

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 225/07 (AMR 51/137/2007, 30 August 2007) and follow-ups (AMR 51/149/2007, 28 September 2007; AMR 51/186/2007, 29 November 2007) – Death penalty/Legal concern

USA (Alabama) Thomas Douglas Arthur (m), white, aged 65

The US Supreme Court has issued a stay of execution for Thomas Arthur, who was scheduled to be put to death by lethal injection on 6 December in Alabama. The stay was issued in response to a petition filed by Thomas Arthur's lawyers challenging Alabama's lethal injection protocol.

Alabama had rescheduled Thomas Arthur's execution despite the fact that there appears to be a *de facto* national moratorium on executions in the USA pending the US Supreme Court's consideration of the constitutionality of the use of lethal injection as an execution method, following a challenge brought on behalf of two Kentucky death row inmates (see *Pause for thought: Another lethal injection halted by US Supreme Court*, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR511612007>).

A member of the Alabama Attorney General's Office is reported to have acknowledged that the Supreme Court's action in Arthur's case has halted executions in Alabama until the Court has issued its ruling in the Kentucky case. The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the issue on 7 January 2008, and is expected to rule by the end of June 2008.

No further action by the UA Network is requested at this time. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.