

# BELARUS

## Miscellaneous Statements

CCPR, A/66/40, vol. I (2011)

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## Chapter II. Methods of Work of the Committee under article 40 of the Covenant and cooperation with other United Nations Bodies

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### A. Recent Developments and Decisions on Procedures

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#### 4. Press Release on executions in Belarus

50. On 27 July 2011, during its 102<sup>nd</sup> session, the Committee issued a press release, in which it stated that Belarus had violated its international obligations by executing two death-row inmates whose cases were being reviewed by the Human Rights Committee, despite requests to the Government to await the results of the reviews. The Committee expressed dismay at the second such breach in two years.

51. The news release continues as follows:

“The two men, Mr. Oleg Grishkovtsov and Mr. Andrei Burdyko, had alleged that they were subjected to torture at the pre-trial investigation stage and did not receive a fair trial. The Committee had asked Belarus state authorities not to carry out their execution while their cases were under consideration. The exact date of the executions remains unknown but it is presumed that they took place between 13 and 19 July 2011.

“On 21 July, the Committee sent a letter to the Belarus Permanent Mission in Geneva, expressing concern over the apparent execution of Mr. Grishkovtsov (communication No. 2013/2010) and Mr. Burdyko (communication No. 2017/2010) in violation of the Committee’s request for interim measures of protection. The Committee requested prompt clarifications from the Government but no reply has been received.

“ ‘Our requests for interim measures of protection are aimed at averting irreparable harm to alleged victims of human rights violations. The Committee deplores the fact that, by proceeding to execute these two individuals, Belarus has committed a grave breach of its obligations under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,’ said Ms. Zonke Zanele Majodina, the Committee’s Chairperson.

“ ‘While the Covenant does not as such prohibit the death penalty for the most serious crimes and Belarus is not a State party to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, it is imperative that a death sentence be imposed only in full respect of the right to a fair trial. The imposition of a death sentence after a trial that did not meet the requirements for a fair trial amounts to a violation of articles 14 and 6 of the Covenant.’

“This is the second time executions have been carried out in Belarus of individuals whose cases are pending before the Human Rights Committee. In March last year, Mr. Andrei Zhuk and Mr. Vasil Yuzepchuk were executed despite the Committee’s request for interim measures of protection.”