

URGENT ACTION

MALDIVES TO RESUME EXECUTIONS AFTER OVER 60 YEARS

Sources close to the government of Maldives have confirmed that executions in the country will resume on 21 July 2017. The Maldives Supreme Court has upheld the convictions and death sentences of three men, who are all now at imminent risk of execution. If carried out, it would be the first executions in the country in over 60 years.

On 19 July 2017, Amnesty International was informed that sources close to the government of Maldives confirmed that authorities are preparing to carry out the country's first executions in more than six decades on 21 July 2017. On the same day, politicians and activists published unconfirmed reports on social media that the government was imminently planning to resume executions. The Minister of Home Affairs, apparently in response, denied these reports and told local media that the date for the implementation of the death sentences is "not definite"; and would only happen once the entire appeal process is over, in line with the promise made by President Yameen.

While the names of the prisoners involved in the scheduled executions have not been disclosed, there is grave concern that three prisoners, who have exhausted all domestic legal avenues, are now at imminent risk. Following recent legislative changes, the men have not been able to apply for pardon or commutation of their death sentences from the executive and, to Amnesty International's knowledge, pardon negotiations with the murder victims families have yet to begin in any of the three cases. The UN Human Rights Committee issued in 2016 a binding order to stay the execution for one of the individuals pending the consideration by the UN body of an appeal filed on prisoner's behalf.

International law and standards require that, in countries which have not yet abolished the death penalty, the authorities must ensure that prisoners under sentence of death and their families are given reasonable advance notice of the scheduled date and time of the executions, and to make publicly available information of any scheduled execution.

Please write immediately in English or your own language urging the authorities to:

- Halt any plans to resume executions and establish an official moratorium on all executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty;
- Immediately commute the death sentence against all prisoners under sentence of death, including those imposed for crimes committed when the prisoners were below 18 years of age;
- Amend national legislation to remove provisions that are not in line with international law and standards and abolish the death penalty for all crimes.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 AUGUST 2017 TO:

President of Maldives
Abdulla Yameen Gayoom
The President's Office,
Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male' 20113,
Republic of Maldives
Fax: (960) 332 5500
Twitter: @presidencymv
Salutation: His Excellency

Minister of Home Affairs
Mr. Azleen Ahmed
Ministry of Home Affairs,
10th floor, H. Velaanaage Malé,
Ameeru Ahmed Magu, Male' 20096,
Republic of Maldives
Fax: (960) 3324739
Email: info@homeaffairs.gov.mv
Twitter: @AzleenAhmed,
@homeministrymv
Salutation: Honourable Minister

And copies to:
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Dr. Mohamed Asim
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male' 20077,
Republic of Maldives
Email: admin@foreign.gov.mv
Twitter: @MDVForeign, @asim_mdv

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR AHMED SHIAAN *High Commissioner*, High Commission of the Republic of Maldives, 22 Nottingham Place W1U 5NJ, 020 7224 2135, Fax 020 7224 2157,

www.maldiveshighcommission.org

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In 2014, the Maldives government, under President Abdulla Yameen, announced that the Maldives would resume executions, which had not been carried out for over 60 years. Since then, authorities have taken steps to resume executions, including amending national legislation. Regulations have removed the power from the executive to grant pardons or commutations in murder cases, depriving those facing the death penalty of the right to apply for these as guaranteed under international law.

In 2016, the method of execution was changed from lethal injection to hanging, and government officials pledged that executions would happen within 30 days of confirmation of guilty verdicts by the Supreme Court. In late January 2017, Amnesty International received credible reports from contacts that executions could be imminent, and could resume even before local council elections which, at the time, were tentatively scheduled for early April 2017. In early February 2017, Minister of Home Affairs Azleen Ahmed told national media that preparations for the implementation of the death penalty, including the building of two execution chambers, were underway. On 23 April 2017, President Abdulla Yameen said in a speech that the government intended to resume executions within a few months.

According to figures from the Maldives Correction Services and media reports, there are at least 20 prisoners currently under sentence of death in the country. Of these, at least five were convicted and sentenced to death for crimes committed when they were below 18 years of age.

The Maldives Supreme Court has to date upheld the convictions and death sentences of three men who have now exhausted their domestic legal appeals:

Hussain Humaam Ahmed (Humaam) was convicted of and sentenced to death for murder in 2012, and the Supreme Court upheld his conviction and death sentence on 24 June 2016. Amnesty International and other human rights organisations have raised serious concerns about the fairness of Humaam's trial. The UN Human Rights Committee in July 2016 issued an order to stay his execution pending its consideration of the case.

Ahmed Murrath was convicted of and sentenced to death for murder in 2012. The Supreme Court upheld his conviction and death sentence on 9 July 2016.

Mohamed Nabeel was convicted of and sentenced to death for murder in 2009. The Supreme Court upheld his death sentence on 27 July 2016.

Amnesty International believes that the death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International supports calls, included in five resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly since 2007, for the establishment of a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty. As of today, 141 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice; in the Asia-Pacific region, 20 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes and a further seven are abolitionist in practice.