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Lebanon: 27 people at risk of execution

Amnesty International is strongly urging President Emile Lahoud of Lebanon to use his prerogative to immediately commute the death sentences passed on 27 people.

While Amnesty International recognizes the right to bring to justice all those suspected of involvement in criminal acts, the organization believes that executing these people will contribute little to alleviating the suffering of the families of murder victims, for whom it has the greatest sympathy.

The organization opposes the death penalty in all circumstances, considering it to be a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The finality and cruelty inherent in the death penalty render it incompatible with norms of modern-day civilized behaviour and an inappropriate and unacceptable response to crime.

"That Lebanon may be soon carrying out executions after a five-year moratorium - as well as decades of war and occupation during which and tens of thousands of people lost their lives - would be a serious blow to the spirit of reconciliation and opposition to the death penalty which has recently pervaded the country," Amnesty International said.

Background

According to reports, seven people have already had their death sentences agreed by the clemency committee. These people are: Ahmad 'Ali Mansour, Badea' Waleed Hamada, Fadi Ahmad Mereish, Remi Antoan Zaatar, Jamal Deeb Amin, Abdou Bashir al-Ashqar and Merhef Hasan Bsiss.

The clemency committee has reportedly recommended that Idris Hamad al-Shayea' and Mahmoud Reda Yassin have their sentences commuted to life imprisonment at hard labour.

Death sentences have also been passed on: Medhat Hasan Khalil Ahmad, Maher Abdel-Hayy al-Hosami, Yahya Riyad ar-Rayyis, Milad Mansour, Ahmad Hassan al-Sharifi, Ilyas Gergi al-Habr, Mohammad Abdel-Haleem Abara, Wesam Mohammad Bashir Mohammad Ali, Zayn al-Abedeen Ibrahim Janbeen, Vasken Bisay Markaryan, Qassem Mohammad Qubaisi, Ali Mohammad al-Qaddur, Khaled Nayyif Za'arour, Mohammad Ali al-Asheq, Layla Laboura Balkakachi, Ghazi Maher Mohammad Badr, Medhat Hasan Khalil and Nour ad-Din Yahya Dawoud.

Between 1972 and 1994 one judicial execution was carried out. At least 13 people have been executed since 1994, two of them publicly. However, no executions have taken place in Lebanon since

President Emile Lahoud took office in November 1998.

Public Document

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