



International Commission
against the Death Penalty

President

Federico Mayor

Members

Giuliano Amato

Louise Arbour

Robert Badinter

Mohammed Bedjaoui

Ruth Dreifuss

Michèle Duvivier
Pierre-Louis

Hanne Sophie Greve

Asma Jilani Jahangir

Ioanna Kuçuradi

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**Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty:
President of ICDP Mr Federico Mayor, Commissioners Ms Hanne
Sophie Greve and Mr Ibrahim Najjar leads ICDP mission to Lebanon**

The President of the International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP and Commission) Mr Federico Mayor, ICDP Commissioner and former Lebanese Minister of Justice Mr Ibrahim Najjar and ICDP Commissioner and former judge at the European Court of Human Rights Ms Hanne Sophie Greve were part of a delegation that discussed issues related to the abolition of the death penalty in Lebanon with the Prime Minister of Lebanon, parliamentarians, lawyers and important members of the civil society between 8-10 June 2014. The delegation was accompanied by the former Minister of Justice of Palestine Mr Ali Khashan and by staff members of the ICDP Secretariat.

On 10 June, President Mayor and ICDP Commissioners met Prime Minister Tammam Salam and earlier on 9 June, the delegation met with the Chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee Mr Michel Moussa and the Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, Mr Ghassan Moukheiber.

On 9 June, President Mayor, Commissioners Najjar and Greve spoke at a Conference organised by the Beirut Bar Association which was chaired by its President Georges Jreij. The Conference focused on the abolition of the death penalty in Lebanon. The conference featured the premiere screening of a documentary film on a prisoner facing the death penalty in Lebanon entitled "Deprived of Freedom". Later on the same day, the delegates spoke at and then participated in a debate with students at the Saint Joseph University on the question of abolition of capital punishment in Lebanon.

ICDP launched its annual "Review 2013," which summarises the activities of the Commission last year, on 9 June at the Beirut Bar Association Conference.

The mission attracted good media interest. ICDP President Mr Mayor was interviewed by L'Orient-Le Jour and the BBC on 8 and 9 June respectively. On 7 June, ICDP Commissioner Ms Greve participated in a live interview with the leading Lebanese TV Channel mtv (Murr Television).

"It has been ten years since Lebanese authorities carried out the last execution in January 2004. We congratulate the Government of Lebanon on this milestone taking note of its difficult circumstances. We call on the Government to take steps gradually to formalise the *de facto* moratorium as a first step to abolish the death penalty in Lebanon. By taking these steps, Lebanon will take the leadership role in the region," said ICDP President Federico Mayor.



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“In Lebanon, we are witnessing a tendency to steer away from the death penalty when we take note of that the Parliament has introduced no new legal sanctions constituting expansion of the death penalty in the recent past. The dependence on death penalty has ended. For me, the death penalty is premeditated murder; it is not objective. Its abolition has to be achieved through constant consensus and placed within the context of Lebanese and regional peace,” said ICDP Commissioner Najjar.

In her speeches, ICDP Commissioner Greve cited the famous Lebanese philosopher and diplomat Charles Habib Malik who was a key architect in the drafting process of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and in ensuring that it was accepted by the UN without a dissenting vote. The UDHR recognizes each person's right to life (Article 3) and categorically states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 5). “You must also be free to become what your conscience requires you to become in light of your best knowledge. It is therefore freedom of becoming, of change that we stress as much as freedom of being” Professor Malik emphasized. “These are all strong arguments to abolish the death penalty. The visit of the ICDP delegation to Beirut constitutes a dialogue; we call on a step by step approach to the abolition of the death penalty in Lebanon. The right to life – to be and to become – is supreme,” said ICDP Commissioner Greve.

Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty

Background

ICDP was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 15 persons 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 18 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Geneva.