

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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BELARUS: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DEPLORES THE EXECUTION OF SIARHEI IVANOU

Amnesty International strongly condemns the execution of 22-year old Siarhei Ivanou in Belarus. He is the first person known to have been executed since November 2014.

Siarhei Ivanou was executed on the night of 18 April. He had been sentenced to death in March 2015 for the murder of a 19-year old woman in 2013. His case was pending at the UN Human Rights Committee which had requested a stay of execution while the case was under consideration. Despite that, and in contravention of Belarus' human rights obligations, Siarhei Ivanou was executed.

Siarhei Ivanou's family only learned of his execution in May, after the sentence had been carried out. They were not given any warning or granted a final meeting. In keeping with Belarusian law, his body will not be returned to them for burial, nor will his place of burial be disclosed. They are now required to collect his death certificate from the Belarusian authorities. His personal belongings have not yet been returned to them.

In 2012, the Human Rights Committee ruled that the secrecy surrounding the death penalty in Belarus amounts to inhuman treatment of the families and is a violation of Article 7 of the ICCPR. Amnesty International reiterates its calls for the Belarusian authorities to end the secrecy surrounding the death penalty and amend Article 175 of the Belarusian Constitution which prohibits the handing over of the body to relatives for burial.

At least three people remain on death row in Belarus. They are Ivan Kulesh, Gennadii Yakovitskii and Siarhei Khmialevski. Amnesty International calls on the Belarusian authorities to halt any planned executions and immediately commute the death sentences handed down to Ivan Kulesh, Gennadii Yakovitskii and Siarhei Khmialevski and all others sentenced to death in Belarus.

The organisation also calls on Belarus to introduce an immediate moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its permanent abolition. Belarus is the last country in Europe and the Former Soviet Union to still carry out executions.

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