

20 August 2020

Singapore: Human rights defender Jolovan Wham sentenced to 10 days imprisonment

On 20 August 2020, human rights defender **Jolovan Wham** was sentenced to 10 days' imprisonment for organising an event in 2016. The sentence is due to commence on 21 August 2020.

[Jolovan Wham](#) is a human rights defender who has worked on a range of issues, including the abolition of the death penalty, workers' rights, and LGBTI rights. He has worked with other members of civil society to highlight issues related to freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of assembly.

In 2019, a case was filed against Jolovan Wham for organising an event at The Agora in November 2016, entitled Civil Disobedience and Social Movements, without a police permit. The event saw the participation of several human rights defenders and journalists including Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong, [Seelan Palay](#) and [Kirsten Han](#). On 20 August 2020, the Singapore High Court dismissed Jolovan Wham's final appeal of his conviction, stating that the defender instead go to jail for a period of ten days in lieu of paying a \$2000 fine.

Since 2016, Jolovan Wham has been targeted for his human rights work through legal and judicial harassment. He is currently facing four other charges relating to several incidents, including a candlelight [vigil](#) for a death row inmate he helped organize on 14 July 2017 outside the Changi Prison and, for taking a photo of himself in front of the State Courts with a [sign urging](#) the government to drop charges against the journalists and human rights defenders, [Terry Xu](#) and Daniel De Costa.

Front Line Defenders condemns the judicial harassment of human rights defender Jolovan Wham, as it believes he is being targeted for his peaceful work in defence of human rights. It condemns the Singapore government's increasing hostility towards human rights defenders and urges the government to respect and promote the fundamental freedoms of assembly and expression.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Singapore to:

1. Immediately cease the judicial harassment and drop all charges against Jolovan Wham, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being targeted solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Singapore are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals, and free of all restrictions including police and judicial harassment.