



International Commission
against the Death Penalty

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Founding Members

Rodolfo Mattarollo
(1939-2014)
Asma Jilani Jahangir
(1952-2018)

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**Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty:
Myanmar carries out four executions: the first in 34 years**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP or Commission) strongly condemns the executions of four people by authorities in Myanmar on 25 July 2022. The last known execution in Myanmar was carried out in 1988, although death sentences have been handed down since.

According to reports reaching ICDP, the four people, all men, included former National League for Democracy (NLD) legislator Phyo Zeya Thaw, prominent democracy activist Kyaw Min Yu (also known as 'Ko Jimmy'), Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw. Ko Jimmy and Phyo Zeya Thaw, who were arrested on 23 October and 18 November 2021 respectively, were sentenced to death on 21 January 2022 by a military tribunal under the Counterterrorism Law of 2014, while Ko Jimmy was subsequently charged with sedition. Hla Myo Aung, and Aung Thura Zaw were convicted on murder charges. Their appeals were denied. On 3 June, the military junta announced that its authorities would carry out the executions of the four people.

ICDP notes its deep disappointment that after 34 years, Myanmar's authorities have resumed executions following what reports suggest were unfair closed-door trials without the presence of their lawyers. The Commission expresses its serious concern as these executions open the worrying possibility of many more executions noting that since the military coup on 1 February 2021, at least 116 people have been sentenced to death, many on political charges similar to which at least two of the people were executed. Reports suggest that among those facing the death penalty includes two children, and 41 people who have been sentenced in absentia while some 11,500 people remain in detention on political charges.

ICDP's thoughts go to the families of those people whose executions have been carried out. The death penalty is an obsolete punishment, that has been repeatedly discredited for its arbitrariness, for its discriminatory nature, for the lack of proof of its deterrent effects, as there is always a risk of an innocent person being executed. The death penalty is a brutal act and, if it is used for political reasons, it usually brings in a cycle of violence, which deepens conflict in societies, rather than reconciliation and undermines the legitimacy of its rulers.

ICDP calls on the military junta in Myanmar to consider moving away from the death penalty as this step for life, rather than death, will be considered



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by the international community as a step away from its current isolation, noting that the vast majority of countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice.

Background

Composed of 24 Commissioners of high international standing following highly respected careers in public service and representing all regions of the world, the International Commission against the Death Penalty acts with total independence.

The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in countries that observe a *de facto* moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that retain capital punishment. ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to advocate for worldwide abolition of the death penalty.

The work of ICDP is supported by a geographically diverse Support Group of Member States who are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its Secretariat is based in Madrid and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.



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