

# Amnesty criticizes Jamaica death penalty vote

## Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica -- Amnesty International is urging Jamaica to reform its justice system rather than resume executions to deal with violent crime.

Amnesty International Deputy Director of the Americas Kerrie Howard says executions offer only an illusion of action against crime.

The human rights group says Jamaica also needs an independent commission to investigate police abuses.

Monday's comments follow last week's parliament vote to retain the death penalty. Jamaica hasn't executed anyone in 20 years. But there are growing calls for executions amid a stubbornly high homicide rate and a series of attacks on children.

Jamaica's senate has not yet scheduled a vote on the issue but is expected to within two weeks.