

URGENT ACTION

KIRYL KAZACHOK AT RISK OF IMMINENT EXECUTION

Kiryl Kazachok has decided not to appeal the death sentence he was given on 28 December 2016 and is now at risk of imminent execution.

Kiryl Kazachok's appeal hearing at the Supreme Court of Belarus was scheduled for 21 March. However, he has refused to use his right to appeal the sentence or request clemency. He was transferred to the pre-trial detention centre (SIZO) #1 in Minsk where death sentences are carried out. Kiryl Kazachok is now at risk of imminent execution.

Kiryl Kazachok was sentenced to death by the Gomel Regional Court, in south-eastern Belarus, on 28 December 2016 after being found guilty of killing his two children on 31 January 2016. He called the police following the incident, before trying to kill himself.

In Belarus no warning is given of the date or time of execution and no final meeting with relatives is granted. Death row inmates are executed with a shot to the back of the head. In accordance with Belarusian law, their bodies are not returned to their families for burial, nor is the location of the burial site disclosed.

Belarus is the only country in Europe and Central Asia which continues to use the death penalty. 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.

Please write immediately in Belarussian, Russian or your own language:

- Urging President Alyaksandr Lukashenka to commute the death sentence of Kiryl Kazachok and all those on death row in Belarus;
- Calling on the President to establish an immediate moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty;
- Stress that whilst we are not seeking to downplay the seriousness of the crime, research shows that the death penalty does not deter crime more than imprisonment, and is the ultimate denial of human rights.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 APRIL 2017 TO:

President

Alyaksandr Lukashenka
Vul. 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**

And copies to:

Human Rights Centre Vyasna
Vul. Merzhinkovo, 8-26
220012, Minsk, Belarus
Email: vasna@spring96.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR SERGEI ALEINIK
Embassy of the Republic of Belarus, 6 Kensington Court W8 5DL, 020 7937 3288, Fax 020 7361 0005, uk.london@mfa.gov.by,
www.uk.mfa.gov.by

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 16/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR49/5496/2017/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kiryl Kazachok allegedly strangled his daughter, aged nine, and son, aged 17, at their home on 31 January 2016. Following the incident, he went to his estranged wife's apartment, where she lives with their eldest son, and told her what he had done. He then threw himself from the fourth-floor balcony but survived and was taken to hospital. Tests revealed that he had a high percentage of alcohol in his blood at the time. After being treated for his injuries he was transferred to a detention centre in March 2016.

Death sentences are often imposed in Belarus after unfair trials which include forced confessions; they are implemented in strict secrecy and without giving adequate notice to the condemned prisoners themselves, their families or legal representatives. The authorities refuse to return the bodies of those executed to their relatives or even tell them where they are buried. Executions are carried out despite requests from the UN Human Rights Committee to the government not to do so until the Committee has considered the cases. In November 2012, the Human Rights Committee found that the application of the death penalty in Belarus violates the human rights of those condemned and their families.

By failing to publish full information about the use of the death penalty, including comprehensive statistics about the number of death sentences imposed and executions carried out, the Belarusian authorities prevent informed public debate about the issue and hamper the movement towards abolition.

As of today, 140 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

Further information on UA: 16/17 Index: EUR 49/5821/2017 Issue Date: 3 March 2017