



**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

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

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) condemns the executions of two men that took place on 12 December.

Mitsuo Fujishima, 55, who murdered his ex-wife's aunt and a male company employee in 1986, was hanged at the Tokyo Detention Centre.

Ryoji Kagayama, 63, who killed a female Chinese student in 2000 and a male company employee in 2008 was executed at the Osaka Detention Centre.

The two executions, by hanging, bring the number of persons executed this year to eight. According to the Ministry of Justice, there are now 129 prisoners on death row in Japan.

"The executions took place just two days after the 65th Human Rights Day on 10 December, and despite repeated calls by the international community for Japan to end its use of this cruel and inhuman punishment," said Federico Mayor, President of ICDP.

Japan's use of the death penalty is shrouded in secrecy. Death row prisoners in Japan have very little contact with outside world and are only notified of their execution a few hours before the capital punishment takes place. This lack of transparency presents difficulties for defence lawyers in pursuing timely appeals and also denies the public information necessary for Japanese society to have an informed debate about the use of capital punishment.

Japan's use of the death penalty goes against the global trend where a majority of states have stopped using the death penalty. According to the United Nations, some 150 countries from all regions and cultures in the world have abolished capital punishment or no longer carry out executions. These nations have accepted that state killing is wrong.

"We reiterate our call to the government of Japan to stop any further executions and commute all death sentences to terms of imprisonment," said President Mayor.

The government of Japan should declare an official moratorium on executions as a first step towards abolition in line with the UN General Assembly Resolutions adopted in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012 and initiate an independent and informed public debate about abolition of the death penalty.

Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
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Background

ICDP was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 15 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 17 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Geneva.