

## Why Human Rights?

The death penalty is typically viewed as a criminal justice issue. A death sentence is thought of as a criminal sanction that the state has a right to impose, just like any other punishment for a crime.

Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights (MVFHR) asserts that the death penalty is a human rights issue instead. Executions violate Articles 3 and 5 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights: the right to life, and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment or treatment. Members of MVFHR work to uphold these Articles by working to end the death penalty.

Human rights transcend government policies. If a particular act violates human rights, then it should be prohibited no matter what form of government or criminal justice system a nation has. In any nation, the death penalty is a clear human rights violation, and should be abolished.

Based in the U.S., MVFHR joins in solidarity with people in other countries who are working to abolish the death penalty, and with victims' families around the world who are working for justice and healing in the aftermath of violence.

Photos by Scott Langley

## The Power of Victims' Voices



penalty is often to be viewed as anti-victim.

Through their statements, testimony, and educational materials, MVFHR members let policymakers and the general public know that it is possible to be both pro-victim and anti-death penalty. The response to one human rights violation should not be another human rights violation. We honor victims by preventing violence, not by perpetuating it.

We believe that survivors have a moral authority to call for a consistent human rights ethic in response to murder. Speaking from direct personal experience, survivors join together across the globe and say: no more killing.

Throughout the world, survivors of murder victims are commonly assumed to favor capital punishment. Executions are presumed to meet survivors' need for justice and closure. To oppose the death

## MURDER VICTIMS'

## FAMILIES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

*In the name of victims,  
we pledge  
to end the death penalty  
around the world*



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## Who We Are

**M**urder Victims' Families for Human Rights was launched on international human rights day, 2004, by a group of victims' family members who oppose the death penalty and have extensive speaking and organizing experience in the United States and around the world.

Our members have many different reasons for opposing the death penalty, but we are united in our belief that capital punishment violates all legal and ethical human rights standards. MVFHR membership is open to all family members of victims of homicide, execution, extra-judicial assassination, and "disappearances," who oppose the death penalty in all cases.

Friends of MVFHR are abolitionists, attorneys, members of the clergy, victims' advocates, human rights workers, and anyone else who is interested in supporting and joining in our efforts.



## What We Do



**M**VFHR works with colleague organizations to abolish the death penalty on the local, state, national, and international levels. Our activities include

- ❖ Organizing victims to speak out against the death penalty — from the New York State Assembly to the Korean National Assembly, from the Catholic Campaign to End the Use of the Death Penalty to the UN Commission on Human Rights
- ❖ Conducting groundbreaking research and creating publications — like the *Creating More Victims* report, the newsletter *Article 3*, and the "For Victims, Against the Death Penalty" blog
- ❖ Opening new anti-death penalty fronts — such as mental illness and the death penalty and "No Silence, No Shame: Organizing Families of the Executed"
- ❖ Advocating for victims' right to be treated equally within the criminal justice system even if they are opposed to the death penalty

## Join Us

Are you a

- family member of a victim
- friend of MVFHR (individual or organization who supports our work)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (h) \_\_\_\_\_

(w) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose \$25  \$50  \$100   
\$500  \$1,000  Other \$   
to help end the death penalty around the world.

Clip or copy this form and return it with your donation to:

**Murder Victims' Families  
for Human Rights**  
2161 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge MA 02140 USA

Federal tax identification number: 11-3725424  
Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights is a non-profit, non-governmental organization recognized as tax exempt under section 501(c)3 of the US Tax code. Contributions to MVFHR are tax deductible.

