Hamburger Stiftung

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**Press Release**

**Humayro Bakhtiyar, journalist from Tajikistan**

**Latest guest of the Hamburg Foundation for Politically Persecuted People**

10 September 2016

Hamburg

Humayro Bakhtiyar (30 years), the latest guest of the Hamburg Foundation for Politically Persecuted People, has safely arrived in Hamburg.

The young Tajik first build a reputation in her home country as a parliamentary reporter for Radio Imruz (2007-2010) and from 2010-2014 for newspapers and agencies and since 2015 with her coverage of political and human rights issues for the media group Asia Plus. Special attention was paid to her reports on a task force concerned with the death penalty as well as on the civil merger of several NGOs opposing torture and other human rights violations of the Tajik regime.

In the years 2012, 2013 and 2015, she was honored with awards by the "Institute for War and Peace Reporting" for her work on the Tajik presidential election and on the topic "radicalism and extremism", among other things.

These and other research works brought Humayro Bakhtiyar to the attention of the Tajik intelligence. In 2014, she was questioned by the security services several times, her phone was tapped and her Facebook account hacked. In March 2015, one day after her interview with the Tadjik opposition politician Umarali Kuwatow living in exile, he was shot by unknown assailants in Istanbul in broad daylight. Kuwatow had been a fierce critic of Tajikistan’s long-time head of state Emommali Rahmon. Since this murder, the journalist Bakhtiyar feared for her life.

According to Reporters Without Borders, the danger for independent journalists has increased due to the current aggravation of the inner-political situation, which is characterized among other things by armed conflicts between security forces and opponents of the government.

Thus, we are very happy to be able to welcome Humayro Bakhtiyar in safety. The young woman wants to spend her year in Hamburg informing the public about the volatile situation in her home country, while expanding her network and receiving further professional education. We thank ProtectDefenders.eu, the EU HRD Mechanism, for making this one-year fellowship possible.

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