In Angren all residents mobilized to weed cotton fields,” *UzNews*, 16 May 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=usual&cid=2&nid=22737.

⁴¹ “Янгийўллик тиббиёт ходимлари пахта яганасига мажбурланди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 27 May 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/24998716.html>, English summary: Tashkent region central

hospital doctors, nurses and other staff were sent to weed cotton fields. A paramedic and head doctor stated that the contracts for the hospital staff included a statement that they would “voluntarily” help with agricultural work.

⁴² Uzbek human rights monitor, August – September 2013.

⁴³ “Шифокорлар бу йил ҳам мажбуран пахтага олиб чиқилади,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 18 August 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25079622.html>; “Шифокорлар бу йил ҳам мажбуран пахтага олиб чиқилади,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 18 August 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25079622.html>, English summary: Around the country, hospitals and other health care institution administrations instructed the doctors, nurses and other staff that they would have to pick cotton or contribute approximately half of their salary to cotton collection during the harvest season, or they would be dismissed.

⁴⁴ Uzbek human rights monitor, September 2013.

⁴⁵ “Uzbek Government to mobilize state employees for the cotton harvest,” *Fergana News*, 23 August 2013, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2699&mode=snews>.

⁴⁶ “Uzbek teachers enlisted in preparation for child labour during the cotton harvest,” *UzNews*, 23 August 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=3&nid=23565; “Ҳашарчилар таъминоти ташкилотларга юкланди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 28 August 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25089497.html>, English Summary: Surkhandarya region, authorities convened a meeting with heads of public-sector institutions and private companies and ordered them to pay the cost of refurbishing accommodations for people sent to pick cotton. The “Djarkorgonneft” society was responsible for refurbishing a field house with toilets and showers.

⁴⁷ “Пахта мавсуми сабаб Тошкентда мардикорларнинг нархи кескин кўтарилган,” *BBC*, 16 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130916_cotton_season_mardikors.shtml, English summary: BBC interviewed Sur’at Ikromov, leader of the Action Group of Independent Human Rights Defenders of Uzbekistan. Mr. Ikromov reported that everyone – public sector and private sector – is required to contribute to the cotton harvest. Government tax inspectors threaten private business owners with extraordinary tax investigations to ensure their contribution. Businessmen avoid the field work by hiring day labourers, which transfers the labour cost from the government to the businesses.

⁴⁸ Uzbek citizen, Email to [noforcedlabor\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:noforcedlabor[at]gmail.com), 19 September 2013, English translation: A self-described small businessman in Tashkent reported that received a call from the local administration in the district of Tashkent where his business is registered inviting him to a meeting the next day. When he showed up, he was taken in to see a Deputy Administrator who was accompanied by two men who identified themselves as working for the Prosecutor’s Office and the Tax Inspectorate. He was told he needed to contribute two people to the cotton harvest. He explained he only employed four and could not spare two of them for the harvest. He was then told that in that case he should hire two unemployed people to do the harvesting. He again refused and was threatened with stepped up inspections of his business by a variety of government agencies. According to the author of the email, just during the time he was at the local administration office something like 40 other private businessmen were there, having been called in just as he was.

⁴⁹ *Uzmetronom.com*, 5 September 2013, English summary: Private businessmen whose firms work on the territory of Tashkent’s parks were called together and told that according to the local administration they will all voluntarily spend 40 days picking cotton in Syrdarya. Those who don’t wish to volunteer or wish to volunteer for a shorter period should pay 40,000 soums (\$18-19) per day or 1.6 million soums (\$755) for the full 40 day period (apparently no discounts given). According to the article: “Those who refused were threatened with administrative intervention (additional checks of their financial-economic activities leading to the opening of criminal cases in instances of causing harm to the national economy).” The article notes that teachers, doctors, clerks, industrial workers, etc. are getting the same message.

⁵⁰ “Ушли на грядки,” *UzMetronom*, 16 September 2013, http://www.uzmetronom.com/2013/09/16/ushli_na_grjadki.html, English summary: In Tashkent, authorities required business owners to send their workers to pick cotton and to sign an agreement to buy food for the cotton pickers from Mega Food Store, a company directed by O.Z. Ortikov, yet the actual use of the money is unknown. Example of the agreement is posted on the link. At the Sergeli automotive market in Tashkent, shop owners were

compelled to pick cotton for three days in Jizzak region, hire someone to go in their place, or pay 40,000 soums (\$19) per day to the district administration, under threat of losing their shops.

