

EXTERNAL

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Death penalty

24 October 1995

UKRAINE Reports of continuing executions despite announced moratorium

Amnesty International is alarmed by reports that executions are continuing in Ukraine despite a commitment by the government to impose an immediate moratorium on them and to abolish the death penalty.

In an official statement to a Council of Europe delegation on 17 October 1995, the Ukrainian Minister of Justice, Serhiy Holovatiy, confirmed this commitment as part of the preparations for Ukraine joining the Council of Europe on 9 November 1995. The Minister claimed that no executions have been carried out in Ukraine since September 1995.

However, press reports have quoted a statement by the newly-appointed Procurator General of Ukraine, Grigory Vorsinov, as claiming that executions are continuing in two regions of the country. Reportedly, Grigory Vorsinov said last week that he personally filed a report on an execution carried out recently in Dnepropetrovsk Region. He was Procurator for this region from April 1991 until his appointment as Procurator General last week.

Amnesty International is extremely concerned by this ambiguity in official statements on the subject of the introduction of a moratorium on executions.

In a telephone conversation with a representative of Amnesty International, the Procurator General stated that no official government decree or written statement concerning this matter has been issued yet, and no instructions passed to local authorities.

Ukraine has had one of the highest rates of judicial execution in the world.

Sixty prisoners were executed in 1994 and only two sentences were commuted, according to official figures. In 1995, Amnesty International has recorded at least two executions although it believes that the true number is much higher.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters either in Russian, English or in your own language:

- calling for all relevant government and judicial bodies to be promptly informed of the government's commitment to an immediate moratorium on executions as part of the preparations for joining the Council of Europe on 9 November;
- calling for an immediate investigation into reports of continuing executions in some regions of Ukraine, especially in Dnepropetrovsk, and for the findings to be made known;
- reiterating opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and on the grounds that it is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

APPEALS TO:

President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma

Ukraina

252601 Kiev

ul. Bankovaya, 7

Prezidentu Ukrainy Kuchma L.

Faxes: +380 44 291 61 61

Telegrams: Ukraina, Kiev, Prezidentu Kuchma

Salutation: Dear President

Minister of Justice of Ukraine, Serhiy Holovatiy
Ukraina
252030 g. Kiev
Ul. Kotsyubinskogo, d.12
Ministerstvo yustitsii Ukrainy
Ministru HOLOVATOMU S.
Telegrams: Ukraina, Kiev, Ministru Yustitisii
Salutation: Dear Minister

Procurator General of Ukraine, Grigory Vorsinov
Ukraina
252601 g. Kiev II
ul. Reznitskaya, 13/15
Prokuratura Ukriany
Generalnomu Prokuroru Vorsinovu.G
Faxes: +380 44 290 26 03
Telegrams: Ukraina, Kiev, Prokuroru Vorsinovu
Salutation: Dear Procurator General

COPIES TO:

Minister of the Interior, Ukraine, Yuri Kravchenko
Ukraina
252024 g. Kiev
ul. Bogomoltsa, 10
Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Ukrainy
Ministru KRAVCHENKO Yu.
Faxes: +380 44 220 19 05

Acting Prime Minister of Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers, Yevhen Marchuk.
Ukraina
G. Kiev
Ul, M. Gruchevskogo, 23
Kabinet Ministrov Ukrainy
I.o Premyer-ministra Marchuk Ye.

Procurator of Dnepropetrovsk Region (copies of letters to the
Procurator-General)
Ukraina
320001 Dnepropetrovsk
Oblastnaya Prokuratora
Prokuroru

and to diplomatic representatives of Ukraine accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 November 1995.