

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Penalty

24 September 1992

USA: (Virginia)

Charles Stamper

Charles Stamper is scheduled to be executed by the state of Virginia, USA, on 28 October 1992.

Charles Stamper, black, was sentenced to death in November 1978, for the murders of Steven Staples, Agnes Hicks and Franklin Cooley, all white, during a robbery in March 1978. Charles Stamper has been on death row for 14 years which is longer than any other inmate on Virginia's death row. Charles Stamper is also partially paralysed as a result of being badly beaten by two other inmates in 1988.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The authority to grant executive clemency lies with Governor Douglas Wilder.

Since taking office in January 1990, Governor Wilder has commuted the death sentences of two inmates: Joseph Giarratano in February 1991 and Herbert Bassette in January 1992. However, he has allowed the executions of eight inmates to proceed, including that of Roger Coleman on 20 May 1992, despite grave lingering doubts about his guilt.

As of April 1992 there were 47 prisoners under sentence of death in Virginia. Sixteen prisoners have been executed in the state since 1982, the most recent being Willie Leroy Jones on 15 September 1992. The method of execution is electrocution.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters in English:

- urging Governor Wilder to grant clemency to Charles Stamper by commuting his death sentence.

APPEALS TO:

The Honorable L Douglas Wilder

Governor of Virginia

State Capitol

Richmond, VA 23219, USA

Telegrams: Governor Wilder, Richmond, VA 23219

Telephone: +1 804 786 2211

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Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

diplomatic representatives of the USA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY, TO ARRIVE BY 27 October 1992.