⁵¹ “Кейинги ҳафтадан пахта теримиға сафарбарлик қутилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 3 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25094184.html>, English summary: A listener wrote to Radio Liberty that in Surkandarya, region private companies employing 10 or more persons were ordered to send 2-5 employees to pick cotton.

⁵² Uzbek human rights monitor, September 2013.

⁵³ Uzbek human rights monitor, interview of GM worker, November 2013, cited in Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights, “A Chronicle of Forced Labor of Children and Adults: Issue 8,” 7 November 2013, <http://uzbekgermanforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/8-Cotton-Chronicle-Issue-8-20131.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Uzbek citizen, Email to noforcedlabor[at]gmail.com, 17 September 2013, English translation: Mahalla committee in Tashkent suburbs visited the homes of the community residents and asked them to give 89,000 soums (\$42) to the cotton harvest. The mahalla committee representatives informed the residents that they would have problems with their electricity if they refused to pay. One pensioner reported that he already refused to pay and lost power; he then paid, and the power returned.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ “Тошкент мактаблари пахта теримиға “команда” олди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 9 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25100550.html>, English summary: In Buka district, Tashkent region, local authorities mobilized five people from each neighborhood.

⁵⁷ “Наманганда пахта учун аҳоли ва тадбиркорлардан пул ундирилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 13 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25105254.html>, English summary: The Namangan regional governor issued a statement to the local media that neighborhood “mahalla” committees would mobilize residents for the harvest.

⁵⁸ “Зааминцев заставляють собирать хлопок бесплатно,” *UzNews*, 18 September 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=ru&sub=top&cid=2&nid=23785, English summary: Residents of villages in the Zaaminski district of Dzhizak province were gathered together by local authorities and told they must all pick cotton, for which they will receive no payment, not even the token amounts received in past years. There are to be no exceptions; if anyone is too old or sick to participate they must hire a replacement with their own money. The authorities threatened to cut off electricity and/or hold up child support or pension payments to those who refuse to participate.

⁵⁹ “Тошкентда мардикорлар мажбурий пахта теримиға ҳайдалмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 5 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25127584.html>, English summary: At the Koylik market in Tashkent, police rounded up day labourers from Syrdarya region and forcibly took them to pick cotton, citing their lack of residence permits to be in Tashkent.

⁶⁰ “Жанубий вилоятларда пахта теримиға “старт” берилди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 5 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25096739.html>, English summary: September 5, in southern regions, under orders from the authorities, public-sector institutions and private companies began sending their employees to the cotton fields; “Тошкент мактаблари пахта теримиға “команда” олди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 9 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25100550.html>, English summary: Starting September 6, Navoi city, Kashkadarya region, nurses were sent to pick cotton and stay overnight in the cotton fields of Kiziltepa district. The nurses reported picking cotton in shifts for 10-15 days. September 6, Surkhandarya district, workers of several private companies and public institutions were sent to pick cotton.

⁶¹ “Тошкент мактаблари пахта теримиға “команда” олди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 9 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25100550.html>, English summary: Starting September 9, school staff were sent to pick cotton or required to pay a fine of 400,000 soums (\$189). Public sector workers in Tashkent received orders to begin picking cotton on September 10.

⁶² “Тошкент мактаблари пахта теримиға “команда” олди,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 9 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25100550.html>, English summary: Starting September 6, Navoi city, Kashkadarya region, nurses were sent to pick cotton and stay overnight in the cotton fields of Kiziltepa district. The nurses reported picking cotton in shifts for 10-15 days. September 6, Surkhandarya district, workers of

several private companies and public institutions were sent to pick cotton; Uzbek human rights monitor, September – November 2013.

⁶³ “Наманганда пахта учун аҳоли ва тадбиркорлардан пул ундирилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 13 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25105254.html>, English summary: The Namangan regional governor issued a statement to the local media that the students of the three regional universities and all workers of companies and public-sector institutions would work in the cotton harvest.

⁶⁴ Uzbek citizen, Email to [noforcedlabor\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:noforcedlabor[at]gmail.com), 17 September 2013, English translation: On 17 September 2013, at 6:00 AM at South Station, the Tashkent city mayor sent “volunteers” to the cotton harvest, somewhere in Jizzak region. The people would stay in a college gymnasium.

