

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

ASA 36/4044/2016
14 May 2016

SINGAPORE: JOINT STATEMENT ON IMMINENT EXECUTION OF KHO JABING

We, the undersigned, are troubled by the imminent execution of Jabing Kho in Singapore, despite strong concerns over the development of his case. We believe there are strong grounds for President Tony Tan of the Republic of Singapore to grant clemency in this case.

The family of Sarawakian Jabing Kho, 31, received a letter from the Singapore Prison Service on 12 May 2016 informing them that his execution had been scheduled for 20 May 2016. Jabing was convicted of murder in 2011.

The announcement came as a shock to the family and all involved in campaigning for Jabing. We had been under the impression that the authorities would allow his lawyer to submit a fresh clemency appeal on his behalf after the criminal motion filed in late 2015 was dismissed in April this year. His lawyer had sent President Tony Tan a holding letter informing them of his intention to file a new clemency petition, and had been in the process of drafting it when the execution was scheduled.

On 13 May 2016, Jabing's lawyer received a letter from the President saying that he would be willing to consider a clemency petition if it is filed, but will not be postponing the scheduled execution. Considering that past practice shows that the President usually takes three months before any decision regarding clemency is announced, we are concerned that this current state of affairs will leave the Cabinet and the President with insufficient time to properly consider a fresh plea from Jabing.

We do not condone Jabing's crime, nor do we seek to erase the hurt he has caused to the victim's family. Yet the course of Jabing's case has been tumultuous and traumatic. Due to amendments made to Singapore's mandatory death penalty regime and appeals lodged by the prosecution, Jabing had, over the years, been sentenced to death, then life imprisonment (with caning), then death again. This backandforth has taken a horrific toll not just on Jabing as the inmate, but his family.

Furthermore, one High Court judge and two Judges of Appeal had not believed that the death penalty was an appropriate punishment for Jabing Kho, as they felt that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that he had exhibited a "blatant disregard for human life".

The death penalty does not simply exact an irreversible punishment, but also imposes emotional and psychological tolls on both the inmate and the family and we oppose it unconditionally. Having been resentenced twice, from death to life and back again, Jabing and his family have already been put through a deeply painful process. The knowledge

that three respected and honourable judges hold the belief that the current punishment does not fit the crime simply makes the situation doubly hard to bear.

We believe that Jabing Kho's case presents very strong and persuasive grounds for clemency, and that his death sentence should be immediately be set aside and commuted to life imprisonment as allowed by Singapore's Constitution. We therefore urge the Cabinet of Singapore to advise President Tony Tan to grant clemency to Jabing Kho without delay and re-establish a moratorium on executions as a first step towards the abolition of the death penalty.

Signed:

Local Organisations

Maruah
Sayoni
Singapore AntiDeath Penalty Campaign
Think Centre
We Believe in Second Chances

Regional/International Organisations

Advocates Association of Sarawak
Amnesty International
Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN)
Center for Orang Asli Concerns
Civil Rights Committee KLSCAH
Damn the Dams
Malaysians Against Death Penalty and Torture (MADPET)
People's Green Coalition
Reprieve Australia
Sembangsebang
Forum
Suara Rakyat Malaysia
Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP)

Victims' Family Organisations

Center for Prisoner's Rights Japan
Journey of Hope
Ocean

Individuals

Abdul Rashid bin Bakar, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore
Atiqah bte Zaimi, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore
Haminah bte Abu Bakar, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore
Idros Ismail, brother of inmate on death row in Singapore
Jolene Tan, writer and activist
Kokila Annamalai, activist and community organiser
Letchumy Arumugam, mother of inmate on death row in Singapore
Marilyn Siew, activist

M Ravi, antideath
penalty activist
Osman bin Bakar, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore
Priya Ratha Krishnan, fiancée of inmate on death row in Singapore
Sangeetha Thanapal, activist
Saraswathy Kataiah, sister of inmate on death row in Singapore
Sean Francis Han, activist
Sharmila Rockey, sister of inmate on death row in Singapore
Syida Ismail, sister of inmate on death row in Singapore
Tan Tee Seng, activist
Vanessa Ho, activist
Zaimi Bin Abdul Rahman, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore
Zarah bte Abu Bakar, relative of inmate on death row in Singapore

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