



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

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COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE - COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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Malaysia: No More Delays in Anwar Appeal

The International Commission of Jurists urged the Malaysian Federal Court today to deliver its judgment expeditiously in the appeal of Anwar Ibrahim, the former deputy prime minister who is in jail on politically motivated charges of corruption and sodomy.

"We are concerned that the Court vacated the date fixed for delivering the judgment, 22 July, without providing any reasons whatsoever and without fixing another date." said Linda Besharaty-Movaed, Legal Advisor for the Centre on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers of the International Commission of Jurists. "This is particularly worrying as Anwar continues to be held in detention where his health is reportedly deteriorating" she added.

On 10 May 2004, the Federal Court of Malaysia heard the final appeal of Anwar Ibrahim and Sukma Darmawan, Anwar's co-accused and brother. Anwar was initially held under Malaysia's draconian Internal Security Act (ISA), and was beaten by the former national chief of police while in custody. He was convicted of corruption and sodomy following two separate trials in 1999 and 2000 respectively and sentenced to consecutive terms of six and nine years.

After completion of the hearing on 20 May 2004, the Presiding Judge stated, "We are reserving our judgment. I promise we will sit down, work hard uninterruptedly and we will give the decision as soon as possible."

Malaysian and international human rights organizations have repeatedly called for Anwar's release, expressing concern that the charges of "corrupt practices" (interference in a police investigation) and sodomy subsequently brought against him were a pretext to remove him from public life.

The Australian Bar Association, the Bar Council of Malaysia, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Bar Association, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and LAWASIA monitored the appellate proceedings.

For further information, please contact Linda Besharaty-Movaed, Legal Advisor, at + 41 22 979 38 09.

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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