

# URGENT ACTION

## PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE IGOR KOKTYSH RELEASED

**On 2 February, Belarusian musician and activist Igor Koktysh was released from the pre-trial detention centre in the Ukraine where he has been held for two and a half years. He has thanked Amnesty International for its support.**

Igor Koktysh is a Belarusian musician and political activist who is a supporter of the opposition movement in Belarus. He had been held since June 2007 in a pre-trial detention centre in Simferopol, a city in the republic of Crimea in the Ukraine. Ukrainian authorities had planned to extradite him to Belarus.

On 10 December, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Igor Koktysh should not be extradited to Belarus, as he would be at serious risk of torture or other ill-treatment and could be given an unfair trial and sentenced to death if returned to Belarus. The Court said that he should be released immediately as there was no legal basis to detain him in Ukraine and also stated that the conditions in which he was held in Ukraine amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment.

The Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office initially stated that he would be released only after the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights became final in March 2010, but he was released on 2 February.

Amnesty International spoke to him briefly today at his home and he expressed his gratitude to Amnesty International "for the efforts you have taken". He said that he is still adjusting to his freedom and that his first concern is his health.

Igor Koktysh is currently pursuing his application for refugee status in Ukraine. Amnesty International will continue to monitor the progress of his asylum application and the payment of compensation ordered by the European Court of Human Rights.

**No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.**

This is the second update of UA 305/09 (EUR 50/003/2009) Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR50/003/2009/en>

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