

May 2015

INPUD RESPONSE



The International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD) condemns the executions of eight people for drug-related offences in Indonesia

On 29th April, 2015, eight people convicted of drug-related offences were executed by firing squad in Indonesia. Those killed included Brazilian, Nigerian, Australian, and Indonesian nationals. These executions follow the execution of six people convicted of similar offences on the 18th January, earlier this year, including an Indonesian national, and citizens of Brazil, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Vietnam, and Malawi.

Executions took place despite repeated calls for them to be called off

The death penalty is the ultimate denial of human rights. In executing these people, their fundamental right to life has been violated by the state of Indonesia which, by doing so, has shown itself to be significantly out of step with states increasingly abolishing the death penalty. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have stressed opposition to the death penalty for drug offences, and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has specifically called upon states to abolish the death penalty for drug-related offences.

The executions took place in spite of the fact that international law prohibits the death penalty for all but instances where crimes involve intentional killing; those executed had committed no such crime. The executions took place despite repeated global calls that they be called off, calls from both Indonesian and international civil society, as well as UN agencies, and governments whose citizens were executed. Indeed, the president of Indonesia, President Widodo, stated prior to the executions that clemency would not be considered, in violation of Indonesia's constitution, which states that each case must be considered on its own merit. In addition to this international outcry and condemnation, the executions were also in breach of one of Widodo's own nine pre-election commitments, namely to protect "marginalised groups [and ensure] respect for human rights and equitable settlement of cases of human rights violations"¹.

Executions and criminalisation do not reduce drug use; they increase harm

President Widodo has referred to executions for drug offences as prohibitionist 'shock therapy'. However, the death penalty, the criminalisation of people who use drugs, and prohibition more generally do not achieve their ambition of deterring people from using drugs, and Indonesia's drug legislation has not resulted in a decrease in drug use or drug trafficking in Indonesia. Instead, criminalisation and prohibition drive people who use drugs underground, and create substantial barriers in accessing service and healthcare provision and harm reduction interventions. In short, **these executions will not deter drug use, and will not deter drug trafficking. Instead, they will increase fear, marginalisation, and social exclusion.**

INPUD condemns, in the strongest possible terms, executions for drug-related offences and ongoing criminalisation of people who use drugs. INPUD implores states to focus on health and human rights, and not on punitive and violent policies that exacerbate harm. INPUD reiterates that the death penalty is the ultimate denial of human rights, and should never be applied for drug-related offences.

¹ Translated from <http://jokowinners.com/content/nawa-cita-sembilan-agenda-prioritas>, last accessed 11 May 2015