

**Japanese lawyer indignant after her client is executed without notice**

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**On June 17, Tsutomu Miyazaki, Shinji Mutsuda and Yoshio Yamazaki were executed in Japan. Lawyer Maiko Tagusari (photo), who defended one of the three men, denounces the rising number of executions in her country.**

“On the morning of June 17, my client on death row, Tsutomu Miyazaki, was executed in Tokyo Detention Centre without any prior notice, as well as two other inmates, one also in Tokyo and the other in Osaka. Since the inauguration of the current Justice Minister Kunio Hatoyama, there have been executions every two months. He has executed as many as 13 people in only 6 months. I was therefore gravely worried that my client's execution could be imminent. Miyazaki was mentally ill and had been receiving psychiatric medical treatment in the detention centre for more than a decade.

I had been preparing for an appeal for retrial for the last several months, obtaining his medical record from the detention centre authorities and requesting an expert to examine his mental condition. On May 30, I sent a letter to the Minister and requested him not to execute my client, citing these circumstances.

I am now in Taiwan and joining the campaign organized by Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty, together with Speedy Rice from the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty and Mark Allison from Amnesty International.

**Japan going against the trend**

Although I do not know if the Ministry of Justice selected my client as a target because I am outside Japan now, it is symbolic that he was executed during my visit to this country which has been under de-facto moratorium on executions for two and a half years. Even Mainland China is also reducing the number of executions drastically. Japan is almost the only country which is clearly and intentionally going against the internal trend toward moratorium and abolition.

Japan should stop executions immediately, following repeated recommendations by UN Human Rights Committee, Committee against Torture, Human Rights Council and United Nations General Assembly Resolution on moratorium on executions.

Hereby I strongly denounce the execution of the three people including Miyazaki and call for raising awareness about realities in Japan, which is totally isolated in the context of human rights.”

**Maiko Tagusari**

Attorney at law

[ADPAN member](#)

Japan