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RUSSIAN FEDERATION: CONTINUING EXECUTIONS MAKE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
COMMITMENTS A MOCKERY, SAYS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is appalled at recent official reports that 53 people were executed this year in the Russian Federation, despite a commitment by the government to impose an immediate moratorium on executions from 28 February, when Russia joined the Council of Europe.

“Russia is treating its Council of Europe commitments with contempt,” Amnesty International said today. “How much longer before Russia backs up words with actions, stops executions, and ensures that responsible officials respect the moratorium?”

At a press conference in Moscow on 24 September, Anatoly Pristavkin, the chairman of the Presidential Clemency Commission and Valery Borschev, representative of the Chamber of Human Rights under the President, reported that 53 executions have been carried out in 1986. It was also announced that judicial errors have been made in 30 per cent of death penalty cases.

The Presidential Clemency Commission regularly recommends that the president grant clemency, but according to the information available to Amnesty International, President Yeltsin granted clemency in only five cases in 1995.

Amnesty International believes that other executions may be imminent, and fears for the lives of the estimated 700 prisoners still on death row in the Russian Federation.

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