

Press Release

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PACE President deplores secret, unannounced executions in Japan

Strasbourg, 10.04.2008 – "I deplore the decision of the Japanese authorities to carry out the four executions that have taken place today, in secret, and without prior warning," said Lluís Maria de Puig, President of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE).

"The death penalty is not a civilised act of justice, but the way it is carried out in Japan is particularly chilling," the President said, pointing out that the people who were executed had no prior warning and that the executions were only announced after they had taken place.

"It is disturbing that there has been an increase in the number of executions in Japan because, according to reports, the current Justice Minister – unlike the previous one – is in favour of the death penalty, and is therefore willing to put it into effect. This is both arbitrary and unjust.

"I reiterate the Assembly's appeal to Japan – as a state holding observer status with the Council of Europe – to place a moratorium on executions. The Assembly has in the past worked with the Japanese Diet to help bring this about, and is willing to do so again," said the President.

The death penalty is not carried out in the 47 nations of the Council of Europe.

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: Lluís Maria de Puig (Spain, SOC) ; Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democratic Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).