

# URGENT ACTION

## STANISLAU AND ILLIA KOSTSEU GRANTED CLEMENCY

On 30 April, Stanislau and Illia Kostseu's mother learnt that they had been granted clemency. Since Alyaksandr Lukashenka came to power in 1994 there has only been one other known case of clemency granted to a person facing execution.

**NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.**

Brothers **Stanislau** and **Illia Kostseu** had been on death row in Belarus since January 2020 for the murder of their former teacher. They were only 18 and 20 at the time of their arrest. On 30 April 2021, their mother attempted to deliver a parcel for them to the prison in Minsk where they were held on death row. When she tried to hand over the parcel, a prison official told her that the brothers were no longer there. In Belarus, such news is often the first indication that a person held on death row has been executed, due to the secrecy that still surrounds the process and notification of executions. However, in this case their mother was then told that there had been a presidential decree granting them clemency. Their mother was completely shocked and phoned her daughter, asking the prison official to repeat the news so that their sister could hear. The prison official said "Ladies, we do not make jokes about such things." It is expected that the brothers will soon be transferred to a regular prison following a period of time in quarantine.

This good news has been overshadowed by news about other death sentences and possible executions. On 4 May, the Supreme Court upheld the death sentence of Viktor Skrundzik, and on 10 June Viktor Paulau's lawyer was informed that he was no longer in the detention centre - this is usually the first sign for families that their relative may have been executed.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Stanislau Kostseu (he, him) and Illia Kostseu (he, him)

**THIS IS THE THIRD AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 53/20**

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR49/2533/2020/en/>

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