

Foreign Office statement on use of the death penalty in Sri Lanka

We are deeply concerned at reports that Sri Lanka intends to abandon its long-standing moratorium on use of the death penalty. The UK opposes the use of the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle.

Sri Lanka voted in favour of a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty at the UN General Assembly just six months ago. A reversal of this policy would be a regressive step that would harm Sri Lanka's international standing and its reputation as a tourist destination and growing centre for business. Implementation of the death penalty will inevitably make it more difficult for the UK to cooperate on law enforcement issues, including on counter terrorism, and will require us to review our technical assistance programmes on relevant policing, defence and other security issues.

We have raised our concerns at the highest levels of the Sri Lankan Government. We continue to call on Sri Lanka to maintain its moratorium on the death penalty.