



ECPM and the Iraqi Coalition against the death penalty demand the repeal of Article 4 of the Anti-terrorism law in Iraq

Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM)

Statement

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The French association Together against the Death Penalty (Ensemble contre la peine de mort - ECPM) calls on the Iraqi authorities to respond positively to the request of Iraqi demonstrators to repeal Article 4 of the terrorism law which includes the death penalty.

"The death penalty has no deterrent effect and is thus never effective in the fight against terrorism," said Raphael Chenuil-Hazan, director of ECPM. "Only an independent and impartial Iraqi judiciary, fully respectful of the rights of defense and international law, can obtain the confidence of citizens."

The frequent use of Article 4 by Iraqi courts continues to fuel suspicion against Iraqi authorities who could use this sanction as a tool for political or communitarian repression.

The death penalty is regularly pronounced by Iraqi courts. Hundreds of people have been sentenced to death and executed since the Iraqi state was reinstated in 2004. Iraqi authorities provide little information and no statistics concerning executions. In 2012, at least 129 people were executed in Iraq.

Background

Article 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Act was approved by the Iraqi National Assembly in 2005 following the departure of the Bremer administration. It sentences to death "anyone who commits, as a main perpetrator or participant, a terrorist act, along with anyone who incites, plans, finances or assists terrorists to commit such crimes".

This provision is now the center of a crisis between supporters of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his opponents after politicians and protesters in several Iraqi cities have called for its repeal.

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