

# URGENT ACTION

**IMMINENT EXECUTION: OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBER Abdul Quader Mollah, a senior member of a Bangladeshi opposition political party, is at imminent risk of execution after a warrant for his execution was issued on 5 December. The Supreme Court had sentenced him to death for crimes against humanity. His family have reportedly been summoned by the jail authorities to visit him immediately.**

On 5 February, Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) sentenced **Abdul Quader Mollah**, a senior member of the opposition political party Jamaat-e-Islami, to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity. The ICT is a national court established in 2010 to try people suspected of crimes under international law, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed during Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence.

In reaction to his sentence and public pressure, the Bangladeshi Parliament passed amendments to the act governing the conduct of trials at the ICT, which enabled the prosecution to appeal the decision and plead for the sentence to be revised to death. On 17 September 2013, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court overturned Abdul Quader Mollah's life sentence issued by the ICT and sentenced him to death, in violation of international law. On 5 December the Supreme Court verdict was officially released, paving the way for Abdul Quader Mollah's execution. The same day, Abdul Quader Mollah was transferred from Kashimpur Jail to Dhaka Central Jail, and the ICT issued a warrant of execution to the Central Jail authorities, putting him at imminent risk of execution. His family have reportedly been told by the jail authorities to appear for a final visit.

Abdul Quader Mollah's death sentence was handed down by the Supreme Court, the highest court in the country, thereby giving him no chance to appeal. The imposition of the death sentence without the possibility of appeal is incompatible with Bangladesh's obligations under international human rights law. Multiple appeals against death sentences, as well as a final review of the highest court ruling on them, are available to prisoners sentenced to death by other courts in Bangladesh. This is the first known case of a prisoner sentenced to death directly by the highest court in Bangladesh, and the first known death sentence in Bangladesh with no right of appeal.

**Please write immediately in Bangla, English or your own language:**

- Calling on the Bangladeshi authorities to ensure that Abdul Quader Mollah has a right to appeal against his death sentence;
- Urging the President to commute the death sentence of Abdul Quader Mollah, and of all other persons under sentence of death, to terms of imprisonment;
- Calling on the Bangladeshi authorities to immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty, as called for by UN General Assembly resolutions in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 DECEMBER 2013 TO:**

President

Md. Abdul Hamid  
Bangabhaban  
Dhaka 1000  
Bangladesh  
Fax: +880 2 956 6242

**Salutation: Dear President**

Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina  
Old Sangsad Bhaban  
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215,  
Bangladesh  
Email: info@pmo.gov.bd

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

**And copies to:**

Inspector General of Prisons  
Fax: +880 2 730 0333

**Salutation: Dear Inspector General**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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## IMMINENT EXECUTION: OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBER

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The President has the power to pardon or commute any death sentence in Bangladesh; Abdul Quader Mollah's lawyers say that he now has until 23 December to decide if he will make an appeal for clemency.

Amnesty International viewed the establishment of the ICT in Bangladesh as a historic opportunity with the potential to end more than 40 years of impunity for the mass-scale crimes under international law and other human rights violations that were committed by members of Pakistani and Indian armed forces, as well as by members of all armed groups, during the country's 1971 war of independence. Bangladesh has a responsibility to the entire international community to ensure justice for more than 1 million civilians who were reportedly killed by Pakistani forces and their allied groups, tens of thousands of women who were allegedly subjected to rape and other crimes of sexual violence, and more than 8 million people who fled the country into India in search of safety.

No person suspected of crimes under international law during the 1971 war of independence, whether committed against people who supported the independence of Bangladesh or those who opposed it, should be immune from prosecution, regardless of what party they supported or what political affiliation they had at the time.

Amnesty International recognizes the obligation and duty of the Bangladeshi government to protect the rights of the victims of these crimes and of their families. The organization believes that those found responsible, after a fair judicial process, should be punished, but without recourse to the death penalty.

On 9 December, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Gabriela Knaul and the Rapporteur on summary executions, Christof Heyns, called for the execution to be halted amid concerns that Abdul Quader Mollah was not granted a fair trial.

To impose a death sentence for alleged crimes under international law counters the trend set by the International Criminal Court and all other international criminal courts established since 1993, which have excluded the death penalty as a sentence for the most horrific crimes: crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the individual; or the method used by the state to carry out the execution.

Name: Abdul Quader Mollah  
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 330/13 Index: ASA 13/018/2013 Issue Date: 10 December 2013