



## Protest Against Executions Ordered by Minister of Justice Yoshihisa Furukawa

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Center for Prisoner Rights ([prisonersrights.org/english/](https://prisonersrights.org/english/))  
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Japan Innocence and Death Penalty Information Center  
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Today, in accordance with a directive issued by Minister of Justice Yoshihisa Furukawa, three prisoners: Tomoaki Takanezawa, Onogawa Mitsunori (in the Tokyo Detention Center), and Yasutaka Fujishiro (in the Osaka Detention Center), were executed. The Center for Prisoner Rights and the Japan Innocence and Death Penalty Information Center strongly protest these actions.

It has been two years since executions have been carried out. The current cabinet, under prime minister Fumio Kishida, was inaugurated just two months ago in October. The executions today show that the current administration denies that the death penalty is an egregious violation of human rights.

This year, world attention was drawn to Japan with the hosting of the summer Olympic and Para-olympic games, and the the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (the Kyoto Congress) in March.

The 'Kyoto Declaration' strongly advised all countries of the world:

- 1) To promote a rehabilitative environment in the community to facilitate the social reintegration of offenders with the active involvement of local communities.
- 2) To ensure equal access to justice and application of the law to all, including vulnerable members of society, regardless of their status.

One of those executed today, Mr Onogawa, was seeking a retrial. His hanging clearly indicates that equal access to justice has been denied.

The treaty bodies of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, first and foremost, have repeatedly advised the Japanese government to avoid executions of those seeking retrial.

These executions have shaken the leadership which the member states of the United Nations, as well as the international community, have entrusted to Japan in accordance with the Kyoto Declaration.

Furthermore, minister Furukawa using documents prepared by his ministry, repeatedly iterated in a special press conference that the continuation of the death penalty "should be decided by each country on an individual basis." He therefore acknowledges and purposely attempts to avoid international criticism in light of the March Kyoto Congress and the hosting of the summer Olympics.

In the U.S., the Biden administration has suspended executions at the national level. The Japanese government, in carrying out executions, directly confronts the worldwide wave for abolition.

We remain undaunted in our repeated opposition to executions, and more than ever, in association with international opinion, remain committed to the suspension and ultimate abolition of the death penalty in Japan.

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