

URGENT ACTION

50TH EXECUTION IN THE USA THIS YEAR

Bobby Wayne Woods was executed in the US state of Texas on the evening of 3 December. He was sentenced to death in 1998 for the murder of an 11-year-old girl in 1997.

Bobby Woods received a lethal injection shortly after the US Supreme Court denied a request from his lawyer to stay his execution. His lawyer had sought a stay on the grounds that Bobby Woods had mental retardation. His last words were: "Bye, I'm ready."

On 1 December, the Texas Board of Pardons and Parole rejected Bobby Woods's clemency petition. The petition cited evidence of his mental impairment. It also raised questions about his legal representation during the appeal process, and in the initial legal challenges under the 2002 US Supreme Court decision which outlawed the death penalty for people with mental retardation.

Bobby Woods becomes the 50th prisoner to be put to death in the USA this year and the 1,186th since executions resumed in 1977. Texas accounts for 447 of these executions.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

This is the first update of UA 317/09 (AMR 51/121/2009). Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/121/2009/en>

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