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Death Penalty

15 May 1992

RUSSIAN FEDERATION:  
(Name in cyrillic)

Vladimir LEVCHENKO

(Name in cyrillic)

Nikolay KLEPCHA

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Amnesty International is concerned that Vladimir Levchenko and his co-defendant Nikolay Klepcha, may soon be executed if their petitions for clemency, currently pending with President Yeltsin, are turned down.

Vladimir Levchenko's appeal against the death sentence was rejected in March 1991 which indicates that, in his case, the whole appeals procedure is at a very advanced stage, and he faces imminent execution.

Vladimir Levchenko and Nikolay Klepcha were sentenced to death in September 1990 for premeditated murder under aggravating circumstances.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Soviet parliament adopted legislation in July 1991 reducing the number of crimes punishable by the death penalty from 18 to five. However, in each of the republics of the USSR, the provisions of the new USSR legislation have no force unless the republican parliament has incorporated them into republican legislation. The new legislation retains the death penalty for five crimes in peacetime: treason, premeditated murder with aggravating circumstances, rape of a minor with aggravating circumstances, kidnapping of a minor with especially grave consequences and grave crimes against the peace and security of mankind. Women and those under the age of 18 are exempted under the new legislation from the death penalty, and those awaiting execution for crimes which no longer carry the death penalty have their sentences commuted to 15-year prison terms. The death penalty will be carried out, as before, by shooting.

On 11 March 1992, a leading newspaper, Izvestiya, reported that 332 people were currently on death row in the Russian Federation.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telephone calls/telegrams/express and airmail letters:**

- asking for commutation of the death sentences passed on Vladimir Levchenko and Nikolay Klepcha;

- explaining Amnesty International's opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances without exception;

- urging the authorities in the Russian Federation to stop executions and to consider complete abolition of the death penalty.

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**APPEALS TO:**

1. The President of the Russian Federation

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya,  
g. Moskva,  
Kreml,  
Prezidentu Rossiyskoy Federatsii  
YELTSINU, B.N.

**Telegrams: Rossiyskaya Federatsiya, Moskva, Kreml, Prezidentu Yeltsinu, B.N.**

**[Salutation: Dear President]**

2. The Chairman of the Clemency Commission of the Russian Federation

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya,  
g. Moskva,  
Kreml,  
Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya  
pri Prezidente Rossiyskoy Federatsii,  
Predsedatelyu PRISTAVKINU, A.I.

**Telegrams: Rossiyskaya Federatsiya, Moskva, Kreml, Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya, Predsedatelyu Pristavkinu, A.I.**

**[Salutation: Dear Chairman]**

3. The Procurator-General of the Russian Federation

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya,  
103760 Moskva,  
Kuznetsky most 13,  
Prokuratura Rossiyskoy Federatsii,  
Generalnomu Prokuroru STEPANKOVU, V.G.

**Telegrams: Rossiyskaya Federatsiya, Moskva, Kuznetsky most 13, Prokuratura Rossiyskoy Federatsii, Generalnomu Prokuroru Stepankovu, V.G.**

**Telephone: 924 42 56; 925 18 79; 928 90 43 (reception)**

**[Salutation: Dear Procurator-General]**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:** diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat

or your Section Office if sending appeals after 26 June 1992.