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Indonesia: Make today's executions the last

Today's execution of three people known collectively as the "Bali Bombers" should be the last time Indonesian authorities use the death penalty, said Amnesty International.

The three, Amrozi bin H. Nurhasyim, Ali Ghufron, alias Mukhlas, and Imam Samudera, were convicted of involvement in the 12 October 2002 bombings on the island of Bali, which killed 202 people and injured a further 209.

"The Bali Bombers perpetrated a horrific atrocity," said Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific director. "But to continue the cycle of violence through state sanctioned killings is to answer the violation of human rights with further violations."

"Amnesty International expresses its sympathy for the victims of violence and their loved ones who suffered a great loss. The organization recognises the need for all who committed crimes to be brought to justice but points out that there is no clear evidence that the death penalty is an effective deterrent."

These executions bring the total number of people executed in Indonesia since 26 June to ten. Prior to that, only one person was executed in 2007, compared to 11 in the last decade.

The rise in the number of executions flies in the face of UN General Assembly Resolution 62/149 of December 18 2007, which calls for a moratorium on executions, and runs counter to the global trend away from the use of the death penalty.

Amnesty International called on Indonesia to immediately cease all executions and follow the example of the 137 nations that have already abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

"The executions of the Bali bombers may create martyrs whose memory risks increasing support and recruitment to their cause" said Sam Zarifi. "There is no reliable evidence that the executions will deter further criminal acts".

Indonesia resumed executions on 26 June 2008 after a 14 month hiatus. At least 107 people are believed to be under sentence of death in Indonesia. At least 5 of them were sentenced to death for acts of terrorism.