

**\*\*JOINT STATEMENT URGING SINGAPORE TO HALT IMPENDING EXECUTION OF  
NAGAENTHRAN K DHARMALINGAM FOR A DRUG OFFENCE\*\***

3 November 2021 - Harm Reduction International (HRI), the International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD) and the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC), alongside 27 organisations and networks, urge the Singaporean Government to immediately halt the impending execution of Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam; and call on UN entities, the European Union, and all relevant stakeholders to take urgent action.

Nagaenthran, a 32 years' old Malaysian citizen, was arrested in 2009, and sentenced to death in 2011 for importing with intent of trafficking 42.72 grams of diamorphine. The Singapore Court of Appeal upheld the sentence in November 2011, and further re-sentencing applications were dismissed. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, Nagaenthran's family was informed that he would be executed on 10<sup>th</sup> November, and was advised to start making travel and funeral arrangements.

Nagaenthran, who was reportedly pushed to import drugs in exchange of RM 500 (USD 120) needed to pay for his father's upcoming heart surgery, also experiences mental health issues and has an intellectual disability: he was diagnosed with mild ADHD, his I.Q. of 69 meets the international [standard](#) for intellectual disability, and his functioning skills (including verbal fluency, abstract reasoning, and problem solving) are impaired. Nevertheless, judges concluded that his impairment was not sufficient to grant re-sentencing, and in 2017 upheld his death sentence.

Nagaenthran's siblings and mother live in Malaysia, and - in addition to the extraordinary mental and emotional toll - are facing significant financial and logistical [challenges](#) to travel to Singapore, particularly in light of COVID-19 requirements and restrictions. Once in the country, they will have to comply with the [Stay-Home-Notice](#) (SHN) and are strictly prohibited from using public transportation. If they test negative for COVID-19, they will be granted an exception to the SHN to travel to and from the prison, although it is unclear whether they will be able to have any physical contact with Nagaenthran. If the test comes back positive, they will be barred from visiting Nagaenthran, and may be confined to a medical facility.

The use of the death penalty for drug offences is a clear violation of international human rights as well as drug control standards, as reiterated by the [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), the [Human Rights Council](#), the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime](#) (UNODC) and the [International Narcotics Control Board](#) (INCB). Contrary to the Government's claims, there is no proof that the death penalty has a unique deterrent effect on drug use or trafficking. Like many capital drug defendants, Nagaenthran was evidently at the low end of the drug supply chain, was tricked - if not coerced - to carry drugs, and did not stand to make a sizeable profit in return for the incredibly high risk activity of carrying drugs across international borders. Rather, the use of death penalty, and punitive drug policies more generally, work to deepen stigma and [discrimination](#) against people who use drugs and entrench cycles of poverty and marginalisation. As more countries move away from using the death penalty as a tool of drug control, [research by Harm Reduction International](#) shows Singapore is one of few countries that regularly sentence individuals to death for drug offences.

In addition, the imposition of capital punishment against persons with mental or intellectual disabilities is prohibited by international law and a violation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Singapore ratified.

We call on the Government of Singapore to halt Nagaenthran's execution and to commute his sentence, as a first step towards abolition of the death penalty, and towards drug policies which centre health and human rights - **END**.

**Co-signatories:**

1. Adrian & Adrian, Abogados Consultores (Venezuela)
2. Anti Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN) (Global)
3. Asia Catalyst (USA/Thailand)
4. Capital Punishment Justice Project (Australia)
5. Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation (Canada)
6. Centro de Convivência É de Lei (Brazil)
7. Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign (Ireland)
8. Corporación Acción Técnica Social (Colombia)
9. Drug Policy Network South East Europe (Serbia)
10. Eleos Justice, Monash University (Australia)
11. Ensemble Contre le Peine de Mort (ECPM) (Global)
12. Episteme, Investigación y Acción Social (Spain)
13. Instituto RIA AC (Mexico)
14. Intercambios Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico)
15. International Center for Ethnobotanical Education, Research and Service (ICEERS) (Spain)
16. Jakarta Feminist Association (Indonesia)
17. Lawyering On The Margins (Global)
18. Lawyers Collective (India)
19. LBH Masyarakat (Indonesia)
20. Metzineres (Spain)
21. Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia (Mexico)
22. Reprieve (UK)
23. RESET - Política de Drogas y Derechos Humanos (Argentina)
24. Rights Reporter Foundation (Hungary)
25. Singapore Anti-Death Penalty Campaign (Singapore)
26. Viso Mutop (Colombia)
27. Washington Office on Latin America (USA)