

Stop child executions in Pakistan

In 2000, the use of the death penalty against child offenders – people under 18 at the time of the crime – was banned in most of Pakistan, but scores of child offenders remain under sentence of death.

In November 2001 Sher Ali, who was hanged for a murder committed when he was 13 years old, became the third child offender executed in the country since Pakistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Pakistan is bound by the convention, which forbids the execution of child offenders.

Take action

Please write to President Musharraf of Pakistan urging him to commute the death sentences of all child offenders in Pakistan, and to ensure that no further child offenders are sentenced to death, in accordance with Pakistan's obligations under international law.

Dear President,

I respectfully urge you to commute the death sentences of all child offenders in Pakistan, and ensure that no further child offenders are sentenced to death, in accordance with Pakistan's obligations under international law.

In October 2003 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Pakistan take immediate steps to ensure that the prohibition of the death penalty under the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 (JJSO) is guaranteed for all offenders under the age of 18 years, and that death sentences imposed before the promulgation of the JJSO are not carried out.

Child offenders continue to be sentenced to death in the Provincially and Federally Administered Tribal Areas where the JJSO does not apply. I urge you to extend the JJSO and ensure that any death sentences imposed on child offenders in these areas or in other parts of Pakistan are commuted.

In order to prevent errors which could result in child offenders being sentenced to death in the future, I urge you to take measures to ensure that police officials inquire immediately as to the age of any child in conflict with the law, and ensure that there is a systematic registration of all births in all parts of Pakistan including the Tribal Areas.

The enactment of the JJSO was a welcome step in upholding human rights and ensuring respect for Pakistan's commitments under international law. I urge you now to take further measures, so as to ensure that child offenders will never again be sentenced to death or executed in Pakistan.

Yours sincerely

Appeals to:

President Pervez Musharraf
Pakistan Secretariat
Islamabad
Pakistan