

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 49/08/97

22 July 1997

Further information on 266/96 (EUR 49/05/96, 18 November 1996) and follow-ups: EUR 49/02/97, 14 March 1997; EUR 49/03/97, 7 May 1997; EUR 49/05/97, 17 June 1997; EUR 49/06/97, 8 July 1997 - Ill-treatment, possible prisoners of conscience

Belarus Gregory Kishko
Andrey Sheptytskich

new names S. Krishtapovich)
 A. Polatenko) first names
 A. Kolbasko) not known
 A. Stanishevich)

Amnesty International is appalled that the practice of arrest and ill-treatment of peaceful demonstrators in Belarus continues, with the latest event occurring on 17 July 1997. S. Krishtapovich, A. Polatenko, A. Kolbasko and A. Stanishevich were arrested by officers of the Leninsky regional police on 17 July while they were participating in a peaceful protest against the planned closure of the Belarus Humanitarian School and the transfer the running of the school to management reportedly appointed by the President. The protest reportedly took the form of a peaceful procession by parents, teachers and pupils holding textbooks and maps, and not political slogans. Media reports indicate that some other participants in the demonstration were beaten by police officers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has repeatedly expressed its concerns to the government of Belarus about the pattern of ill-treatment and imprisonment of government opponents during peaceful strikes and demonstrations. Amnesty International is not aware of any steps taken by the government or the President of Belarus to stop the pattern of ill-treatment of demonstrators by law enforcement officials.

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

- urging that S. Krishtapovich, A. Polatenko, A. Kolbasko, A. Stanishevich and any other demonstrators held in detention solely for exercising their right to freedom of assembly are immediately released;
- urging the authorities to initiate prompt and impartial investigations into all allegations of ill-treatment of demonstrators by the police and to bring to justice anyone found responsible;
- urging the Belorussian authorities to inform all law enforcement officials that torture and ill-treatment are prohibited in any circumstances under the provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

APPEALS TO:

The President of Belarus, Alyaksandr Lukashenka
Respublika Belarus
220010 g. Minsk
pl. Nezavisimosti

Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus
Prezidentu Respubliki Belarus Lukashenka A.H
BELARUS

Telegrams: Prezidentu Lukashenko, Minsk, Belarus

Faxes: + 375 172 23-58-25

Salutation: Dear President

The Procurator General of Belarus, Aleh Bozhelko

Respublika Belarus

220050 g. Minsk

Ul. Internatsionalnaya, 22

Prokuratura Respubliki Belarus

Generalnomu prokuroru BOZHELKU A.

BELARUS

Telegrams: Generalnomu prokuroru, Minsk, Belarus

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Agolets, first name
not known

Respublika Belarus

g. Minsk

Ul. Urytskaha, 5

Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Respubliki Belarus

Ministru Agoletsu

BELARUS

Telegrams: Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del, Minsk, Belarus

Faxes: +375 172 26-12-47

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, Ivan Antonovich

Respublika Belarus

220030 g.Minsk

Ul. Lenina, 19

Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Respubliki Belarus

Ministru Antonovich I.

BELARUS

Fax: + 375 172 27-45-21

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 2 September 1997.