

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVISTS FINED FOR PEACEFUL PROTEST

Three activists have been convicted for organising a peaceful protest in 2014 and have been ordered by the court to pay substantial fines.

Han Hui Hui, Ivan Koh Yew Beng and Janet Low Wai Choo, were convicted for offences including of participating in an 'illegal assembly' and 'causing a public nuisance' by the Singapore State Courts on 27 June. The three were arrested after leading a peaceful protest on 27 September 2014 in Hong Lim Park, the only space in the country where people are able to assemble and demonstrate without a police permit. Han Hui Hui has been fined SGD \$3,100 (USD \$2,281), while Koh Yew Beng and Low Wai Choo were each fined SGD \$450 (USD \$323).

The prosecution and conviction of these individuals reinforces a climate of intimidation and judicial harassment of activists within the country and violates their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to Singaporean law, as Han Hui Hui's fine exceeds SGD \$2,000 (USD \$1438), the human rights defender will be barred from running for office for the next five years, including the upcoming general elections in 2020.

The Singapore Constitution provides for the right to peaceful assembly but allows the state extensive powers to impose restrictions on it, which go well beyond those permitted under international human rights law. The three individuals have appealed against the conviction to the Singapore High Court in a petition dated 20 September. While there is currently no date fixed, the hearing of the appeal is expected to take place within the next two months.

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

- Ensure that the convictions of Han Hui Hui, Ivan Koh Yew Beng and Janet Low Wai Choo for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and assembly are quashed, and the fines and other penalties cancelled;
- Repeal or amend all legal provisions that violate the right to freedom of expression and assembly, including section 141, 142, 143 of the Penal Code and section 290 of the Penal Code;
- End the penalization, intimidation and harassment of government critics in the country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 DECEMBER 2016 TO:

Prime Minister

Lee Hsien Loong
Prime Minister's Office
Orchard Road
Istana, 238823
Singapore
Fax: +65 6835 6621

Email: pmo_hq@pmo.gov.sg

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Attorney General

Vijaya Kumar Rajah
Attorney-General's Chambers
1 Upper Pickering Street
058288
Singapore
Fax: +65 6538 9000

Email: agc@agc.gov.sg

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

Minister of National Development

Lawrence Wong
Ministry of National Development 5
Maxwell Road
#21-00 & #22-00 Tower Block, MND
Complex
Singapore 069110
Fax: +65 6325-7254
Email: mnd_hq@mnd.gov.sg

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

HER EXCELLENCY MS FOO CHI HSIA

High Commission for the Republic of Singapore
9 Wilton Crescent
London SW1X 8SP
Tel: 020 7235 8315
Email: singhc_lon@mfa.sg

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Han Hui Hui was charged in October under Regulation 23(1)(a) read with Regulation 8(3)(c) of the Parks and Trees Regulations, for holding a demonstration with prior approval and Section 290 of the Penal Code for public nuisance, for her participation in a peaceful protest that called on the Singaporean government to return Central Provident Fund pension savings to members. Following the protest, Han Hui Hui and several other participants were investigated by police for allegedly overstepping the parameters set by the National Parks Board, that impose limitations on assembly and speech. The protest took place at the same time as another event in the park, which the group was accused of encroaching on.

Under Singaporean Law if an individual is fined over SGD \$2,000 (USD \$1,471), they cannot run for public office for five years upon their conviction. This prevents Han Hui Hui from standing in the 2020 general election.

On Friday 24 June 2016, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Singapore. However, the government of Singapore rejected recommendations on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly which were contained in that report as part of the outcome.

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