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Singapore: Amnesty International regrets Singapore's resumption of executions and its lack of commitment to the right to freedom of expression

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Singapore

Amnesty International deeply regrets Singapore's decision to resume executions in 2014 despite the initial progress in reviewing the Misuse of Drugs Act 2012 and the Penal Code Act 2012 with a view to establishing a moratorium on executions, as recommended to Singapore during its first UPR in 2011.¹

On 20 May 2016 Kho Jabing, a Malaysian national, was executed in cruel haste just hours after his final appeal had been dismissed. Kho Jabing had been convicted of murder in 2010 and sentenced to death. In 2012, following a review of the mandatory death penalty laws, his death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. However, in January 2015, the Court of Appeal re-imposed the death penalty in a three-to-two split decision.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception and calls on Singapore to immediately re-establish a moratorium on executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty, as recommended by many countries during its second review.²

Opposition activists, bloggers and human rights defenders in Singapore continue to face political repression, reprisals and intimidation.

In 2015, Amos Yee, a 16-year-old blogger, was sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment after he uploaded a video and cartoon criticizing the late Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Amos Yee currently faces six more charges under Section 298 of the Penal Code, for 'wounding the religious feelings of Muslims and Christians' by posting further comments and videos online. In this context, Amnesty International is concerned about Singapore's rejection of recommendations to review existing

¹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Singapore*, A/HRC/18/11, 11 July 2011, recommendation 97.3 (Czech Republic).

² Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Singapore*, A/HRC/32/17, 15 April 2016, recommendations 166.20 (Montenegro), 166.21 (Australia), 166.33 (Sweden), 166.156 (Netherlands, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Finland, Holy See, Honduras), 166.157 (South Africa), 166.158 (Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, France, Italy, Mexico), 166.159 (Panama), 166.160 (Argentina), 166.161 (Germany), 166.162 (Chile), 166.163 (Greece), 166.164 (Ireland), 166.165 (Namibia), 166.166 (Uruguay), 166.167 (Paraguay), 166.168 (New Zealand).

legislation in order to enhance the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.³

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Singapore on 24 June 2016 during its 32th session. Amnesty International contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on Singapore: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa36/2664/2015/en/>

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³ A/HRC/32/17, recommendations 166.87 (Czech Republic), 166.88 (Latvia), 166.90 (Italy), 166.92 (Canada), 166.204 (Japan), 166.205 (France), 166.206 (Ireland).