

PUBLIC

**AI Index: EUR 49/013/2008
24 September 2008**

Further Information on UA 121/08 and follow-up (EUR 49/009/2008, 31 July) - Torture and other ill-treatment

BELARUS Emanuel Zeltser (m), US national

On 11 August, Emanuel Zeltser was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for industrial espionage and having used forged documents. He has been granted a hearing on 26 September to appeal against the sentence. The US embassy in Minsk requested permission to attend the appeal hearing at the Supreme Court but was refused.

US embassy officials were able to hand over Emanuel Zeltser's medication and a prescription when they visited him on 18 August, and reported after a visit on 10 September that he was receiving the medication and appeared slightly better. An American doctor was permitted to visit Emmanuel Zeltser in June, but a request by the doctor to visit again was turned down on 17 September. A group of Belarusian doctors appointed by the state have declared that his health was satisfactory.

Amnesty International is concerned that US embassy officials were not granted access to any court hearings, and Emanuel Zeltser's lawyer was obliged to sign a non-disclosure clause.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Emanuel Zeltser was arrested and detained on 12 March as he arrived by plane in Belarus. On 21 March, he was charged with use of forged documents, industrial espionage and drugs smuggling. At trial he was cleared of this charge as the drugs referred to the medications that he requires. Emanuel Zeltser suffers from Type 2 Diabetes, arthritis, severe back pain, and other complaints. He is being held in a state security services detention facility in the capital, Minsk.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Belarusian, Russian, English or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to allow US consular representatives to attend the appeal hearings;
- request that the authorities order an urgent, independent investigation of reports that Emanuel Zeltser has been tortured and suffered other ill-treatment, and to bring those responsible to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure that Emanuel Zeltser is protected from further torture and other ill-treatment, and given regular access to US consular representatives, lawyers of his choice and any medical attention he may require.

APPEALS TO:

Alyaksandr Lukashenka
President
Administratsia Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus
ul.Karla Marksa, 38
220016 Minsk
BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 226 06 10

+375 17 222 38 72

Salutation: Dear President Lukashenka

Grigorii Vasilevich
Prosecutor General
Internatsionalnaya str., 22
220050 Minsk
BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 226 42 52

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

COPIES TO:

Vladimir Naumov
Minister of Internal Affairs
Gorodskoi Val str., 2
220050 Minsk
BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 203 99 18

Salutation: Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of Belarus accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 05 November 2008.