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To the following: Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister, and
Mr. Sadakazu Tanigaki, Minister of Justice

This is a Petition of Redress Against the Use of Capital Punishment

We strongly protest against the executions of Mr. Mitsuhiro Kobayashi at the detention center in Sendai and Mr. Tsutomu Takamizawa at the detention center in Tokyo, both carried out on 29 August of this year. This date marks the sixth round of executions and a total of eleven people killed since the second inauguration of the present Abe administration.

The standing use by the nation of the death penalty is counter to Article 36 of the Japanese Constitution which prohibits “cruel punishments” and Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states the following: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” Furthermore, continuing to execute citizens runs counter to the current of international standards, which is progressively moving toward abolishing the death penalty.

Neither nations nor citizens have the right to take someone’s life. Under present circumstances, however, such tyranny is continuing to take place. The death penalty is carried out under the orders of the Minister of Justice, who signs and seals these orders in an extremely businesslike, mechanical, and periodic manner. Execution is, plain and simple, systematic murder by the nation.

As of now, several condemned criminals have been baptized, have accepted the Christian faith, and are leading religious lives after they were sentenced to death. But, we have also witnessed five brothers in faith dying by the hand of the nation. They had been keen to atone for their crimes, facing their own sins in honesty. However, they were unable to completely reflect on their own responsibilities as their lives were taken by the nation. For this reason, we earnestly hope the death penalty will be abolished as soon as possible. This hope is based on our Christian faith, which defends the life, dignity, and rights of every individual who are all children of God.

We strongly urge Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Minister of Justice Sadakazu Tanigaki to listen to the many voices of the people who petition for the abolition of the death penalty. Make an effort to abolish this crime in the Cabinet and the Diet, and promise never to execute anyone again. Follow the law which prohibits cruel punishment and execution.