⁶⁵ “Daytime markets shutdown in Uzbekistan, police chasing vendors,” *Fergana News*, 4 October 2013, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2732&mode=snews>.

⁶⁶ “Қашқадарёда 9 сентябрдан оммавий пахта терими бошланади,” *BBC*, 7 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130907_су_узбек_cotton.shtml, English summary: Kashkadarya region, leading up to September 10, university students, public-sector and private sector workers and members of neighborhood “mahalla” committees received orders to pick cotton or pay the value of their daily cotton quota. Authorities also informed residents that transportation and food expenses would be the responsibility of the citizens, and that penalties for disobeying the orders included dismissal from work, docked salary, and expulsion from school.

⁶⁷ Uzbek human rights monitor, October 2013.

⁶⁸ Uzbek human rights monitor, September – November 2013.

⁶⁹ Университет ўқитувчиси: 40 кун пахта тердим, тушликни уйдан ташидим,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 25 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25148101.html>, English summary: A teacher of Guliston State University picked 30-40 kilograms of cotton per day. Uzbek human rights monitor, 19 October; Uzbek human rights monitor, 20 October; *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 10 October 2013, “WhatsApp Пахтакор: “Яна озгина териб беринглар, наварамни Австрияда ўқитволай!”

<http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25104210.html>, English summary: Students of Dustlik district, Jizzak region reported that the daily quota of 70 kilograms of cotton must be met to receive any payment, and deductions are taken for food and accommodations; “Узбекистан: Ученики колледжей переведены на казарменное положение на хлопок отправляют даже нарушителей ПДД,” *Fergana News*, 21 September 2013, <http://www.fergananews.com/news/21226>, English summary: Students from ages 16-18 are being mobilized to pick cotton and assigned daily quotas of 50-60 kilos. The article includes pictures of children in a bus being taken to the harvest and of a place in the town of Buka where students from one high school from another area are being housed while they pick cotton; “Uzbek Government to mobilize state employees for the cotton harvest,” *Fergana News*, 23 August 2013, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2699&mode=snews>, English summary: Tashkent, administrations of public-sector institutions informed staff that they would be required to pick cotton and pay for their travel, alimentation and lodging during the cotton harvest. The daily cotton picking quota told to city residents was 40-60 kilograms.

⁷⁰ “Университет ўқитувчиси: 40 кун пахта тердим, тушликни уйдан ташидим,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 25 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25148101.html>, English summary: He picked 30-40 kilograms of cotton per day and was paid less than \$200,000 soums (\$94), which did not cover the costs of his transportation.

⁷¹ “WhatsApp Пахтакор: “Яна озгина териб беринглар, наварамни Австрияда ўқитволай!” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 10 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25104210.html>

⁷² “В Янгиюле схвачен милиционер, обвиняемый в убийстве фермера,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 3 May 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=ru&cid=38&nid=22628

⁷³ “Пахта – 2013’ нинг илк қурбони Қаршида қайд этилди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 16 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25107660.html>

⁷⁴ “Вобкентда 1-синф ўқувчиси пахта тагида қолиб ўлди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 19 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25111365.html>

⁷⁵ *Fergana News*, October 28, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2750&mode=snews>; “Қаршида пахтага чиқмаган касал талаба ўқишдан ҳайдалди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 21 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25113332.html>.

⁷⁶ “Student commits suicide during cotton harvest,” *UzNews*, 4 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=4&nid=23954.

⁷⁷ “Another cotton-related death – teacher dies in car crash,” *UzNews*, 4 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=4&nid=23966

⁷⁸ “Шифокор ёллаган мардикор пахтазорда ўлиб қолди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 8 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25130163.html>; “Наманганда пахта учун аҳоли ва тадбиркорлардан пул ундирилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 13 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25105254.html>.

⁷⁹ “Farmer commits suicide on cotton field,” *Fergana News*, 20 October 2013, <http://enews.fergananews.com/news.php?id=2743&mode=snews>; “Тўрткўллик фермер қамалишдан қўрқиб, ўзини осди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 18 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25140979.html>

⁸⁰ “Урганчда пахта теришга мажбурланган 16 яшар бола ётоқда ўлиб қолди,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 22 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25144742.html>, English summary: 16-year old Yuldoshev Erkaboy Shuhratovich died unexpectedly in the barracks during the cotton harvest in Galaba village, Urgench, Khorezm region, on October 21. Yuldoshev was a 1st-year student of at the Urgench Vocational College. He died in the barracks at 10 p.m., shortly after his returning from the cotton field; “16-year old dies during cotton harvest,” *UzNews*, 23 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=3&nid=24150. “Uzbek Cotton-Picking Claims Eighth Victim,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, 23 October 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/25145827.html>.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Interview, *RadioFree Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 22 October 2013, starting at minute 9, <http://www.ozodlik.org/audio/audio/1017350.html>.

