

# URGENT ACTION

## CLEMENCY DEADLINE PASSES FOR YUZEPCHUK

**President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has allowed the deadline for clemency for Vasily Yuzepchuk to pass. On 12 October, the UN Human Rights Committee registered Vasily Yuzepchuk's case and called on the Belarusian government not to execute Vasily Yuzepchuk while his case is under consideration by the Committee.**

President Lukashenka has ignored calls for clemency from the international community, including the Council of Europe. Following the Supreme Court's 2 October rejection of Vasily Yuzepchuk's appeal, President Lukashenka had 10 days in which to grant clemency. On 8 October local human rights activists sent a petition to the UN Human Rights Committee about the case. On 12 October the Committee requested that Belarus not carry out the sentence while it is considering the case.

Vasily Yuzepchuk was sentenced to death on 29 June, for the murder of six elderly women, following an investigation and trial which his lawyer argues were fundamentally flawed: he says that Vasily Yuzepchuk was beaten in detention to force him to confess.

Vasily Yuzepchuk belongs to the marginalized Roma ethnic group; originally from Ukraine, he does not have an internal passport, which is required for all citizens of Belarus. He may have an intellectual disability and according to his lawyer he is illiterate and does not know the months of the year.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Russian or your own language:**

- √ Urging President Lukashenka to comply with the UN Human Rights Committee not to carry out the death sentence against Vasily Yuzepchuk pending its consideration of his case;
- √ 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 24 NOVEMBER 2009 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](mailto:contact@president.gov.by)**

**Salutation: Dear President Lukashenka**

**Send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA: 218/09 (EUR 49/008/2009) 17 August 2009. Further information:

[www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR49/008/2009](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR49/008/2009).

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Condemned prisoners are given no warning that they are about to be executed, and they are usually put to death within minutes of being told that their appeal for clemency has been rejected. They are first taken to a room where, in the presence of the Director of the detention facility, the Prosecutor and one other Ministry of Interior employee, they are told that their appeal for clemency has been turned down and that the sentence will be carried out. They are then taken to a neighbouring room where they are forced to their knees and shot in the back of the head. Their families will only be informed days or sometimes weeks later.

Belarus is the last country in Europe and the former Soviet Union which still carries out executions.

Further information on UA: 218/09 Index: EUR 49/012/2009 Issue Date: 13 October 2009

