

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Amnesty International condemns executions for drug trafficking

Amnesty International strongly condemns the execution by firing squad of two men (Hansen Anthony Nwaolisa, aged 40 and Samuel Iwachekwu Okoye, 37) in Indonesia late Thursday, 26 June 2008. They were convicted of attempting to smuggle heroin into Indonesia in 2001. In 2004 President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono refused their request for clemency.

This is the first time the Indonesian authorities have carried out executions since April 2007, and the first time since 2004 that prisoners convicted of drug related offences were executed.

The executions took place on the UN-backed International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon reminded all UN member states of their responsibility to 'respect the rights of prisoners who are drug dependant or are in custody for drug-related crimes, especially their rights to life and a fair trial'.

Instead, Indonesia's Attorney General Henderman Supandji has stated this week the government's intention to speed up executions of drug traffickers, despite a global trend towards abolition of the death penalty. As of 27 June, 137 countries in the world have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. In recognition of this trend, in December 2007 the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 62/149 calling on all retentionist countries to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

Death sentences in Indonesia are carried out by firing squad. Firing squads consist of 12 people, six of whom are supplied with live ammunition and six whose guns are loaded with blanks. Executions are often carried out at very short notice; in this case the authorities informed the two men and the public only three days in advance, an

event which sparked a riot in Nusa Kambangan prison where they were being held.

Amnesty International calls on Indonesia to reverse its intention to expedite executions and to immediately establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.