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Mongolia should realize abolition of the death penalty in 2011

On the one year anniversary of the announcement of a moratorium on executions, Amnesty International calls on the Mongolian government to abolish the death penalty in 2011.

In his speech announcing the moratorium, President Tsakhia Elbegdorj noted that 2011 is the centenary of Mongolia's restoration of independence and he called on Mongolians to mark the occasion by ensuring that no Mongolian citizen would be deprived of life at the hands of the State.

A bill to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, is currently awaiting a final vote in the State Great Khural (parliament).

The bill has already been approved by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Legal Affairs and the Standing Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy. According to available information, no executions have been carried out in Mongolia for two years.

During Mongolia's Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council on 2 November 2010, several states commended Mongolia for establishing a moratorium on executions and the Mongolia government was recommended to take steps toward full abolition of the death penalty. In its first ever review of Mongolia, the UN Committee against Torture encouraged Mongolia to continue efforts towards abolition and called on the state to declassify information on the death penalty.

The Mongolian government ended 2010 by voting for the first time in favour of a resolution on a worldwide moratorium on the use of the death penalty at the UN General Assembly on 21 December. Mongolia had voted against such UN resolutions previously in 2007 and 2008.

Asia still executes more people than the rest of the world combined although numbers are declining. Like China, North Korea and Viet Nam, executions in Mongolia are carried out in secret and no official statistics on death sentences or executions are made available. Families are not notified in advance of the execution and the bodies of those executed are not returned to the family.

The world is moving away from the use of capital punishment: more than two-thirds of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice including 27 in Asia and the Pacific.

By introducing a moratorium on executions a year ago, Mongolia is leading the momentum in Asia and the Pacific towards abolishing capital punishment. This was welcomed by the international community, Amnesty International and Asian civil society, including the Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network, (ADPAN). In recognition of this year's anniversary Mongolia is urged to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR marking the next step to abolition in Mongolia and codify abolition in Mongolia's criminal law.

Public Document

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