



**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

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

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

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) condemns today's executions in Japan.

According to the Ministry of Justice Katsuji Hamasaki, 64, and Yoshihide Miyagi, 56, were executed after being convicted of the murder of rival gang members.

Today's hangings in Tokyo bring the number of persons executed this year to five.

Three persons were executed on 21 February 2013 and more than 130 persons remain on death row in Japan.

The government maintains that the public supports capital punishment but Japan's use of the death penalty is shrouded in secrecy which makes an informed public discussion very difficult.

"The government should cease all executions and initiate an informed public debate as a step towards ending this barbaric punishment", said Mr. Federico Mayor, President of ICDP.

The majority of states have stopped using the death penalty. According to the United Nations (UN), some 150 countries from all regions and cultures in the world have abolished capital punishment or no longer execute. These nations have accepted that state killing is wrong and fails to deter crime.

ICDP calls on the government of Japan to stop any further executions, to commute all death sentences to terms of imprisonment and declare an official moratorium on executions in line with the UN General Assembly Resolutions adopted in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012. Furthermore, ICDP calls on the government of Japan to initiate an independent and informed public debate on its use on the death penalty.

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President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty



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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 16 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Geneva.