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10 October 2018, World Day Against the Death Penalty

Dear Mr. President, Dear Mr. Mitskevich,

As a member of ACAT-Luxembourg, the Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture and the Death Penalty, I am writing to you on behalf of

**Mr. Aliaksandr Zhylnikau and Mr. Viachaslau Sukharko**

End of May 2018, the Supreme Court of Belarus has upheld the death sentences handed down earlier by the Minsk City Court to Aliaksandr Zhylnikau and Viachaslau Sukharko for the murder of three people. According to the defense, the verdict was not established on the basis of proven facts, but merely on the judges' assumptions who seemed to have sided with the prosecution. The investigation and the subsequent trials violated the two men's rights to life, to physical integrity, to a fair trial and not to be subjected to degrading treatment, rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Moreover, in Belarus - the only country in Europe applying the death penalty - death convicts are warned of their execution only minutes before it takes place. Their relatives are often informed weeks later about it and are denied the right to know the place of burial. We don't underestimate the gravity of the crime allegedly committed by Mr. Zhylnikau and Mr. Sukharko. However, these practices, as well as the death penalty - which is proven to produce no deterrent effect - constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment violating the ICCPR and the UN Convention against Torture, both ratified by the Republic of Belarus.

**We therefore urge you:**

- **to commute the death penalty handed down to Aliaksandr Zhylnikau and Viachaslau Sukharko;**
- **to accept the calls by the international community for a moratorium on the death penalty in Belarus.**

We thank you for the attention given to this concern

Name

Adresse