

Procurator-General, Zhang Jun  
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People's Republic of China  
Email: web@spp.gov.cn  
Dear Procurator-General,

I write to express my grave concern regarding the case of Robert Lloyd Schellenberg, a Canadian national convicted and sentenced to death for drug trafficking on 14 January 2019.

First detained on 3 December 2014, Robert Schellenberg was eventually sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment after being convicted for drug trafficking on 20 November 2018. Schellenberg appealed the conviction and sentence. The Liaoning High People's Court heard his case on 29 December 2018 and considered new evidence. It ordered a full retrial on the grounds that the 15-year sentence was too lenient. The Dalian Municipal Intermediate People's Court held a retrial on Schellenberg's case on 14 January 2019 and announced the guilty verdict and death sentence on the same day. It is very unusual for the court to announce the death penalty at a full hearing instead of on a later date.

Drug-related offences do not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" to which the use of the death penalty must be restricted under international law, yet reports of death sentences and executions for drug-related offences are routinely published in Chinese and international media.

The speed of Schellenberg's retrial, combined with reports that his lawyer was frequently interrupted by the judge in the hearing and was limited in the number of questions he was allowed to ask each witness on various subjects, raises concerns over the fairness of the trial.

I call on you to:

- Immediately stop seeking the death sentence in this case, or any other cases;
- Ensure that all case proceedings fully comply with international standards for a fair trial and that, pending full abolition of the death penalty, the use of this punishment is restricted to the "most serious crimes", which refers to intentional killings

Yours sincerely,