

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER KILLS CELLMATE, SENTENCED TO DEATH

A prisoner, Rygor Yuzepchuk, was sentenced to death on 24 April for the murder of a cellmate in eastern Belarus. He could be executed within months.

Amnesty International has recently learnt that Mahiliou regional court sentenced **Rygor Yuzepchuk** to death for the murder of a cellmate in prison number 4 in Mahiliou, his alleged accomplice was sentenced to 16 years. According to media reports the three prisoners had staked their lives on a game of dominos and the losing prisoner was strangled with a scarf on 5 July 2012. Rygor Yuzepchuk has not denied killing his cellmate. He was serving a 25-year sentence for murder, and had been previously convicted. The killing of Rygor Yuzepchuk's cellmate was carried out in a prison under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which has a duty to protect those in custody.

A new wave of death sentences are being imposed in Belarus. In another murder case in the eastern city of Homel, the prosecutor has asked for the death penalty: and a death sentence was recently pronounced in Hrodna.

In Belarus, death sentences are often imposed after unfair trials which include forced confessions; they are implemented in strict secrecy and without giving adequate notice to the inmates themselves, their families or legal representatives. The authorities refuse to return the bodies of those executed to their relatives or even tell them where they are buried; and executions are carried out despite requests from the UN Human Rights Committee to the government not to carry out the executions. The Human Rights Committee and others have found that the application of the death penalty in Belarus violates the human rights of those convicted and their families.

Please write immediately in Belarusian, Russian, English or your own language:

- Urging President Lukashenka to commute immediately the death sentence of Rygor Yuzepchuk;
- Calling on him to establish an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty;
- Calling on the Prosecutor General to investigate how it was possible for Rygor Yuzepchuk's cellmate to be murdered inside a prison.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 JULY 2013 TO:

President

Alyaksandr Lukashenka
ul. Karla Marxa 38
220016 Minsk
Belarus
Fax: +375172260610/
+375172223872
Email: contact@president.gov.by
Salutation: Dear President

General Prosecutor

Alyaksandr Koniuk
Internatsionalnaya str. 22
220050 Minsk
Belarus
Fax: +375 17 226 42 52
Email: info@prokuratura.gov.by
**Salutation: Dear General
Prosecutor**

And copies to:

Minister of Internal Affairs
Igor Shunevich
ul. Gorodskoi Val 4
220030 Minsk
Belarus
Fax: +375 17 203 99 18

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Belarus is the last country in Europe which still carries out executions: in 2012 it executed three men. Rygor Yuzepchuk is the first person sentenced to death since the high-profile case of Uladzslau Kavalyou and Dzmitry Kanavalau, who were sentenced to death in November 2011 and executed in March 2012.

Rygor Yuzepchuk was born in the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine. His relative Vasily Yuzepchuk was executed in March 2010. He had been sentenced to death for murder in June 2009 following an investigation and trial which his lawyer claims violated International standards. In keeping with Belarusian practice, his family were not informed of the date of execution or granted a final meeting with him and the whereabouts of his body have not been disclosed.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. It violates the right to life, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Name: Rygor Yuzepchuk

Gender m/f: M

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