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Viet Nam must not resume executions by firing squad

Vietnamese national media today reported that the government is asking the National Assembly to allow the use of execution by firing squad until 2015.

An EU export ban on the chemicals needed for lethal injections has meant that Viet Nam has struggled to find drugs to carry out executions.

Isabelle Arradon, Amnesty International's Deputy Asia Pacific Director, said:

"It is extremely disappointing that Viet Nam is yet again trying to find a way to kill, either by using domestically produced drugs or by reverting to an execution method the government itself has rejected as inhumane.

"The current shortage of lethal drugs should be an opportunity for the Vietnamese authorities to show to the world their commitment to humane treatment of prisoners and their rejection of the death penalty.

"The death penalty is not a deterrent to crime. It is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and a clear violation of a fundamental human right, the right to life.

"Viet Nam should encourage a debate on the death penalty with a view to its full abolition in line with steps taken by some ASEAN states in recent years."

The global trend is moving steadily away from the use of the death penalty, with the vast majority of the world's governments recognising that it has no deterrent effect. Ninety-seven countries have completely abolished the death penalty in law, while 140 in total are abolitionist in law or practice. Only 21 countries carried out executions in 2012, down from 28 a decade ago.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all circumstances, regardless of the crime being punished or the method used by the state to carry out executions.

Background

["Vietnam: Lethal injection looms for 117 prisoners"](#), Amnesty International Urgent Action, 24 June 2013