



## **INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY News Release**

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**Push Needed to Abolish Death Penalty Worldwide** – Although significant progress has been made in either abolishing capital punishment or in establishing national moratoriums over the years, a major push is now needed to end the practice globally.

Marking World Day against the Death Penalty on 10 October, IPU and the International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) will host a one-day event in Geneva for MPs from across the world. The meeting, intended particularly for MPs from countries that still have the death penalty but which may be considering abolishing it, will provide parliamentarians with information on what is needed to end the practice.

This not only includes promoting a better understanding of global and regional trends on the issue, but also identifying legal and political opportunities for parliamentary involvement to overcome the many challenges countries face in abolishing capital punishment. MPs will also draw upon the experiences of countries such as France, Kazakhstan and Morocco.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 when the issue was the concern of only a minority of States, there has been an encouraging trend to abolish the death penalty. By 2012, 105 countries had eliminated the death penalty in law (97 for all crimes and eight for ordinary crimes). Among countries where it is law, 35 have not carried out any executions in the past 10 years or have announced a moratorium, according to a 2012 Amnesty International report.

Although abolition is supported by States from all regions in the world regardless of political system, religion, culture or tradition, a significant number of countries nevertheless regularly carry out executions. Between 2010 and 2012, this involved some 20 countries. Most of the executions were in China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the USA and Yemen with thousands more prisoners remaining under sentence of death in countries where it is still law.

Greater progress on abolishing the death penalty would be made if more public information was available on its application in the relevant countries to allow an informed debate and to gauge public opinion. This includes the number of death sentences, the crimes for which people have been sentenced to death and executions carried out.

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