

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 418/93 Death Penalty

29 November 1993

SINGAPORE Johannes Van Damme, Dutch national, aged 58

On 23 November 1993 the Court of Criminal Appeal in Singapore rejected Johannes Van Damme's appeal against his death sentence. His only hope for clemency now lies with President Ong Teng Cheong.

The 58-year-old Dutchman was arrested on 27 September 1991 at Changi Airport and was sentenced to death on 26 April 1993, convicted of trafficking 4 kilograms of heroin. His co-accused was acquitted. Van Damme is the first Westerner to be sentenced to death under Singapore's anti-drug laws.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams, express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the imposition of the death penalty on Johannes Van Damme and urging that his sentence be commuted;
- stating Amnesty International's unconditional opposition to the death penalty, and urging that all existing and pending death sentences be commuted and that no more be imposed.

APPEALS TO

1) The President:

His Excellency Ong Teng Cheong

Office of the President

Istana

Orchard Road

Republic of Singapore 0922

Telegrams: President Ong Teng Cheong, Singapore

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Prime Minister:

The Honourable Goh Chok Tong

Office of the Prime Minister

Istana Annexe

Istana
Republic of Singapore 0923
Faxes: +65 732 4627

Minister of Law:
Professor Shanmugham Jayakumar
Ministry of Law
250 North Bridge Road
Raffles City Tower 21-00
Republic of Singapore 0617

and to diplomatic representatives of Singapore accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 January 1994.