⁸³ “Uzbek Student Stabbed to Death in Dispute over Cotton Picking,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, 31 October 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-cotton-picking-killing/25153889.html>; *Fergana News*, 31 October 2013, <http://www.fergananews.com/news/21431>.

⁸⁴ “Пахта: Ўқитувчиларга талабаларни топишдек изқуварлар вазифаси берилган,” *BBC*, 17 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130917_cotton_teacher_shtml, English summary: The teacher also reported visiting a healthcare clinic, where staff instructed everyone the no medical exemptions would be granted, except by the mayor’s office; “Зааминцев заставляют собирать хлопок бесплатно,” *UzNews*, 18 September 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=ru&sub=top&cid=2&nid=23785, English summary: There are to be no exceptions; if anyone is too old or sick to participate they must hire a replacement with their own money; “WhatsApp Пахтакор: “Битта домла камида 3-4 миллион сўм пул ишлапти,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 19 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25104210.html>, English summary: A Radio Liberty reader posted a blog stating that students diagnosed with health issues were forced to pick cotton.

⁸⁵ Uzbek human rights monitor, September 2013.

⁸⁶ Uzbek human rights monitor, October 2013.

⁸⁷ Uzbek human rights monitors, September – November 2013.

⁸⁸ Uzbek human rights monitor, September - November 2013; “WhatsApp Пахтакор: “Битта домла камида 3-4 миллион сўм пул ишлапти,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik,”* 19 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25111213.html>, English summary: A listener reported abysmal conditions of accommodations for cotton pickers in Samarkand, including no gas, electricity or appropriate washing facilities; therefore, some pay 35,000 soums (\$17 USD) for rent and 3,000 soums (\$1.42) per shower in other facilities, expenditures far exceeding any pay for the cotton picked.

⁸⁹ Executive Office of the President, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, *Public Hearing for U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP): 2012 Annual Review of Country Practices*, March 28, 2013, Washington DC.

⁹⁰ Report of the Committee on the Application of Standards, Part Two, Record of Proceedings, 19 June 2013. Uzbekistan. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

⁹¹ Statement provided by the Vice-President of Public Policy and Advocacy of the US Fund for UNICEF, June 2013

⁹² Each year, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) reviews the application of labour conventions by the 185 member states of the ILO. Since 2005, the CEACR report has raised concern about forced labour for the purposes of economic development in Uzbekistan. In 2010, 2011 and 2013, the Committee on the Application of Standards urged the Government to accept an ILO high-level tripartite observer mission that would have full freedom of movement and timely access to all situations and relevant parties, including in the cotton fields, in order to assess the implementation of Convention No. 182. The CEACR reports inform discussion of cases of particular concern by the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS), comprised of representatives of the employers, workers and governments of ILO member states and mandated to review cases and issue recommendations to the government concerned. In June 2013, the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards, the tripartite supervisory body of the ILO, “requested the Government to accept an ILO high-level monitoring mission during the 2013 cotton harvest that would have full freedom of movement and timely access to all situations and relevant parties, including in the cotton fields...” [Report of the Committee on the Application of Standards, Part Two, Record of Proceedings, 19 June 2013. Uzbekistan. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)]

⁹³ Cotton Campaign, “Recommendations Recommended Terms of Reference for an International Labour Organization Program in Uzbekistan,” distributed to the ILO, United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, ITUC, IOE, US government, European Commission in July 2013, http://www.cottoncampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Recommendations_ToR_ILOmonitoringUzbekistan.pdf; Cotton Campaign letter to the ILO Director of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), 24 September 2013, http://www.cottoncampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ltr_ILO-IPEC_CottonCampaign_24Sept2013.pdf.

⁹⁴ The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946 that has a unique tripartite structure that includes representatives from national governments, employers associations, and trade unions. . The Uzbek government as well as the Uzbek Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan (FTUU), which are not independent of the government, are members of the ILO.

