

MID OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 16 DEATH PENALTY REPORT

Date format: day/month/year

International Update (11.10.16 – 8.11.16)

- **USA**

- *Oklahoma* – 1
 - 1.10.16 – The US Supreme Court reversed a State Appeals Court that had affirmed the death sentence imposed on Shaun Michael Bosse, convicted of murder. The prosecutors had asked three of the victim's relatives to recommend a sentence, and all three had recommended the death penalty, to which the Jury agreed. The Supreme Court ruled that seeking the opinion of family members in this way had violated the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution, which prohibits the imposition of cruel and unusual punishment. The case now returns to the State Appeals Court for further review. (Source: Mail Online)
 - 8.11.16 – The State voted to provide explicit constitutional protections for its death penalty that declare it cannot be deemed cruel and unusual punishment by state courts. It is the first state to provide constitutional protection for capital punishment. (Source: Time)
- *Nevada* – 13.10.16 – Governor Brian Sandoval has stated that, despite the State having exhausted its supply of lethal injection drugs, he will not propose the abolition of the death penalty. He has, however, also said he will not be proposing an alternative method of execution, such as a firing squad. (Note: Nevada have budgeted almost \$900,000 to create a working execution chamber - Source: News4)
- *Florida* – 14.10.16 – The Florida Supreme Court ruled that only a unanimous Jury may recommend a death sentence, bringing the State in line with most of the rest of the Country. Legal experts state this means that 'dozens' of those on death row may be eligible for re-sentencing. The Supreme Court wrote 'This requirement will dispel most, if not all, doubts about the future validity and long-term viability of the death penalty in Florida. (Source: The Wall Street Journal)
- *California* –
 - 15.10.16 – Silicon Valley Entrepreneurs, including Netflix and a former Chief Executive of Apple, are donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to the campaign to end executions in the State, saying the time has come for the practice to be abolished both in the State and across the USA. (Note: Californian citizens will be voting on the death penalty on 8th November) (Source: Los Angeles Times)

in which prisoners on death row live and die. (Source: The Guardian)
17.10.16 – Reports confirmed by the BBC.

- **Pakistan –**

- 13.10.16 – Asia Bibi, the Christian woman sentenced to death for blasphemy, has had her final appeal postponed. She has been on death row for six years, her earlier appeal having been postponed five times. More than 1,300 people have been charged with blasphemy in Pakistan since 1987, a disproportionate number of them Christians: Asia Bibi's case has captured world-wide attention, with international calls for her release and an end to Pakistan's repressive blasphemy laws. (Note: Salmaan Taseer, the Governor of Punjab, who spoke out in her defence, was murdered, and his bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, who murdered the governor for defending her, was hanged.) (Sources: The Guardian, Christian Today).
- 22.10.16 – The Supreme Court ruled that schizophrenia is not a mental illness, paving the way for the execution of Imdad Dali, who had been found guilty of killing a cleric in 2002. He had been declared 'clinically insane' but the Court have ruled that schizophrenia is 'not a permanent mental disorder'. (Source: BBC) *Note: UA circulated previously to DPLWG 4.10.16*
- 23.10.16 – Maya Foa, Director of Reprieve, has warned the UK Home Secretary that the 'UK funding for counter-narcotics programmes may be not only contributing to the death penalty and other human rights abuse, but even leading to the arrest and execution of some of the very exploited people it is seeking to protect'. The Home Office denies funding the programme and insists all its overseas engagement work is risk-assessed, including looking at any impact on human rights. (Source: The Guardian)

