



3 February 2015

The Hon Julie Bishop MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

Australian diplomacy in response to imminent executions in Indonesia

We are writing to convey our serious concerns about Indonesia's resumption of the death penalty, and to ask you to increase your diplomatic efforts to stop imminent executions from going ahead.

We commend the role that you and the Prime Minister have played in calling for the Indonesian Government to put a halt to the executions and making numerous representations asking the Indonesian government to show mercy to the two Australian citizens on death row, Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan. We also applaud the Australian Government's continued stance in opposition to the use of the death penalty.

We note that in spite of global efforts to call on the Indonesian Government to halt executions, six people were executed by firing squad on 18 January 2015. All were sentenced to death for drug-related offences.

We now hold grave concerns for Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan and a number of other individuals facing imminent execution after rejection of their clemency applications by President Joko Widodo.

A return to the death penalty is a regressive step for human rights in Indonesia. The death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 6(6) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a State Party, provides that "Nothing in

this article shall be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment by any State Party to the present Covenant”.

There is no convincing evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments. The decision to resume executions has set Indonesia against the global trend towards abolition of the death penalty and the country’s own progress in this area.

We understand you have made a large number of representations to the Indonesian authorities on this matter and we urge you to continue to do so. Australia has a vital role to play in enhancing the protection of its citizens from the death penalty and in promoting a global and regional human rights culture in which such flagrant human rights abuses do not occur.

We now ask that you consider an urgent diplomatic visit to Indonesia to meet with authorities and urge the Indonesian Government to show mercy to all prisoners facing imminent execution. We believe that such a visit would help to demonstrate the wider significance of Indonesia’s actions and send a powerful signal from the Australian Government and Australian people.

In addition to calling for an immediate halt to imminent executions, we urge you to call on Indonesia to establish a moratorium on all executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty and to commute all death sentences to terms of imprisonment.

To respond to the issues set out in this letter please contact Stephanie Cousins, Government Relations Manager at Amnesty International on Stephanie.Cousins@Amnesty.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Alistair Gee, Executive Director, Act for Peace NCCA

Rev. Prof. Andrew Dutney, President, Uniting Church in Australia

Andrew Stone, National President Australian Lawyers Alliance

Archie Law, Executive Director, ActionAid Australia

Bill Rowlings, CEO, Civil Liberties Australia

Claire Mallinson, National Director, Amnesty International Australia

Don Sinnamon, President, Australians Against Capital Punishment

Elaine Pearson, Australia Director, Human Rights Watch

Lachlan Murdoch, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

Marc Purcell, Executive Director, Australian Council for International Development

Nathan Kennedy, President, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights

Stephen Blanks, President, New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties

The Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma

Ursula Noye, Vice President, Reprieve Australia Inc