⁹⁵ “Пахта мавсуми сабаб Тошкентда мардикорларнинг нархи кескин кўтарилган’,” *BBC*, 16 September 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/uzbek/uzbekistan/2013/09/130916_cotton_season_mardikors.shtml, English summary: BBC interviewed Sur’at Ikromov, leader of the Action Group of Independent Human Rights Defenders of Uzbekistan. Mr. Ikromov government officials have instructed citizens to report to foreigners that they contribute to the harvest for the love of the motherland; “В Узбекистане пытаются обмануть международных инспекторов,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty “Ozodlik”*, 23 September, <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/uzbekistan-cotton-ilo-inspection-on-child-labour/25113351.html>, English summary: A report quoting several sources to the effect that officials have coached them or their relatives on what to say if asked by ILO inspectors; “Самарканд - ты записался в хлопкоробы? Все на хлопок!,” *UzNews*, 23 September 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=ru&sub=top&cid=2&nid=23829, English summary: A report on the mobilization campaign in Samarkand quotes the mother of one student as saying that her daughter and her classmates were coached to tell ILO monitors that they were picking cotton voluntarily.

⁹⁶ “Наманганда пахта учун аҳоли ва тадбиркорлардан пул ундирилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik”*, 13 September 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25105254.html>, English summary: A private-sector worker in Tashkent region reported that he learned of the ILO mission from Radio Liberty and noted that he and his colleagues were instructed to respond to their questions by saying that they picked cotton ‘voluntarily, to raise the economy of the country and work hard for our motherland.’

⁹⁷ “Uzbek authorities conceal the true scope of forced labor, including that of children,” *UzNews*, 7 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=30&nid=23979; “Халқаро кузатувчилар ҳамон Ўзбекистонда: талабаларга уларга нима дейиш ўргатилмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik”*, 23 October 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25145763.html>.

⁹⁸ “Фарғоналиклардан пахта пайтида тўй қилмаслик бўйича тилхат олинмоқда,” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty “Ozodlik”*, 12 August 2013, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/25073049.html>, English summary:

Fergana regional authorities issued orders for the upcoming cotton harvest: no weddings during the harvest; no taking children to pick cotton near the main highways; and public-sector workers will contribute to the harvest.

⁹⁹ Uzbek human rights monitors, 14 October 2013 and 15 October 2013.

¹⁰⁰ *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty "Ozodlik,"* website post, 30 October 2013.

¹⁰¹ OSCE media freedom representative concerned about disappearance of journalist in Uzbekistan," Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 23 September 2013, <http://www.osce.org/fom/105392>; "Uzbekistan - Independent journalist missing after calling to say he was arrested," Reporters Without Borders, 23 September 2013, <http://www.trust.org/item/20130923125113-rpyi0/?source=hppartner>; "Uzbekistan: Journalist Forcibly 'Disappeared,'" Human Rights Watch, 27 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/24/uzbekistan-journalist-forcibly-disappeared>; "Uzbekistan: Freelance journalist and human rights activist Sergey Naumov is under a 12 days arrest for "hooliganism," Association for Human Rights in Central Asia, 29 September 2013, http://nadejda-atayeva-en.blogspot.com/2013/09/uzbekistan-freelance-journalist-and_25.html; "Sergey Naumov freed from detention," *UzNews*, 4 October 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=3&nid=23965

¹⁰² "Uzbekistan: Trial of Activist on Trumped-Up Charges," Human Rights Watch, 24 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/24/uzbekistan-trial-activist-trumped-charges>;

¹⁰³ "Jizak-based activist under round-the-clock watch," *UzNews*, 12 February 2013,

http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=3&nid=22026; "Jizzakh human rights worker "hidden" from Korea child labor monitors," *UzNews*, 27 September 2013, http://www.uznews.net/news_single.php?lng=en&sub=hot&cid=2&nid=23899

¹⁰⁴ "Central Asia: Overview of Key Human Rights Concerns and Recommendations: Uzbekistan," *Human Rights Watch*, 15 November 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/11/15/central-asia-overview-key-human-rights-concerns-and-recommendations>

¹⁰⁵ Uzbek citizen, Email to noforcedlabor[at]gmail.com, 13 September 2013.

¹⁰⁶ The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) is an independent body composed of legal experts charged with examining the application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations by ILO member States. The annual report of the Committee of Experts covers numerous matters related to the application of ILO standards. The report of the Committee of Experts is also available at: www.ilo.org/global/standards/lang--en/index.htm.