



International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

**President**

Federico Mayor

**Members**

Giuliano Amato

Louise Arbour

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## **Statement by the International Commission against the death penalty: UN Call for moratorium on death penalty gathers strength**

(Geneva) The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) today welcomed the adoption of a resolution by the UN General Assembly's human rights committee calling for a global moratorium on the use of capital punishment, and urged UN member states to fully support the resolution at the plenary session of the General Assembly next month.

The UN General Assembly's Third Committee in New York adopted the resolution by 110 votes in favour, 39 against and 36 abstentions. There were five hostile amendments, and all five were defeated before a vote on the resolution as a whole.

The resolution drew new support from Central African Republic, Niger, Tunisia and South Sudan. Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia moved from a negative vote to abstention.

"The UN resolution is an important step on the road to the abolition of this cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. The spotlight now falls on the UN General Assembly. We urge all UN Member States to vote positively for a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty", said Mr Federico Mayor, President of the ICDP.

The resolution, which reaffirms unequivocally the UN's commitment towards abolition of the death penalty, will now be tabled at the 67<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly's plenary session in December. The General Assembly is expected to endorse the resolution. It will be the fourth UN resolution on this issue since 2007, and on all previous occasions support for a moratorium has increased.

Although not legally binding, the resolutions have been a political breakthrough, sending a powerful message to the few countries adhering to capital punishment that it is time to turn away from what is increasingly seen as a cruel and abhorrent practice.

Next month's vote is an opportunity for further progress. There are hopes that several nations that previously voted negatively or abstained will now vote positively. A number of countries in Africa, Asia and the Greater Caribbean have not carried out executions for years or even decades, and some of these nations also take legal and humanitarian action to protect their citizens from capital punishment elsewhere.



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In 1945, when the UN was founded, only eight states had abolished the death penalty for all crimes. Today, over two-thirds of the 193 UN member states – according to the UN more than 150 countries from all regions and cultures – have abolished capital punishment or do not use it. Only a small number of states carry out executions every year.

**Federico Mayor**  
President of the International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

## **BACKGROUND**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 14 personalities of high international standing from all regions of the world who act with total independence and neutrality and work under its President Mr. Federico Mayor.

ICDP opposes the death penalty under any circumstances believing that it violates the right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human rights. ICDP promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in those states that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that rarely use the death penalty. In states that continue to carry out executions ICDP urges strict adherence to international standards.

ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to further the abolition of capital punishment worldwide.

The work of the ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 16 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. There is a small secretariat in Geneva.