

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Afghanistan: Amnesty International condemns the unlawful killing of 15 year-old boy by Taleban

Amnesty International condemns the hanging of a 15 year-old boy by the Taleban on 30 September 2007.

Zainullah was taken from the bazaar where he worked as a key-maker in Sangin district, Helmand province southern Afghanistan, by Taleban fighters who accused him of being a spy. They hanged him from an electrical utility pole with a note warning that others caught spying would suffer the same fate.

Amnesty International condemns all unlawful killings, particularly of children, and calls for all such attacks to be investigated, promptly, independently and thoroughly, and for those responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with international standards of fairness.

Article 3 Common to the four Geneva Conventions, which is binding on all parties to the armed conflict in Afghanistan, prohibits "violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds," a prohibition which applies in all circumstances. Hanging a child is a clear violation of this provision.

Amnesty calls for the Afghan government to investigate the unlawful killing and for the Taleban to publicly renounce the use of illegal actions such as kidnapping and unlawful killings, including those following quasi-judicial proceedings which flout international humanitarian law.