

EXTERNAL (for general distribution) **AI Index: EUR 46/85/91** Error! Bookmark not defined.

Distr: UA/SC

UA 432/91 **Fear of Imminent Execution**

11 December 1991

USSR (Russian Federation): **Mikhail N. TYRNIKOV**

Amnesty International is concerned that Mikhail Tyrnikov may face imminent execution. According to unofficial sources he was convicted in October 1989 by the Maykopsky court of the Adygeysky Autonomous Region of the Russian Federation of the murder of three elderly women. The sentence was upheld on 3 April 1990 by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation (RSFSR). Mikhail Tyrnikov denies the murder charges and alleges that he was forced by physical and psychological pressure to incriminate himself.

The case is reportedly due to be considered by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The ultimate authority to decide whether clemency should be granted rests with President Gorbachov. If this is turned down then Mikhail Tyrnikov will face imminent execution.

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. At the beginning of December 1991, the death penalty was abolished in the RSFSR for the crimes of foreign currency speculation and large-scale bribe-taking.

The figure of 445 death sentences passed in the USSR in 1990 showed a marked increase on the previous year's figure of 276.

Amnesty International is opposed to the death penalty in all cases without reservation, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International is appealing to the President of the USSR to exercise his constitutional authority and commute the death sentence passed on Mikhail Tyrnikov.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telephone calls/express and airmail letters:

- appealing for clemency on behalf of Mikhail Tyrnikov;
- welcoming the reduction in the scope of crimes punishable by the death penalty in USSR and RSFSR legislation; expressing the hope that other republics will follow suit and will initiate a further review of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

1. President of the USSR, Mikhail Sergeyevich GORBACHOV

SSSR, RSFSR

Dear President Gorbachov

Moskva

Kreml

Prezidentu GORBACHOVU M.S.

Telegrams: SSSR, RSFSR, Moskva, Kreml, Prezidentu GORBACHOVU M.S.

2. Chairman of the Clemency Commission at the USSR Supreme Soviet, Nikolay Semyonovich GLAZKOV

SSSR, RSFSR

Dear Chairman Glazkov

g. Moskva

Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya

Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR

Predsedatelyu GLAZKOVU N.S.

Telegrams: SSSR, RSFSR, Moskva, Komissiya po voprosam pomilovaniya

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and to diplomatic representatives of the USSR in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office if sending appeals after 22 January 1992.