

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of imminent execution

6 May 1994

GEORGIA

Sergo TIDILOV and Kakusha GRIGOLOVA

Amnesty International fears that Sergo Tidilov and Kakusha Grigolova face imminent execution in Georgia after reports on 5 May 1994 that parliament has lifted a two-year moratorium on carrying out death sentences. Both men had been sentenced to death for premeditated, aggravated murder, but no further details are currently available.

It is not known how many other people on death row may also now face execution in the absence, to Amnesty International's knowledge, of official statistics on the application of the death penalty. Amnesty International is urging Eduard Shevardnadze, Chairman of the Georgian parliament and head of state, to commute all pending death sentences.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without reservation on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subject to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

After President Zviad Gamsakhurdia was ousted in January 1992, a transitional ruling Military Council followed its stated intention of imposing a moratorium on the death penalty by issuing a declaration the following month under which the 1921 Constitution of the briefly independent Georgian Republic was restored. Article 19 of the constitution enshrines abolition of the death penalty.

However, this constitutional provision for abolition has yet to be incorporated into Georgian legislation and the criminal code currently contains 12 articles carrying a possible death sentence, including two new offences introduced in 1993. In November that year at least seven people were reported shot dead for looting following a temporary decree authorizing summary executions in areas where a brief civil war took place.

Although abolition has not been incorporated, the moratorium is believed to have stood until the reported revocation this month by parliament. The last executions carried out following sentences passed by civilian criminal courts are said to have taken place in 1991.

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

- urging that the death sentences passed on Sergo Tidilov and Kakusha Grigolova be commuted;
- urging that all other pending death sentences be commuted;
- urging the immediate reimposition of a moratorium on executions, and the amendment of the criminal code to incorporate the constitutional provision for abolition of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO

Eduard Shevardnadze
Chairman of Parliament
pr. Rustaveli, 8

380018 Tbilisi
Republic of Georgia
Telegrams: E. Shevardnadze, 380018 Tbilisi, Georgia
Faxes: +8832 99 79 85
Salutation: Dear Chairman

Otar Gogeladze
Chairman of the Clemency Commission
of the Georgian Parliament
pr. Rustaveli, 8
380018 Tbilisi
Republic of Georgia
Telegrams: O. Gogeladze, Komissiya po pomilovaniyu, 380018 Tbilisi, Georgia
Faxes: +8832 99 79 85
Salutation: Dear Chairman

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Dzhomlet Babilashvili
Procurator General of the
Republic of Georgia
ul. Gordastali, 24
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Tevdore Ninidze
Minister of Justice of the
Republic of Georgia
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Faxes: +8832 93 27 21

Mindziya Ugrekhelidze
Chairman of the Supreme Court of the
Republic of Georgia
ul. Bratyev Zubalashvili, 32
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Republic of Georgia
Faxes: +8832 93 52 94

Aleksandr Chikvaidze
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Georgia
ul. Chitadze, 4
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and to diplomatic representatives of Georgia, if any, accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 June 1994.