



Geneva, 21 February 2013

Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: Three executions in Japan.

International Commission
against the Death Penalty

President
Federico Mayor

Members
Giuliano Amato

Louise Arbour

Robert Badinter

Mohammed Bedjaoui

Ruth Dreifuss

Michèle Duvivier
Pierre-Louis

Asma Jilani Jahangir

Ioanna Kuçuradi

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Rodolfo Mattarollo

Ibrahim Najjar

Bill Richardson

Honorary Member
José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero

Secretariat
Rue Rothschild 20, TL 004
CH-1202 Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 908 44 22
Fax: +41 22 908 62 62
asunta.vivo@icomdp.org
info@icomdp.org

www.icomdp.org

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) condemns the three executions carried out in Japan today. The three men Masahiro Kanagawa (29), Keiki Kanoh (62) and Kaoru Kobayashi (44), were hanged in the early hours of 21 February according to the Ministry of Justice.

They are the first executions since the Liberal Democratic Party came to power in December 2012 and formed the government under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and after Sadakazu Tanigaki took office as Minister of Justice.

The three executions have taken place just before the twenty-second session of the UN Human Rights Council begins on 25 February. This session of the Human Rights Council will consider the final outcome of the second Universal Periodic Review on the human rights situation of Japan in this session.

According to the United Nations, more than 150 countries from all regions in the world and cultures have abolished capital punishment or no longer execute because of its inherent cruelty, its ineffectiveness at deterring crime and the ever-present risk of executing the innocent.

Secrecy shrouds Japan's use of the death penalty. Death row prisoners are only notified of their scheduled execution a few hours before they are hanged. Their families are informed after the execution.

"The government maintains that there is strong support for capital punishment – but given the lack of transparency about its use of the death penalty it is very difficult to have an informed public debate on the issue," Federico Mayor, President of ICDP.

There are reportedly more than 130 prisoners on death row in Japan and today's hangings raise fears that more executions will soon follow.

ICDP calls on Japan to introduce an immediate moratorium on executions in line with the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions adopted in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012, and initiate an independent and informed public debate on its use of the death penalty.

Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty



**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

President

Federico Mayor

Members

Giuliano Amato

Louise Arbour

Robert Badinter

Mohammed Bedjaoui

Ruth Dreifuss

Michèle Duvivier

Pierre-Louis

Asma Jilani Jahangir

Ioanna Kuçuradi

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Rodolfo Mattarollo

Ibrahim Najjar

Bill Richardson

Honorary Member

José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero

Secretariat

Rue Rothschild 20, TL 004

CH-1202 Geneva

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 908 44 22

Fax: +41 22 908 62 62

asunta.vivo@icomdp.org

info@icomdp.org

www.icomdp.org

BACKGROUND

ICDP was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 14 personalities of high international standing from all regions of the world who act with total independence and neutrality and work 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. ICDP 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. In states that continue to carry out executions ICDP urges strict adherence to international standards.

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 the ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 16 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. There is small secretariat in Geneva.