

## **Moratorium on the death penalty: testimony of Tamara Chikunova**

Last Tuesday, 29th of November, we welcomed Mrs. Tamara Chikunova from Uzbekistan in the light of the international campaign '*Cities against the death penalty*' (Sant'Egidio community). Mrs. Chikunova was confronted with the death penalty in the most horrifying way: her only son, D'mitriy, was executed in 2000, following an ill-founded prosecution for murder. In a moving testimony Mrs. Chikunova told how her son was wrongly accused of murder by Uzbekistan authorities, how he was forced to make a confession under torture and how he was finally sentenced to death after a grossly unfair trial. Mrs. Chikunova, herself a lawyer, relentlessly tried to prove her son's innocence, but the execution could not be stopped.

Following Dmitriy's death, Mrs. Chikunova founded 'Mothers against the Death Penalty and Torture', an organization that advocates for the abolition of capital punishment. In Uzbekistan, this mission has been successfully accomplished.

For more information on the work of the Sant'Egidio Community and Tamara Chikunova, visit:

<http://santegidio.be/main.php>, <http://www.willsworld.com/~mvfhr/tamara.htm>





