

**Oral intervention of the International Commission of Jurists
on the adoption of the outcome document of
the Universal Periodic Review of Singapore**

24 June 2016

Mr. President,

The International Commission of Jurists appreciates the recommendations made in the report on the Universal Periodic Review of Singapore (A/HRC/32/17, 15 April 2016), regarding the death penalty (recommendations 166.11, 166.20, 166.21, 166.33, 166.156-166.168) and the right to freedom of opinion and expression (recommendations 166.86-166.92, 166.200-166.202, 166.204-166.205).

Despite more than 30 recommendations to establish a moratorium and abolish the death penalty, and despite repeated calls of the General Assembly for a global moratorium, Singapore maintains its intention to continue to carry out executions. (See A/HRC/32/17, paragraphs 61-63, and A/HRC/32/17/Add.1, 13 June 2016, paragraph 41.) Indeed, it carried out its most recent execution, of a Mr. Kho Jabing (See ICJ [Press release](#), 5 April 2016), just over a month ago.

The ICJ urges Singapore to abolish the death penalty. There is no proof that death penalty deters crime at a greater rate than other forms of punishment. The imposition of the death penalty violates the right to life and the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

During the previous cycle, Singapore had accepted recommendations to ensure the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression and to protect bloggers and activists from persecution and harassment. In this cycle, Singapore affirmed that no one had been prosecuted for criticizing the government or its policies. It supported a few more general recommendations regarding freedom of opinion and expression, but failed to acknowledge the problem of unjustified restrictions in particular cases, and did not accept the more precise recommendations on these issues. (See A/HRC/32/17, paras 72-75, and A/HRC/32/17/Add.1, paragraphs 47-50).

In mid-2013, tighter restrictions on online expression were implemented; between 2014 and 2015, at least three bloggers were prosecuted for expressing their political opinions in a manner that should have been fully protected by freedom of expression. Similar problems continue today.

The ICJ calls on Singapore to review its position on the relevant recommendations and to refrain from further unjustified infringements of freedom of expression.

I thank you.

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