



Commonwealth Lawyers Association

Statement on the execution of the Death Penalty in Singapore Pannir Selvam Pranthaman

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (“CLA”) is deeply concerned that Pannir Selvam Pranthaman (“Pannir”) is scheduled to be executed in Singapore on 20 February 2025.

The High Court of Singapore convicted Pannir of drug trafficking as a “courier” in 2017 and he was given the mandatory death penalty. The Public Prosecutor did not issue a Certificate of Substantive Assistance under s.33B of the Misuse of Drugs Act (Cap 185, 2008 Rev. Ed) – which would have avoided the imposition of the death penalty - although Pannir claimed that he had provided information to the police regarding the actual drug trafficker. Pannir has also been denied clemency by the President of Singapore.

This is yet another case that raises serious issues regarding the imposition of the mandatory death penalty for drug-related offences that do not meet the threshold of “*the most serious crimes*,” as required under international human rights standards.

The CLA notes that:

- Under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), a sentence of death “*may be imposed only for the most serious crimes*”.
- The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has noted that the imposition of mandatory death penalty is contrary to the international human rights law as judges are deprived of the ability to consider mitigating circumstances of the convicted person, and, critically, that the death penalty should not be imposed for drug related crimes as it does not meet the threshold of “*the most serious crimes*”.

The CLA further notes that:

- Under Article 22P (1) of the Constitution of Singapore, the President has a power of clemency, pardon or reprieve of any offender.

Noting all the above and cognisant of the international rules and obligations applicable to all nations and the above-mentioned provision of the Constitution of Singapore, the CLA:

- Calls on the Government of Singapore to adhere to international human rights standards and obligations; and
- Calls upon the President of Singapore to reconsider exercising the clemency powers under Article 22P (1) of the Constitution of Singapore in Pannir's case, with the aim of commuting his death sentence.

Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA)

19th February 2025

The **Commonwealth Lawyers Association** is an international non-profit organisation which exists to promote and maintain the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth by ensuring that an independent and efficient legal profession, with the highest standards of ethics and integrity, serves the people of the Commonwealth.
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