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Belarus: PACE rapporteurs condemn new death sentence

Strasbourg, 20.12.2013 - Marina Schuster (Germany, ALDE), Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) General Rapporteur on abolition of the death penalty, and Andres Herkel (Estonia, EPP/CD), rapporteur on the situation in Belarus, strongly condemn the death sentence passed in Belarus on 26 November 2013, but which only became known this week. Native Russian Eduard Lykov, 53, who is now a Belarusian national and has a son living in Russia and a daughter in Germany, was found guilty of several counts of murder whilst under the influence of alcohol.

"The secretive death penalty practice in Belarus is especially barbaric and has been condemned by the Parliamentary Assembly many times. The death penalty remains a key obstacle to Belarus' s eventual accession to the Council of Europe. Belarus is the last retentionist country in Europe, which is otherwise a death-penalty free continent, not least thanks to the relentless efforts of the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly. This new death sentence sends the wrong signal if Belarus wishes to move closer to the European family, and I can only strongly appeal to the President to ensure that it is not executed," the rapporteurs said.



The Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.
President: Jean-Claude Mignon (EPP/CD) - Secretary General of the Assembly: Wojciech Sawicki.
Political groups: SOC (Socialist Group); EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party);
EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe);
UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).