



International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

**President**

Federico Mayor

**Members**

Giuliano Amato

Louise Arbour

Robert Badinter

Mohammed Bedjaoui

Ruth Dreifuss

Michèle Duvivier  
Pierre-Louis

Hanne Sophie Greve

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Navanethem (Navi) Pillay

Ibrahim Najjar

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## **Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: Three executions carried out by Malaysian authorities**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) expresses very serious concern at receiving reports that Malaysian authorities carried out the executions of three men on 25 March 2016.

The three men, Gunasegar Pitchaymuthu, 35, Ramesh Jayakumar, 34, and his brother Sasivarnam Jayakumar, 37, were reportedly found guilty in 2011 of murdering a 25 year old man in a playground in 2005 and sentenced to death by the High Court. The three men always claimed they were acting in self-defence after being attacked by a group.

Reports reaching ICDP suggest that these executions were carried out secretly: the families, of the three men, were given only two days' notice of the impending executions. The three men were, according to these reports, informed only the day before their executions were carried out. This lack of transparency presents difficulties for defence lawyers in pursuing timely appeals and also denies the public information necessary for Malaysian society to have an informed debate about the use of capital punishment. According to official estimates that ICDP accessed, there are currently more than 1,000 inmates under sentence of the death penalty.

The executions were carried at a time when Ms. Nancy Shukri, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, reportedly announced in November 2015 that the proposal to amend laws to abolish the mandatory death sentence was expected to be tabled in Parliament of Malaysia in March 2016. "Noting this announcement which has implications of reducing the scope for capital punishment in Malaysia, I am concerned that the executions of the three men on 25 March represent a step backwards. So ICDP and I call on the authorities in Malaysia to stop carrying out any further executions and to establish an official moratorium on the use of the death penalty while steps are taken to reduce the use of capital punishment in the country. The death penalty is a cruel and inhuman punishment that amounts to a denial of human dignity and integrity," said ICDP President Federico Mayor.

ICDP further calls on Malaysia to join some 160 countries from all regions who, according to the United Nations, have abolished the death penalty or do not execute, having recognized that modern justice



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systems can protect the public from crime without the irrevocable and cruel nature of the death penalty and the constant risk of executing an innocent person.

Federico Mayor

President

of the International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

## Background

Composed of 17 Commissioners, who are persons of high international standing from all regions of the world, ICDP acts with total independence and neutrality and works under its President Mr. Federico Mayor.

ICDP opposes the death penalty under any circumstances believing that it violates the right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in those States that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that rarely use the death penalty.

ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to further the abolition of capital punishment worldwide.

The work of ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 18 States from all regions of the world that are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Madrid.