- **Iran –**

- 16.10.16 – A group of Iranian Lawmakers have written an open letter to the Head of the Judiciary calling for the release of Narges Mohammadi, the activist who has campaigned against the death penalty, and who has been sentenced to 10 years in prison. (Source: Middle East Eye)
- 26.10.16 and 8.11.16 – The execution of Zeinab Lokran, convicted of killing an abusive husband at the age of 17, is now no longer imminent. She has a new lawyer, who will work with her on a request for a new trial. Her death sentence, however, remains in place until a re-trial is granted. Please see our website for more details (also posted on Facebook and Twitter). *Note: AI have recorded at least 74 executions of juvenile offenders in Iran between 2005 and 2016, with numbers of young people of death row for crimes committed when under 18.* (Source: Amnesty International UK/See this month's DP Urgent Actions below)

- 29.10.16 – Mr Mostafa Pourmohammadi, Justice Minister, called for the country to execute fewer people and to revise its death penalty laws. He said ‘The quantity of executions has not been effective’ and ‘alternative penalties’ were needed, but that it was impossible to abolish capital punishment all together because ‘there are corrupt people in the country for whom there is no alternative to execution’. (Sources: The Independent/BBC).
- **Saudi Arabia – 18.10.16** – It was reported that a Saudi Prince – Prince Turki bin Saud al-Kabir – was executed for shooting a man dead during a mass brawl 3 years ago outside Riyadh. It is rare for members of the royal family, estimated to number several thousand, to be executed. It is understood the family of the victim refused ‘blood money’ as compensation. Some Saudis said they were pleased to see that ‘the law applied to everyone’. A Saudi citizen, Saad Bin Ahmed al-Shamrani, was executed on the same day, following his conviction for abduction and rape. According to a tally compiled by the AFP News Agency, the Prince was the 134th person in Saudi Arabia to be put to death in 2016. (Source: Washington Post)
- **Turkey –**
 - 20.10.16 – 36 Law Societies and Bar Associations within Europe (including those of Scotland, England and Wales, and Northern Ireland) have co-signed a statement condemning attempts to reinstate the death penalty in Turkey. They call upon the Turkish government to respect its international commitments, reminding them that Turkey has supported the recent World Congress Against the Death Penalty held on 2st-23rd June 2016 in Oslo. (Source: Law Society of Scotland).
 - 29.10.16 – President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his Government would ask Parliament to consider reintroducing the death penalty as a punishment for the plotters behind the July coup bid, and that, following Parliament’s approval, he would ratify the proposal. Capital punishment was abolished in 2004 as the nation sought accession to the EU. The President has dismissed the warnings of the EU – ‘What counts is not what the West say. What counts is what my people say.’ (Source: Yahoo News).
 - 1.11.16 – Prime Minister Binali Yildirim stated the death penalty could be reintroduced for a certain ‘limited’ number of crimes and, most importantly, ‘it should be known that it cannot be retroactive’ and would not apply until the law had been ratified. This, however, is in contrast with the President’s response to the crowds reportedly calling for the death penalty for those involved in the recent failed coup. (Source: Turkey Daily News)
- **UK –**
 - 30.10.16 – Paul Nuttall, UKIP leadership candidate, has said he would hold a national referendum on bringing back capital punishment for

those who kill children should sufficient people sign a petition. (Source: Huffington Post).

- 1.11.16 – John Rees Evans, also a UKIP leadership candidate, has called for the death penalty for those who abuse children under the age of 12. The two remaining candidates, Suzanne Evans and Peter Whittle have said they do not support capital punishment. (Source: The Telegraph)
- **Philippines** – 1.11.16 – Pro-life lawmakers in Manila are set to challenge Congress's proposal to reinstate the death penalty. Lito Atienza, senior deputy leader of the House, has said 'We will put up a fight. The death penalty is the absolute and irreparable deprivation of rights. It flouts the natural and unassailable right to life'.
- **Indonesia** – 5.11.16 – On the eve of his visit to Australia, President Widodo has indicated that Indonesia wants to move towards abolishing the death penalty. He has said he thinks Indonesians will change their minds on execution laws, as citizens in Europe have done in the past. Note: In 2015, he ignored pleas to save the Bali Nine members, convicted of drugs-related offences, two of whom were Australian. He has also stepped up the use of the death penalty in the course of his presidency. (Source: ABC On Line)
- **Burma** – 5.11.16 - 74 people, predominantly Rohingya, are currently on remand for alleged involvement in last month's attacks in Rakhine State, and could face the death penalty, according to a police official. Some sections of Burma's penal code carry the death penalty; however, in most recent cases it has been commuted to a life sentence. (Source: Anadolu Agency)
- **Sierra Leone** – 7.11.16 – The year-long trial of two Sierra Leoneans for the murder of a radio Disc Jockey, together with rising gang violence in urban areas, has led the Government to consider reviving capital punishment. The death penalty remains within the law for murder or treason, but no executions have taken place since 1998. President Ernest Koroma has stood by the 1998 moratorium, but the Government have not removed the death penalty from the law books. (Source: International Business Times)

