

URGENT ACTION

BELARUS SET TO EXECUTE TWO MEN

The clemency applications of two men on death row in Belarus, Aleh Gryshkautstou and Andrei Burdyka have been turned down. They are likely to be executed within the next few weeks.

Aleh Gryshkautsou, aged 29, and **Andrei Burdyka**, aged 28, were sentenced to death by shooting on 14 May 2010 for crimes committed during an armed robbery on a flat in Grodno in October 2009. Both men were found guilty of premeditated murder, armed assault, arson, kidnapping of a minor, theft and robbery. On 17 September 2010, the Supreme Court in Minsk turned down their appeals.

The families of the two men only learnt that President Lukashenka had refused their requests for clemency after the news was broadcast on national television on 22 February. On 24 February, Andrei Burdyka's mother received a letter from him in which he said that he would be seeing a priest on 23 February. This may indicate that his execution is very imminent.

Aleh Gryshkautstou and Andrei Burdyka have not denied the charges. However, 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.

In Belarus, prisoners on death row are told that they will be executed only moments before the sentence is carried out. They are shot in the back of the head; sometimes more than one bullet is needed. The body is not handed over to the family, who are often informed only afterwards, and the place of burial is kept secret, causing further distress to relatives.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian or your own language:

- Calling on President Lukashenka to stop the executions of Aleh Gryshkautstou and Andrei Burdyka;
- Calling on President Lukashenka to establish an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty, in line with UN General Assembly resolution 63/168, adopted on 18 December 2008.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 APRIL TO:

President

Alyaksandr Lukashenka

Administratsia Prezidenta Respubliki

Belarus

ul. Karla Marksa, 38

220016 Minsk, BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 226 06 10/ +375 17 222 38 72

Email: contact@president.gov.by

Salutation: Dear President Lukashenka

Send copies to diplomatic representatives of Belarus accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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Aleh Gryshkautsou is also known as Aleg Gryshkautsou.

Belarus carried out two executions in 2010. Vasily Yuzepchuk and Andrei Zhuk, were executed in March 2010, approximately two months after their clemency applications had been turned down. As in all death penalty cases in Belarus, neither the prisoners nor their relatives were informed of the date in advance. Andrei Zhuk's mother only learnt of her son's execution afterwards when she tried to deliver a food parcel on 19 March. The execution was carried out despite the fact that both men had applied to the UN Human Rights Committee, and on 12 October 2009 the Committee had made a request to the government not to execute the two men until it had considered their cases.

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