

URGENT ACTION

RONALD TIWARIE STILL IN DANGER OF EXECUTION

Ronald Tiwarie has now been on death row beyond the five-year limit set down by the Privy Council as marking the beginning of cruel and inhuman treatment.

No one has been executed in Trinidad and Tobago after spending more than five years on death row since the Privy Council ruled in 1993 that this would amount to cruel and inhuman treatment. Ronald Tiwarie completed his fifth year on death row on 4 August, but will not be safe from execution until his sentence is commuted, either by the High Court, or by a presidential pardon.

The High Court is scheduled to meet on 29 September, when it may commute Ronald Tiwarie's sentence to life imprisonment. The president has the power to pardon him, by way of commuting his sentence.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- √ Expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crime, and their families;
- √ Calling on the authorities to commute Ronald Tiwarie's death sentence immediately to life imprisonment;
- √ Pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments;
- √ Urging the authorities to continue their *de facto* moratorium on use of the death penalty, and commute the sentences of all those on death row in Trinidad and Tobago.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 SEPTEMBER 2009 TO:

Prime Minister

The Rt. Honourable Patrick Manning,
The Office of the Prime Minister
White Hall, Queen Park West
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago

Fax: +1 868 622 2241

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Attorney General

The Hon. John Jeremie
Ministry of the Attorney General
Cabildo Chambers
25-27 St Vincent Street
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago

Fax: +1 868 625 0470

Email: ag@ag.gov.tt

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

Minister of National Security
Senator The Hon. Martin Joseph
Ministry of National Security
31-33 Abercromby St
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Email: mns@tsst.net.tt

President

George Maxwell Richards
Office of the President
Circular Road
St Anns
Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago

Fax: +1868 625 7950

email: firstoffice@yahoo.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA: 198/09 Index: AMR 49/001/2009. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR49/001/2009

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Trinidad and Tobago has not executed anyone since 1999.

The world is turning away from the use of death penalty: 139 countries have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice and only 25 nations carried out executions in 2008. Trinidad and Tobago, however, along with the 11 other English-speaking Caribbean nations, voted on 18 December 2008 against the UN General Assembly resolution 63/168 calling for a global moratorium on executions. The English-speaking Caribbean made up almost a quarter of the countries who voted against the moratorium.

The execution of Charles Elroy Laplace in St Kitts and Nevis in December 2008 was the first in the English-speaking Caribbean since 2000. His execution has sparked fears that other English-speaking Caribbean nations will follow suit as pressure grows on the region's governments to be seen to be tackling an increase in violent crime. In May 2007 the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago said publicly that he wanted hangings resumed, saying that he believed "capital punishment is an essential element in crime fighting." In June 2009 he blamed delays in carrying out executions on restrictions imposed by Privy Council rulings.

Trinidad and Tobago suffers from high levels of violent crime – there were 545 reported homicides in 2008, a rise of 39% over 2007. Scientific studies have consistently found no convincing evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments. The most recent survey of research findings on the relation between the death penalty and homicide rates, conducted for the UN in 1988 and updated in 1996 and 2002, concluded that "research has failed to provide scientific proof that executions have a greater deterrent effect than life imprisonment."

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. The organization recognizes the duty of governments to tackle violent crime but believes that the death penalty is by nature ineffective and arbitrary, and is not an effective deterrent to crime. The application of death penalty inevitably leads to inconsistencies and errors, inescapable flaws which are exacerbated by discrimination, prosecutorial misconduct and inadequate legal representation. It brutalizes those involved in the process of executions and wider society as a whole. The organization believes that the rise in crime affecting much of the Caribbean will only be solved by addressing urgent reforms to police and justice systems, not with state killings.

For more information on Amnesty International's campaign to abolish the death penalty worldwide, please visit:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty>

Further information on UA: 198/09 Index: AMR 49/003/2009 Issue Date: 05 August 2009

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