Urgent Actions

- **USA – Georgia** – received from the National Coalition – an Execution Alert for Gregory Paul Lawler, scheduled to be executed on 19.10.16. He was convicted in 2002 for the murder of a Police Officer. If executed, he will be the 44th prisoner on death row in Georgia to be put to death by lethal injection. (Circulated to DPLWG – 14.10.16) **Gregory Paul Lawler was executed on 19.10.16 – the seventh execution in Georgia this year.**
- **USA – Alabama** – received from the National Coalition – an Execution Alert for Thomas Arthur, scheduled to be executed on 3rd November. Convicted of murder in 1983, he is now 73 and the third longest serving prisoner on death

row. This is the seventh time Mr Arthur has had an execution date set. *(Circulated to DPLWG 24.10.16)*. **3.11.16 – Late in the night, the United States stayed the execution, following arguments by Mr Arthur’s attorneys that Alabama’s lethal injection protocol, which includes midazolam, was deficient. This was the 7th stay of execution for Mr Arthur.** (Source: National Coalition Against the Death Penalty)

- **Pakistan** – UA 222/16 Update – Imdad Ali – Following the Supreme Court’s ruling that the diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia is not sufficient grounds to halt his execution, another execution warrant was expected to be issued imminently. *(Circulated to DPLWG 26.10.16)*. 31.10.16 – The Supreme Court issued a last minute reprieve. A fresh legal challenge to his death sentence will be heard in the second week of November.
- **China** – UA 243/16 – The Supreme People’s Court have approved the death sentence of Jia Jinglong, who had been found guilty of killing his Village Chief after being evicted from his home, suffering injuries to his head, and witnessing the beating of two of his cousins. He had voluntarily turned himself in, which usually results in a death sentence with a two-year reprieve following good behaviour. Jia Jinglong’s sentence, however, is for immediate execution. *(Circulated to DPLWG 26.10.16)*. **This month’s group Urgent Action.**
- **Iran** – 26.10.16 – An email UA on behalf of Zeinab Lokran was received from AI UK – *(Circulated to DPLWG 27.10.16)*.
- **USA – Georgia** – Steven Spears, convicted of the murder of his former girlfriend, is due to be executed on 16th November. If the sentence is carried out, he will be the eighth prisoner on death row to be executed this year, making Georgia the state with the highest number of executions this year. *(Circulated to DPLWG – 7.11.16)*

Campaigning

- The Letter Writing Group have written/emailed in support of the 6 Death Penalty Urgent Actions listed above.
- There is no further news in respect of **Reggie Clemons**. Cards will be signed for him at the December meeting.
- **The New Forest Group of AI are hosting an important meeting at 1.30-3.15 pm on Saturday 12th November at the Lymington Centre, New Street, Lymington. The speaker is Dan Dolan, Head of Death Penalty Policy at Reprieve. His talk will be on the topic ‘Will we see an end to the Death Penalty?’ and will focus on the use of lethal injection as a means of execution in the US.** *(Circulated to the Membership. A group from Salisbury will be attending.)*