

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 36/14/95  
Distr: UA/SC

EXTRA 67/95

Imminent execution

7 June 1995

SINGAPORE

Melvin Seet, Singaporean national, aged 32  
Yee Kim Yeou, Malaysian national  
Ng Teo Chye  
Tan Siew Chay, Malaysian national

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Amnesty International has learned that Melvin Seet, Yee Kim Yeou, Ng Teo Chye and Tan Siew Chay are scheduled to be hanged on 9 June 1995. Yee Kim Yeou was convicted in 1990 of trafficking in 1.69kg of diamorphine, and the others were convicted of abetting the offence. The four lost their appeal in February 1993.

On 27 April 1995 Melvin Seet informed the authorities of his intention to submit a supplementary petition for clemency to the President of Singapore, and was given until 7 June 1995 to do so. On 5 June, however, he was informed that his execution had already been scheduled for 9 June. Yee Kim Yeou and Tan Siew Chay are reportedly entering affidavits on 7 June attesting that Seet was not involved in the offence. Melvin Seet is also petitioning for clemency on the grounds that his case was prejudiced by previous counsel due to a conflict of interest.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The death penalty was employed in Singapore during the colonial period and was retained after the country became an independent republic in August 1965. Amnesty International is aware of at least 24 executions which have taken place since the beginning of 1995, the majority for drugs-related offences. However, the organization fears that the real figure may be higher as many executions are not publicized. According to the Ministry of Information, 76 people were executed in Singapore in 1994. The President has discretionary powers to commute death sentences, but clemency is rarely granted.

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. The organization is concerned that the death penalty is often imposed on those with fewer resources available for their defence, or whose social status has made them vulnerable to unfair conviction. The risk of error in applying the death penalty is inescapable, yet the penalty is irrevocable.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes either in English or in your own language:

- urging the President to commute the death sentences passed on Melvin Seet, Yee Kim Yeou, Ng Teo Chye and Tan Siew Chay;
- expressing Amnesty International's unconditional opposition to the death penalty as the ultimate form of cruel punishment and a violation of the most basic of human rights - the right to life;
- urging that all existing and pending death sentences be commuted.

#### APPEALS TO:

The President  
His Excellency Ong Teng Cheong  
Office of the President

Istana, Orchard Road  
Republic of Singapore 0922  
**Telegrams: President Ong Teng Cheong, Singapore**  
**Faxes: +65 738 4673**  
**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  
**Faxes: +65 336 6165**

Minister of Home Affairs  
Wong Kan Seng  
Phoenix Park  
Tanjong Road  
Republic of Singapore 1024  
**Telex: 34360**

and to diplomatic representatives of Singapore accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**