



# UPDATES TO “DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS IN 2009”, ACT 50/005/2010

Since the report “Death sentences and executions in 2009” (ACT 50/001/2010) was printed, developments were reported in the following cases:

■ **BELARUS:** Andrei Zhuk and Vasily Yuzepchuk, who were at risk of imminent execution at the end of 2009 (p.18 of the report, first paragraph), were reportedly executed in March 2010. The executions were carried out in secret. The families of the prisoners found out about the executions only after Andrei Zhuk’s mother went to bring him a parcel and was told that her son “had been moved”. On 22 March 2010 she was informally told by a prison guard that both men, who had shared a cell, had been shot.

■ **SAUDI ARABIA:** ‘Ali Hussain Sibat (p.21, second paragraph), sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia for “sorcery” in November 2009, had his sentence upheld by a lower court on 10 March 2010.

In January 2010, the Court of Appeal in Makkah had initially accepted an appeal against his death sentence, on grounds that it was a premature verdict. The Court of Appeal said that all allegations made against ‘Ali Hussain Sibat had to be verified, and that if he had really committed the crime he should be asked to repent. On 10 March, however, a court in Madina upheld the death sentence. The judges in a statement said that he deserved to be sentenced to death because he had practised “sorcery” publicly for several years before millions of viewers and that his actions made him an “infidel”. The court said also that there would be no way to verify that his repentance, if he should repent, would be sincere and that imposing the death sentence would deter other people from engaging in “sorcery” at a time when, the court said, there is an increase in the number of “foreign magicians” entering Saudi Arabia. The case has been sent back to the Court of Appeal in Makkah for approval of the death sentence.