

URGENT ACTION

BELARUSIAN CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR ACQUITTED

Belarusian conscientious objector Ivan Mikhailau has been acquitted of the charge of “evasion of conscription measures”.

On 4 May, **Ivan Mikhailau**'s case was heard for a second time by Minsk Regional Court and he was found to be not guilty.

Ivan Mikhailau was detained on 15 December 2009 after he had refused to carry out military service because bearing arms contradicted his religious beliefs. He was found guilty of “evasion of conscription measures” by Minsk District Court on 1 February 2010 and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. However, on 9 March the sentence was overturned on appeal by Minsk Regional Court and Ivan Mikhailau was released on bail the following day. The Minsk Regional Court concluded that there had been procedural violations during the initial investigations, and called for a new trial to be held. At the time of his release, Ivan Mikhailau had served all but six days of his sentence.

Amnesty International is concerned that Ivan Mikhailau may be summoned to perform military service again in the near future as there is still no alternative civilian service in Belarus. The organization will monitor his situation.

Thanks to those who sent appeals. No further action is required.

This is the third update of UA 213/10 (EUR 49/001/2010). Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR49/0001/2010/en

