

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

For Immediate Release  
27 January 2010  
AI Index: ASA 13/002/2010

### **Bangladesh: Death sentences against five men should be commuted**

Amnesty International calls upon President Zillur Rahman to commute the death sentences against five men convicted of killing the country's founding leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Supreme Court today upheld their death sentences at its final review of the case. No other judicial remedy is available to the five former army officers convicted of carrying out the killing. Media reports in Bangladesh suggest they could be executed as early as January 31<sup>st</sup> 2010.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were killed when a group of military officers entered his house and opened fire on them in an attempted coup on August 15th 1975.

Then acting President Kondaker Mushtaq Ahmed and his successor, President Ziaur Rahman, had granted the accused officers immunity from prosecution. It was lifted by Sheikh Hasina when she became Prime Minister in 1996.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases regardless of the nature of the crime. The death penalty violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

The killing of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members were grave human rights abuses, and those who committed them should be brought to justice. However, bringing people to justice must not itself violate the human rights of the accused.

Amnesty International also appeals to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to request President Zillur Rahman to commute the death sentences. Amnesty International calls on Bangladesh to establish an immediate moratorium on executions.

Public Document

\*\*\*\*\*

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566 or Madhu Malhotra in India on +91 9924992799  
or email: [press@amnesty.org](mailto:press@amnesty.org)