

Update to Public Appeal

4 March 2008 AI Index: EUR 49/004/2008

Belarus: Public Appeal. Prisoner of Conscience: Alyaksandr Kazulin (AI Index: EUR 49/001/2007)

Prisoner of conscience, Alyaksandr Kazulin, was granted temporary leave from the prison colony in Vitebsk, Belarus, in order to attend the funeral of his wife, Iryna Kazulina, which took place on 27 February 2008. Alyaksandr Kazulin was sentenced in July 2006 to five and a half years' imprisonment on charges which Amnesty International believes to be a violation of his right to freedom of assembly, association and expression.

From 25 February 2008 until 8pm hours on 28 February 2008, Alyaksandr Kazulin was free to see his family, speak to the press and pay his last respects to his wife. Alyaksandr Kazulin was back in prison on the night of 28 February, since which time, the Belarusian Minister for Internal Affairs has since remarked that his temporary release was given despite existing legislation and that from a legal point of view he had no right to such leave.

Amnesty International regards the ongoing imprisonment of Alyaksandr Kazulin as a violation of international human rights law and is reiterating the call for his immediate and unconditional release, as a prisoner of conscience. Amnesty International would like to remind the Belarusian government of its obligations under Articles 19, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Belarus is a state party, which guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

Please keep campaigning for the immediate and unconditional release of Alyaksandr Kazulin. See Public Appeal AI Index: EUR 49/001/2007.