

Insats, English summary, #8 september 2020

Take action against the penalty in the United States!

In the shadow of the corona pandemic, the United States has begun executing prisoners on federal death row. No federal executions have been carried out for nearly two decades and 22 US states have now abolished the death penalty, with a further 11 which have not carried out executions in more than 10 years. Since mid July, three prisoners have been executed and a fourth is planned. More than 50 people are currently on the death row in the United States and there is a risk that the executions will continue.

The United States is a federation and the states have great autonomy. The state courts judges in cases where crimes have been committed within the state. This also includes death sentences, in the 28 states that still apply the death penalty.

But also the federal (national) government can impose the death penalty. There are crimes that are always considered federal crimes - assassination, terrorism, espionage and more. These crimes are being prosecuted in federal court. Since crimes committed in Washington DC are also federal crimes, this means that anyone who commits a murder in Washington DC (or in other federal territory) can be sentenced to death in a federal court.

Amnesty has recently published a report (available at aktivism.amnesty.se/dodsstraff) about the federal executions.

On October 10, we will fight against the federal death penalty in the United States by urging the US Congress to immediately investigate the developments that led to the resumption of the federal death penalty in July this year, and to ensure that all relevant legislation and regulations regarding the death penalty are followed. Furthermore, we need Congress to take action to abolish the death penalty and for the Department of Justice to stop the executions that are planned.

Maja Åberg
Senior Policy Adviser

The death penalty - a discriminatory crime

Studies indicate that the death penalty in the United States has been used in a discriminatory manner. This is one of many arguments in favor of abolishing the death penalty. More than 75% of the cases leading to the death penalty have white murder victims, despite the fact that about the same number of black and white people are murdered in the United States. Over the years, discrimination in the US legal system has been criticized by Amnesty. Lawyers have, for example, removed black members of the jury and black people have been sentenced to death by an all-white jury - one example is Rodney Reed, whose case Amnesty is working on.

October 10: USA - abolish the death penalty!

Now it's time to get together to plan what your group wants to do on October 10th. The aim of the campaign is to spread Amnesty's message that the death penalty must be abolished. At our disposal we have, among other things, five strong photos of a number of innocently executed men's last meals, a petition and tile underlays perfect for school restaurants and such.

In June, a digital idea workshop was held with activists from a handful of different groups, as we gathered ideas for this campaign. Here are some ideas that came up:

- Share the pictures of the last meals together with our message via social media. On [aktivistportalen \(aktivism.amnesty.se/dodsstraff\)](http://aktivistportalen.aktivism.amnesty.se/dodsstraff), you will find photos and a guide for writing your own "letter to the editor" to use for local media.
- Collaborate with the library's café or a food truck. They might be willing to serve one of the meals from the photos the week of October 10.
- Collaborate with your school canteen or a local restaurant that informs about the death penalty by using our stylish tile underlays and posters. Register your group and order material on aktivism.amnesty.se/dodsstraff

Questions or ideas? Keep in touch:

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Uighur model detained in Xinjiang

Merdan Ghappar has not been seen or heard from since March 2020, after his messages and photos describing his poor detention conditions were shared on social media. Detained since January 2020, the authorities only recently disclosed that Merdan Ghappar is under "compulsory measures" on suspicion of assaulting health care workers.

There are serious concerns for Merdan Ghappar's wellbeing, as it is feared he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Take action for Merdan now! Instructions are available at aktivism.amnesty.se/aktioner

When you have taken action, send me an email!

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BRAVE: The campaign ends, the fight for human rights defenders continues!

The important work for human rights defenders will change since the BRAVE-campaign ends.

For those of you who want to take action for human rights defenders, please get involved with the Gustavo Gatica-case. Gustavo took part in the extensive protests in Chile in the autumn of 2019. He was hit by police rubber bullets and became permanently blind. Hundreds of protesters was blinded after being hit by rubber bullets used by the police during the protests. Amnesty demands that responsible commanders and police be brought to justice and that Gustavo and thousands of other victims of police violence can be rehabilitated.

At aktivism.amnesty.se/brave you can sign up to campaign for Gustavo and order posters, info sheets and petition lists.

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STAND UP FOR CLIMATE, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ON SEPTEMBER 25!

"Human rights and the climate crisis go hand in hand. We cannot solve one without solving the other. Climate change means that people cannot grow food, that their homes are threatened and that their health will be endangered. " - said Greta Thunberg when she received Amnesty's highest award in 2019, the Ambassador of Conscience Award.

On September 25, Fridays for Future has once again announced a global action day for the climate. The actions will take place around the world and will be adapted to prevailing circumstances and guidelines on covid - 19.

Of course, Amnesty Sweden is supporting the Climate justice movement, and we therefore urge all activist groups to investigate what is happening in your city (or online) on 25 September. For the latest updated information, keep an eye on Fridays for Futures' social media but also on their website.

Get in touch if you have any questions!

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