

Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union
Secretariat of the Subcommittee on Human Rights
The Chair

EXPO-A-DROI D(2012)3999

His Excellency, Mr Andrei Yeudachenka
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Republic of Belarus - Diplomatic Chancellery
192, Avenue Molière
B-1050 Brussels

301296 26.01.2012

Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament to call on the authorities in Belarus to withhold the implementation of the death sentences confirmed by the Supreme Court upon Mr Dzmitry Kanavalau and Mr Uladzislau Kavalyou, who were accused of carrying out a terrorist attack in the Minsk subway in April 2011. Echoing the declaration of 24 January 2012 of the President of the European Parliament, Mr Martin Schulz, we urge President of Belarus, Mr Alexander Lukashenko, to pardon the two persons and to introduce a moratorium on death penalty.

While the European Parliament strongly condemns all acts of terrorism and demands justice for their victims, we firmly reject the death penalty - an irreversible and therefore cruel and inhumane punishment- under all circumstances. Moreover, reports by reliable international human rights organisations point to procedural irregularities in the preliminary investigation and judicial examination in the above-mentioned cases, including restrictions on the right to defense as well as physical and psychological pressure.

Despite its Constitution and the international agreements signed by the State, which guarantee to citizens their natural and inalienable right to life, Belarus is the only country in Europe still applying the death penalty.

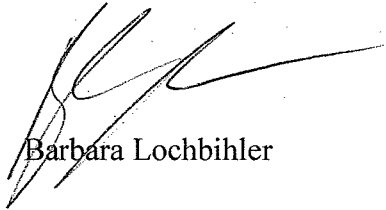
We therefore strongly urge you to withhold the execution of the death sentences for Mr Dzmitry Kanavalau and Mr Uladzislau Kavalyou, to pardon the two persons and to immediately join in a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards its universal abolition and to ensure justice and a fair trial in all cases.

We also condemn the decision of the Minsk district court to dismiss an appeal against a four and a half year prison sentence for Ales Bialiatski, human rights activist and President of the Human Rights Centre (HRC) "Viasna". As Parliament stated in its resolution of 15 September on this case, we believe that that the criminal case against Ales Bialiatski is politically motivated and intended to obstruct his legitimate work as a

human rights defender and therefore we reiterate our call for Ales Bialiatski to be immediately and unconditionally released and for the all the charges against him to be dropped.

I kindly ask you to urgently forward these concerns to the appropriate authorities in your country and inform us on any developments on these crucial issues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Barbara Lochbihler', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Barbara Lochbihler