

19 October 1998

Further information on EXTRA 72/98 (AMR 14/06/98, 6 October 98)- Death Penalty

THE BAHAMAS **Trevor Nathaniel Pennerman Fisher (EXTRA 72/98, AMR 14/06/98, 6 October; EXTRA 76/98, AMR 14/07/98, 13 October 98)**
Richard Woods (EXTRA 76/98, AMR 14/07/98, 13 October 98)

Amnesty International has learned with deep regret that Trevor Nathaniel Pennerman Fisher was hanged on the morning of 15 October 1998. Richard Woods, another death row inmate, was executed one hour after Trevor Nathaniel Pennerman Fisher. These are the first executions to have taken place in The Bahamas since 1996.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned that both executions have been carried out, despite the fact that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) had requested that the government preserve their lives until a decision had been reached. These executions are counter to the government of the Bahamas' obligation as a member state of the Organisation of American States (OAS) to cooperate with OAS bodies, including the IACHR - whose functions include safeguarding the human rights of individuals, as enshrined in the American Declaration. This also contributes to undermining the hemispheric regional mechanism for international protection of human rights, which has been developed over the last 50 years.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please telephone/ send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- expressing deep regret at the execution of Trevor Nathaniel Pennerman Fisher and Richard Woods;
- expressing concern that Trevor Nathaniel Pennerman Fisher and Richard Woods were executed in spite of the fact that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) had requested that the government preserve their lives until a decision had been reached;
- expressing sympathy for the relatives of Durventon Daniels and Pauline Johnson and for victims of violent crime and their relatives, but stating that the death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment which violates the right to life;
- urging the government to commute the sentences of all those sentenced to death in the Bahamas and join the majority of countries in abolishing the death penalty, and as a first step, to propose and support the enactment of legislation which would provide alternative (non-capital) penalties for murder;
- reminding the government of The Bahamas of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3 : "Right to life".

You can also add:

- stating that the death penalty is brutalizing to all who are involved in the process;
- pointing out that it is arbitrary and often falls disproportionately on minority and underprivileged groups, that it denies the widely accepted principle of rehabilitating the offender and that it does not necessarily alleviate the suffering caused to the victims of crime.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister

The Honourable Hubert Ingraham

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Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Attorney General

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Attorney General

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Salutation: Dear Attorney General

COPIES TO:

The Governor General

His Excellency Sir Orville Turnquest

Governor General

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and to diplomatic representatives of the Bahamas accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY