

URGENT ACTION

GEORGIA EXECUTES TROY DAVIS

Troy Davis was sentenced to death in 1991 for the murder of a police officer and has been on death row since then. He was executed by lethal injection at the Jackson state prison in Georgia, USA, on 21 September, despite serious doubts surrounding his conviction.

In his final statement before being put to death by lethal injection, Troy Davis maintained his innocence of the crime and asked his friends and family to “continue to fight this fight.” He has previously given the following message to Amnesty International members: “The struggle for justice doesn’t end with me. This struggle is for all the Troy Davises who came before me and all the ones who will come after me. I’m in good spirits and I’m prayerful and at peace. But I will not stop fighting until I’ve taken my last breath.”

Final appeals to halt the execution were filed with the Georgia and US Supreme Courts by Troy Davis’ attorney on the day of the scheduled execution. The Georgia Supreme Court rejected the appeal shortly before 7pm local time, when the execution was due to take place. The US Supreme court had issued a temporary reprieve to consider the appeal which it later rejected without comments, leading to a four hour-delay in the implementation of the death sentence.

On 19 September, Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles denied Troy Davis’ clemency request. The board stated “The Board members have not taken their responsibility lightly and certainly understand the emotions attached to a death penalty case. The state board has considered the totality of the information presented in this case and thoroughly deliberated on it, after which the decision was to deny clemency.” It later denied requests to reconsider its decision.

In the afternoon of 21 September, Troy Davis was denied his request to take a polygraph test. His lawyers reported that Troy Davis had hoped the polygraph would convince Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles to reconsider its decision against clemency.

Troy Davis was sentenced to death in 1991 for the murder of police officer Mark Allen Macphail in Savannah, Georgia. The case against Troy Davis primarily rested on witness testimony. Since his 1991 trial, seven of key nine witnesses recanted or changed their testimony, some alleging police coercion.

Since Troy Davis has been on death row, more than 90 prisoners have been released from death rows around the USA on grounds of innocence. In each case, at trial the defendant had been found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

There have been 35 executions in the USA this year, 4 of them in Georgia. There have been 1,269 executions in the USA since judicial killing resumed there in 1977 after almost a decade without them. Georgia accounts for 52 of this national total.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and under all circumstances.

No further appeals required. Thank you to all those who took action.

This is the second update of UA 110/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/075/2011/en>

Name: Troy Davis

Gender m/f: male

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