

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 51/65/00

3 May 2000

Further information on EXTRA 36/00 (AMR 51/58/00, 14 April 2000) - Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (Arkansas) Christina Marie Riggs, aged 28, former nurse

Christina Riggs was executed by lethal injection on the evening of 2 May 2000 in Arkansas, in effect completing the suicide that she had attempted by the same method in late 1997 (see original EXTRA). She had waived her appeals and asked to be executed.

It took the execution team about 15 minutes to find a suitable vein to insert the lethal injection needle. Christina Riggs was pronounced dead at 9.28pm local time, 10 minutes after the deadly solution began to flow.

In her final statement Christina Riggs expressed her remorse for the killing of her two children: "No way can I make up for or take away the pain I have caused everyone who knew and loved them. I hope someday maybe everyone can forgive me... Now I can be with my babies as I always intended."

Christina Riggs is reported to be the first woman executed in Arkansas since 1845, when Lavinia Burnett was hanged for being an accessory to murder. She also becomes the fifth woman put to death in the USA since the country resumed executions in 1977.

This was the 31st execution in the USA this year, and the 629th since 1977. Twenty-two of the executions since 1977 have been carried out in Arkansas.

No further action by the UA Network is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.