

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE DEPLORES THE EXECUTION OF TWO INDIVIDUALS IN BELARUS

30 March 2010

At the end of its 98th session held in New York from 8 to 26 March 2010, the Human Rights Committee decided to issue the following press release.

The Human Rights Committee has recently received information indicating that two individuals under sentence of death, whose cases are currently pending before the Committee, and who alleged that they did not receive, in particular, a fair trial, have been executed in Belarus, despite the fact that requests for interim measures of protection had been issued by the Committee. The information relates to the cases of Mr. Andrei Zhuk (case 1910/2009) and Mr. Vasily Yuzepchuk (1906/2009).

On 23 March 2010, the Committee requested Belarus to provide clarifications on the matter, by end-of-business on Thursday, 25 March 2010, but no reply was received.

The Committee's plenary discussed the events on 26 March 2010, in a public meeting. It expressed its dismay and indignation at the apparent execution of the two individuals, and its concern at the State party's failure to cooperate in a good faith with the Committee, in its work on individual communications submitted under the Optional Protocol to the Covenant. The Committee also reiterated that executing individuals whose cases are pending before the Committee amounts to a grave breach of the Optional Protocol, in particular where a request for interim protection under rule 92 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure has been issued.

The Committee decided to address this situation at its end-of-session Press conference, and to issue a separate Press release on the matter.

For further details on this particular situation, and on the Committee's 98th session in general, you may consult the summary of the Committee's end-of-session Press conference (New York, 26 March 2010) at: http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2010/100326_HRC.doc.htm